



Next Muster January 6th 2012 7.30pm MC Brian Langley

Auditorium, Bentley Park, 26 Plantation Drive Bentley 6102,

THIS DAY IN HISTORY
Monday December 1, 2011

Australian History

1876 - Aboriginal stockman Sam Isaacs and teenager Grace Bussell rescue about 40 people from a stricken steamship off Western Australia.

As I am putting the finishing touches to this newsletter (co-incidentally with this column free!!) large areas in the south west of our state are burning. With the Margaret River area being the worse, there have also been fires in the outer areas of the city, throughout the wheatbelt, and several other areas of our state. While FESA, DEC and career firefighters are doing their best to contain the fires, they are also being greatly helped by many volunteer firefighters. This poem was written by Ross Magnay, from the Northern Territory, as a tribute to volunteer firefighters, but I would like to print it as a tribute to all people who are working so hard at this moment to keep our fellow west aussies safe.

The Volunteer Fireman

The silly season's started, that of flames and ash, and smoke,
and if you've ever fought one, you'll know that it's no joke.
When you fight against the elements, and your strength begins to wane,
when all you get is hot north winds, but all you want is rain.

Mother nature always beats you, however smart you are,
and leaves behind a barren mark, as black as new laid tar.
But nature's not the only thing, the firemen have to fight,
There's that bloody great bureaucracy, that always think they're right.

And the shiny bums in offices, still state, no, more demand,
though they have never fought a fire, we don't understand
that there will be no access tracks, defacing nature's plot.
Oh yes, they are so clever, and they know the bloody lot.

There will be no burning off you see, no trees or bushes cut,
but the volunteers are welcome, to get out and bust a gut.
And a lot of hilltop dwellers, think that no, they won't be hurt,
but when it comes to fire and nature, it doesn't pay to flirt.

So congrats to all the fireman, and I doff my hat to you,
unrewarded and undaunted, for the job you freely do.
So check all of the units, and maintain all of the gear,
for we will have to do it all again, about this time next year.

NEWS FLASH - PRESIDENT & VICE-PRESIDENT ELECTIONS

NOTICE OF SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

The Management Committee of the WA Bush Poets & Yarnspinners Association Inc. is pleased to announce having received nominations for the currently vacant positions of President and Vice-President to the committee.

Current committee Members, Mr. John Hayes has been nominated for the position of President and Mr. Bill Gordon has been nominated for the position of Vice-President. Both nominations have been seconded and accepted.

In keeping with Section 10 of our Association rules, a Special General meeting will be held on Friday January 6th 2012, at 7.20pm at Bentley Park - immediately prior to the next muster - at which all members are urged to attend. Association rules require a quorum of 5 members to conduct business. The purpose of this Special General meeting is for the ratification of these nominations (or to hold an election should other nominations be forthcoming), with the successful nominees to hold office until the next AGM due mid/late 2012.

In addition, & as a result of these nominations, members are asked to consider nominating themselves for the 2 subsequent vacant committee positions which will become available on the successful election of President and Vice-President. It is hoped to also fill these vacancies at the Special General meeting.

Association rules are that a minimum of 21 days notice of such a meeting be given. **This is such notification.**

We welcome John Hayes and Bill Gordon as accepted nominees, along with the stability that having a complete Management committee will bring to our Association.



Poet Profile

At the age of 9, Bill found a book of Banjo Patterson's poetry. It started a life long love of bush verse and now in his latter years he can devote more time to learning and performing material penned by the great poets past and present.

Being a farmer, Bill has lots of opportunities to experience bush culture, and this love of the bush is reflected now in his own poems, which are mostly humorous anecdotes about the characters found in rural and remote Australia.

His performing days started round the campfire over a few beers and this led to appearances at the Boyup Brook Country Music Festival. He now co-ordinates the Bush Poetry section of this festival, which has grown over the last four years to an audience of 2000, one of the largest in Australia.

The word is out and Bill is now in demand in various centres throughout the South West of WA, including Albany, Denmark, Kalgoorlie, Esperance and Kojonup. He has also performed at the Wireless Hill Australia Day ceremony. As well as Banjo Patterson and other traditional poets, his repertoire includes contemporary poets such

as Bob Magor, Murray Hartin and Jack Drake.

He has recently started writing his own poetry on a wide range of experiences, from family celebrations to the challenge of driving around France on the wrong side of the road.

Bill was awarded Runner-up in the 2011 WA State Championships held in February in Boyup Brook. He went on to gain further valuable experience in the Man From Snowy River Festival at Corryong (Vic) in April 2011. In 2009 he also performed at the Gympie Muster.

The journey so far has been lots of fun and wherever it takes him, Bill intends to enjoy the ride.

THE FRENCH DRIVING LESSON

Bon jour Madame, bon jour Monsieur, to France we welcome you,
Please do enjoy your holiday, and do what we French do.
Enjoy the sights of Paris, the Arc and Eiffel Tower,
Monmatre and the left bank, their beauty and their power.

Walk her streets and feel her heart, be captured by her charm,
Ride a boat along the Seine, to Louvre and Notre Dame.
You soon will see why gay Paree is called city of love,
A gift divine bestowed on her from somewhere up above.

Now please pay close attention to the way we drive a car,
It is the way to travel if you're wanting to go far.
The steering wheel is on the left as we drive on the right,
Please if you get it wrong monsieur you give us all a fright.

The roundabouts in France we go the anticlockwise way,
It is not very smart of you to go the other way.
The blinkers you find on the left, windscreen wipers on the right,
How come the wipers start to go when a turn comes into sight?

My wife sits on the right hand side; she is a nervous wreck,
But her constant stream of comments does really save my neck.
Cos when I'm calm and concentrate, on right hand side we go,
But then confusion strikes me and I just don't bloody know.

Now we all know that women have a problem reading maps,

Their minds just can't compute it the way it works for chaps
They seem to hold it upside down, and then say the map is wrong,
But now we have the answer so we can get along.
In Oz we live down under, in France we are above,
So upside down is right way up. God bless my little love.

The road signs are confusing, all written in Francae,
Because we do not "parle vous" we head off the wrong way.
But they are all designed to keep messing with our head,
An arrow pointing downwards means you go up straight ahead.
One on the left that's pointing right, or the other way around,
Both mean the same, so why do you so easily confound.

We've all been pleased to welcome you, hope you had a tre bon stay,
But our roads will be much safer if you go, and stop away.

Bill Gordon 20.8.2011

Submissions for the Bully Tin

Just a quick reminder to everyone that this is *your* newsletter. Please feel free to submit your poems for inclusion, keeping in mind the need for size constraints.



Walking Different Tracks

Margaret River Short Story Competition

Margaret River Press and Arts Margaret River have launched the Inaugural Margaret River Short Story Competition, closing on December 30th 2011.

Could you please circulate the information to your students, friends and relatives or you might have a short story you would like to submit. The Open Category is open to all writers within Australia on any topic and the South West Writer's Award is for writers living in the South West region.

Margaret River Press is also seeking submissions from writers for publication.

Please check our website www.margaretriverpress.com for information on the Margaret River Short Story Competition and information about the press.

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Monthly Challenge: Well, we only had one person rise to the challenge to produce a poem on "I Remember..." Many thanks to Terry Piggot - a beautiful poem, as usual.

WHEN YOU AND I WERE BOYS OLD FRIEND

Remember how it used to be when we were boy's old friend,
those carefree years out in the bush; we thought they'd never end.
For you and I were best of mates and life was full of fun,
still blessed with childhood innocence we frolicked in the sun.

I cherish now those days of youth; the friendship that we shared,
the kind of crazy things we did that only young boys dared.

I still recall test matches that we used to play each week,
and happy hours spent fishing for small minnows in the creek.

Too quickly youthful days passed by and soon we were young men,
those joyful times were over and our lives would start again.

We both discovered girls and then began to drift apart,
the fairer sex took precedence; in matters of the heart.

Before too long you'd settled down with children on the way,
while I'd become a wanderer; I'm still the same today.
And though our bonds remained quite strong, a gulf began to grow,
we finally lost contact, all those many years ago.

I'd often think about you as I sat alone at night,
beside a warming campfire when the stars were shining bright.

And memories would focus on the story that awaits,
about two boys born in the bush who'd been the truest mates.

Then came that letter from your wife to say that you were ill,
and wished a final word with me; you'd sensed death's icy chill.

I made it back to see you mate; somehow you had hung on,
A few last words about our youth, a smile, and you were gone.

I stand here by your grave old friend; my mind is drifting back,
to days of boyhood mateship, way out on that dusty track.

I hear again your laughter ringing faintly through the years,
and see once more the way things were, through eyes now moist with tears.

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Monthly Challenge:

5th December is International Volunteer Day. In Australia, it has been designated as a day for the recognition of volunteer involvement, a day in which organisations can thank their volunteer staff.

Volunteers have been the backbone of our nation, and have been instrumental in building our communities over many years - particularly in our country towns.

If anyone would like to write a poem recognizing the role of volunteers in Australia, I will select a couple for the next Bully Tin.

**Muster MCs and Classics Readers are always needed - See John Hayes
Please Contact any committee person**

**Do you want to be part of the National Scene — Then you might consider joining the Australian Bush Poets Assn
www.abpa.org.au . Annual membership \$30
Stay up to date with events and competitions right across Australia**

November Muster Wrap Up, by Teresa Rose

The Muster this month took the form of our annual “Traditional Night”, for the first half at least. Our **MC** was **Brian Langley** who, as usual, did a fantastic job of writing a script, choosing poems and performers and introducing us to more of the works by the prolific, WA poet, Dryblower Murphy. With the heading of “Dryblower – 40 Years with the Sunday Times”, Brian had organised a power point presentation to accompany his narration and all the poems; he was, of course, ably assisted as always, by his “good wife”, Dot.

After the introduction, **Ron Ingham** presented the first poem, “What the hell do you think of it now?” Subtitled, “A New Year’s Hymn”, the poet questions what the drunkard thinks of all he has done after a month of constant drinking. Was it all really worth while? He may have romped with the bar-maids and painted the town red, but how does it feel afterward? What does he think when sanity returns after the effects of the celebration wear off? He has felt all the highs and lows that revelling and drinking arouse, but what now? Having followed the devil and played the fool for a month, what does he think of it all now?

Teresa Rose was the next presenter, with “Hire and Sale”, a poem that highlights the hypocrisy of society’s attitudes. Delilah, a woman of ‘ill-repute’ sits in the theatre with patrons from all classes. She is looked down on or sneered at by all because of her ‘profession’ which is advertised by the way she is dressed. The same scorn is not given to the young woman, sanctioned or abetted by her mother, who is also ‘flaunting her wares’ in order to attract a suitor.

Jill Miller read a poem with a very political slant, “Waiting For the Rail”. (A “Transcontinental Parody”), the poem tells of the old man waiting desperately for the promised railway to come. For years he has waited, asking each day if it has arrived, and each day the answer is the same, “Not yet, old man”. He thinks back to the time of Federation and the promises made, but as his wits gradually fly away, he has no knowledge of the death of Honor, and waits as others wait, for those on the Eastern side to fulfil their promise.

Caroline Sambridge presented “When ‘Baby’ Shoots the Chute”. “Baby” was in fact a very portly local figure. The poet writes as a woman with an eye for the portly gentleman rather than someone dainty and slim. A humorous rhyme that could have been written by Caroline herself; but it wasn’t!

Lorelie Tacoma read one of Dryblower’s more reflective works, “Today Is Mothers’ Day”. Across the years, comes the call to people from all walks of life to remember the person who gave each one life; whether she is in this world or the next. This day is an opportunity to take time out from the daily struggles of life to acknowledge our mother, remember what she did for us. Today is when we remember all her ways and sayings, the many ways she showed her love. Whether mothers live in grand palaces or hovels, they have all given birth to boys and girls; the men and wives of the future. Think back to all those little childhood events and traumas, when she was always there; so don’t ever forget Mothers’ Day.

Kerry Bowe stepped up to the mike to read, “Unless You Are a Lady”, a ‘tongue in cheek’ jibe at the social ‘nuances’ of the times. The widow must bear her adversity with a genteel and noble air. The patronage of the class may be loud but it is not for anyone with a murky past. Before being accepted, it must be proven that the late husband was of an exalted station, if she is to receive their ‘charity’. She must be refined enough to accept all their insults and rude questions, but above all, to join the association she must have a name appropriate for a lady.

Robert Gunn gave us a rendition of, “Sing a Song of Sixpence”; no, not the nursery rhyme, but a poem that was written about the need to raise funds for charities during the Depression. Sixpences from the sale of “CROSSWORD” tickets could do so much good; aiding the sick and lonely and injured. Sixpence may only be a small amount but it could go to those who brought comfort and joy to the helpless. The coins were only small and round but their power was explosive as dynamite. Six pennies was all it took to help the ambulances attend to the numerous accidents and other tragedies that abound in the city streets. Out in the bush, those sixpences helped the nurses to aid the poor and sick and to feed the hungry and malnourished children. Sixpence could be the difference between life and death.

Teresa Rose returned to the mike with another reflective poem, “Pity The Plight of the Poor Unemployed”. The poet pleads with the “Haves” to look at the plight of the “Have Nots”. During the Depression, there were those who knew nothing of the misery suffered by the poor as they tried to keep warm and dry in the make-shift camps. The only dampness the wealthy experienced was that of a drip from their balcony or an occasional splash. The miserable children could not understand why they were so cold and wet. Their fathers had been out of work for so long through no fault of their own. The women could only weep for the better lives they once knew. The poet appeals to everyone to go out and do something real and practical to help these “poor unemployed”.

Dot Langley had the joy of presenting a humorous poem next, to lighten the mood. “Mrs. Flannigan’s Frock” tells the tale of Coolgardie’s paper, ‘The Miner’, which covered every conceivable aspect of the pioneering days in the local area. When the paper ran out, the editor, Flannigan, had to resort to printing on anything he could lay his hands on. Mrs. Flannigan gave a dress which was tacked to a tree after it was printed with news, ads, fun and fiction for all to read. Sally, a local woman, took a fancy to the dress and snatched it away whilst some of the folk were reading the Test scores. She raced off, pulling the frock over her head, but it proved to be her downfall as it tripped her over into the dust. Despite the warden’s outrage at their behaviour, the men continued to read the ‘paper’ while Sally was wearing it.

Ron Ingham presented another sombre poem, “A Hundred Thousand Missing Men”. The poem recalls the horrific and tremendous numbers of men killed in the First World War, who lie beneath the soil across the former battlefields of France and Belgium. They were men who fought for the freedom that we enjoy; who died without dignity or ceremony; whose bodies lie unidentified and undiscovered, where atrocious conditions once prevailed. The locals

who live, and work and walk across these lands are too young to know what went on beneath their feet. Despite all the horror and losses, mankind still continues to kill fellow man. We must remember those thousands of silent heroes for whom there are no memorials.

Marjory Cobb read a poem that continued Dryblower's views of war. "Eastertide" (1936), talks of the contrasts between the holy season of Easter, whilst the world prepares once again for war. In times past, Easter was treated with reverence and conflict was halted, at least temporarily. Now, the god of war spoke with a voice that was louder than that of the God whose message was Peace. Sacred buildings fell and there was slaughter as Eastertide came and went. The poet pleads with God to change men's hearts and minds away from power grabbing and killing and to make a Holier Eastertide.

Caroline Sambridge returned to the mike to give us some light relief with, "Cycles". No matter what your motor or bike requirements, the cycle shop owner has them all. Armstrong was a famous name in the goldfields; he pedalled his way across Australia. Now he is done with wandering and is ready to fix you up with whatever bike or automobile you need.

Brian Langley remained at the mike to present, "Thou Shalt Not", a cynical look at the hypocrisy of Church leaders. The self-appointed and opinionated 'holy people' pointed out the only 'true' way to Heaven. They banned simple pleasures on Sundays or any other days for that matter, particularly as they were unable to reap much money from these encounters. The Sunday Times was regarded as particularly evil because some preferred to read it than listen to the Sunday sermons. Teetotallers would have all drinking banned on Sundays and gambling should not be allowed unless it was for Church purposes. Finally the scribe decided to opt for Hell if it meant he'd have to share Heaven with those others.

Kerry Bowe presented another cutting poem along the same lines as the last, "Things That Keep 'Em Away". The poet is responding to concerns raised by the clergy re: falling church attendances and the resulting fall in funds from the collection plates. The 'so-called' sinner has had to suffer in silence for too long as he has been railed at about his sinful ways. The parson is enraptured at any gold that is offered but scorns the poor man's few pence. There's the parson who speaks as though he is in partnership with God, and the others who take from the poor and needy for themselves. The hypocrites lecture on the evils of the flesh whilst indulging themselves where and with whomever they want. These are some of the things that 'keep 'em away'.

Robert Suann, making his debut as presenter, also had a poem dealing with the pompousness of the Church, "Thou Shalt Not Hike". The pious preacher would ban all the simple Sunday pleasures; train rides and picnic hampers, even a pot of billy tea come in for his criticism. A trip into the country for a lovers' walk is banned, as is drinking in fresh country air. Thou shalt not hike, for fear of causing a scandal!

Robert Gunn read a gentle satire on the government Astronomer, "A Use for Cooke". For a generous wage, it was expected that Cooke would have useful information to share from his reading of the skies. However, anyone could tell what the weather was likely to be according to what had happened the previous day! Using language no-one could understand he might talk about a distant star, but as to forecasting rain, he was usually wrong. He advised lovers to walk on moonlit nights when they were more likely to be seen instead of telling them when the darkest nights would be!

Grace Williamson was our final presenter for the first half, with, "Yuletide Memories". Many of Dryblower's poems revolved around life on the Goldfields. In this one he urges those diggers who are reminiscing or longing for the girls they left over east, to persevere and look forward rather than back. Although life is often hard, and luck seldom seen, things will change for the better. It's usual to think of old friends at Christmas time and to those lost along the way. The food may not be traditional festive fare but there are compensations for living in the bush. He urges the men to make the most of the opportunities this life gives them.

Brian remained as **MC** for the second half of the Muster, and first up after supper was **Dave Smith**, who was very pleased to inform us that he had just become a Great Grandfather for the first time. Congratulations to you and your wife, and of course to the proud Grand Parents and Parents!

In keeping with the Traditional theme of the evening, Dave presented Henry Lawson's, "On The Summit of Mount Clarence". A rotting flagstaff on Mount Clarence, (Albany) is all that remains of the so-called 'Russian Scare', when some people believed that Australia would be invaded by the Russians. Throughout the seasons all it watches over is a phantom fleet. Up in the caves, the threat is still ever present to the madman who keeps watch. At night he is the only one to see the phantom ship and to send it off with his gun.

Marjorie Cobb stepped up to the mike to present, "In Flander' Fields" by Dr. John McCrae. Although neither a Bush Poem nor an Australian one, it fell in with the Remembrance Day theme of November. The poppies grow between the rows of crosses that mark the graves of the fallen. The Dead were alive only a few days ago, living, loving and now lying in Flanders fields. They pass the torch to the living that they may carry on the fight so that those who fell can sleep in peace among the poppies of Flanders fields.

Frank Heffernan gave us a poem he had only just written (as yet unrevised), "What will our dollar do, today?" Our lives today in the "Global Village" are all ruled by the Stock Exchange. The rise or fall of the markets is reflected in our smiles or frowns. What will our dollar do today; we hope it's better than the English Pound. Some folk do well with their deals; some not so well. Advisors and bankers all want you to trust them with your money. Super funds appear to be the go but how can the children understand the contradictory morals they see and hear? Will the Aussies stay afloat in a world of corporate greed, where wealth is held by a few, while millions starve? Does anyone care in a country governed by stocks and shares?

Deb Reid is a newcomer to the performing ranks and chose to read Banjo's classic, "Mulga Bill's Bicycle". Abandoning his faithful horse, Bill dresses up in the best of cycling clothes and went off to purchase a new machine. When asked if he could ride a bicycle, Bill proceeded to brag about what an experienced and proficient rider he was. As he headed off

for home, the bike took off at speed and headed down to Dead Man's Creek. Bill was taken on a frightening and bone-jarring ride that ended in the Creek. Afterwards, he admitted that it had been the worst ride of his life and the bicycle would stay in the Creek while he stuck with his horse.

Robert Suann returned to present C.J.Dennis', "A Letter To The Front". The poem celebrates the simple pleasures of an ordinary Australian who writes a reply to "Mick's" query about life back at home. He talks of the main streets in the capital cities and the land around the Murray and Castlereagh. He imagines what the boys are trying to deal with as they dream of home. He reminds Mick of the colours and sounds of Spring in the Bush, which contrast with the horrible sights of the front. He assures Mick that when the stoush is over, there'll be plenty of work for him and picnics instead of fighting. He warns him that the new fight will be to readjust to life on the land. Meanwhile, the land is waiting for him, while those at home watch as the wounded return, and realise that their old life will never return.

Lesley McAlpine presented a poem she located on the internet; Denise Scanlen's, "Perfumed Pioneers". The pioneers of this land were a determined bunch, fighting battles on many fronts. Many managed to survive the hardships but went unrecognised as they were behind the scenes. They raised the kids, looked after the men who worked the land. Many of them had left the cities not knowing what kind of life was ahead of them. These women were the backbone; their gentle love and strength kept their men together, as they stood beside them in the fight against the land. We should all salute these unsung heroes, the perfumed pioneers.

Barry Higgins and Kerry Bowe united once again to perform Henry Lawson's, "O'Hara, J.P.". O'Hara was a heavy-weight in the local town. He was there at every important 'do' and was so busy in town affairs that the flies 'couldn't roost' on him. When he had to hear a case against Sandy M'Fly regarding breaching licensing laws, he found all the statements very conflicting. He felt sorry for the terrified barmaid and decided to visit the premises himself. When the local cops heard a ruckus going on at the pub, they discovered O'Hara himself was the cause. When O'Hara dismissed the case the next day, he came under the full force of the law and religion, but his wife was the worst! A broken old man, he became a warning to young men to stay away from temptation!

Dot Langley presented another 'Remembrance Day' inspired poem; Capel Boake's, "Stitchin' Seams". As the woman sits sewing by the window, the sunlight on her cheek makes her stop and think. But she doesn't want to think, or laugh or joke; so she stitches and stitches to keep away her thoughts. When the soldiers came past and called out to her, she couldn't see the seams. She works her treadle faster to try to shut out the thoughts. She's stitched so many seams they must reach up to the sky. She has to stitch to shut out the thoughts of her dead love, Bill.

Arthur Leggett volunteered to present a classic; C.J.Dennis', "The Swagman". The 'old codger' was old and grey. He carried a swag and an old black billy-can which looked just right for making tea at a picnic. He told of a hard life on the track, but the dance of corks on his hat was funny to the young lad. He advised the boy to stay off the track if he could; he'd had to trudge many miles, looking for work, and had to trudge some more. He'd been everywhere and was old, and sad and wise; the boy just thought that kind of life would be 'jolly'.

Grace Williamson gave us another Banjo classic, "In Defence of the Bush", his answer to Lawson's, "Up The Country". Lawson had complained of the heat and lack of beer; the bullock that snorted at him, and the dry and dusty landscape. Banjo assured him that had he waited and travelled there a bit later, he would have seen the country in a different light. There would be green grass and flowing rivers, unlike the city streets where nothing ever changes with the seasons. The people who live in the bush are loyal to it; they enjoy life when they can. The city dwellers are sour and sad; the children curse and the women flaunt their wares or sew till their eyes are sore. The music of the bush is sweeter than the roar of traffic. He tells Lawson to stay in his city, for the bush will never suit him, and he'll never suit the bush.

Caroline Sambridge returned with two of her own poems. The first, "I drink coke but I don't smoke", tells how she can drink a two litre bottle of coke, but her teeth don't turn green. However, it does mean she has to pee very often. The second poem, "Jesus and the Melbourne Cup", tells how Jesus was a jockey and rode a very slow horse. When he fell off, he was not happy so he drowned his sorrows in beer.

Trish Joyce was our final presenter for the night, with her poem, "The Miracle of New Norcia". The poem tells the story of the founding of New Norcia by Spanish, Benedictine monks in 1846. When supplies ran out, Dom Salvado and a native went to ask for aid but none was forthcoming. Not to be defeated, he used his musical skills to raise money. Several disasters depleted the groups' numbers, but the two remaining worked on, to plant the land and create a monastery. Native women were protected within its walls. Then an inferno threatened to destroy everything until someone placed a picture of 'Our Lady' in the standing corn. As the monks prayed, the fire miraculously turned away.

Brian finished this wonderful evening's programme with one last 'ditty' from Dryblower, "Only A Black", which was just one of many examples of his sensitivity to the plight of the disadvantaged and ill-treated.

Country Poets

Coming to the City? - City lights are fine, but 1st Fridays could see **you** shine at our Muster. If you are coming to the big smoke on a muster night why not come along and be part of our get together.

Give us a bit of notice and you might even find yourself being star act (but only if you want to be). This applies also to Bush Poets from other places and those past member poets whose lives have now gone in different directions.

To me, this poem captures so well the spirit that keeps us going through the tough times; when nature seems hell bent on destroying our spirit.

The Spirit of the Bush

Bruce Venables

There's trouble out there as I speak, made up of wind and dust.
It howls around the homesteads and the rain tanks, gone to rust.
The animals are dying, all choked up with flies and sand
and though country folks aren't saying much, they need a helping hand.

They're hard as nails those bushmen, but this time they're on their knees.
This drought has got them to the stage where they're in dire need.
But they're not beg-or-borrow folk, and they don't cheat or lie.
They'll do it hard in silence and I'm here to tell you why.

There's a pulse that beats in the bush country beyond the Great Divide,
You can feel it from the Snowies for as far as you can ride.
You can sense it when you see the brush of breezes on the river.
It'll touch your soul where e'er you go and cause your spine to shiver.

Born of the men who worked the land on outback cattle stations,
in the olden days when times were hard at the birth of our great nation.
It's a melding of the Dreamtime with the heart of Never-Never
that's then blended with the souls who came here after Cook's endeavour.

It's a force made up of all that's fair and noble in the bush.
It's the strength that makes an Aussie bushie give it 'one more push'.

It's the decency that makes a person lend a helping hand.
It's the valour shown at Lone Pine and Kakoda and Long Tan.

In the bush they call it being 'dinkum', 'straight up', or 'true blue'.
They don't discuss it often, it's just something that they do.
It's the mateship that'll help the bloke who's broke or down and out.
It's the guts it takes to fight the bloody bushfires and the drought.

You watch how fast they go to work when Nature takes a turn;
when raging floods strike dingo-like or roaring bushfires burn.
Or when a screaming cyclone flattens half a dozen towns,
watch how quick those country hearts will help those who are down.

That's the spirit, don't you see, that gives the bush its power?
The people stick and do it tough all through the darkest hour.
No one shirks or backs away, it's 'shoulders to the wheel!'
That's the spirit of the bush, old mate, and that's the pulse you feel.

So spare a thought next time you're driving down a country road
for all those sunburnt people out there carrying the load.
Stop and listen for a second and I'll bet your pulse starts racing.
That's the spirit of the bush my friend, the heartland of our nation.

TREASURER'S CORNER

A Friendly Reminder..... some Membership Dues remain outstanding.

Please Note: The Committee **has extended the cut off date** for 'No further Bully Tins to Members un-financial until the end of January 2012.

Membership subscriptions are: Single \$15.00 Double \$20.00 Hard Copy Bully Tin Postage Levy \$3.00
(Email address must be included if not paying the Postage levy.)

Remember Direct Payment details To NBA Bank Account; Is as follows:
WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners **BSB Number 086-455 Account Number 82-428-4595**

Ensure: Your **Member Name** is on the NAB Deposit Slip/payment

Treasurer Robert is pleading for the Name or Phone Number for the **\$18.00 NAB Deposit on 20th September 2011** (Single Member + Postal Levy) Payee Member payment.

Robert cannot issue a Member receipt or Name Tag until this detail is known. And if unknown beyond 31 January, sadly that person will not receive copies of their Bully Tin.

Treasurer, Robert

With the emphasis on Dryblower Murphy at the last muster, I will include a couple of his poems.

Like most "Bush poets", Dryblower was not one to let a story go past, albeit with in many cases considerable "embellishment"

A factual incident occurred at Kanowna when there had been a delay in transporting the paper necessary to print the local "rag". In order that the news (particularly about mining stocks etc) was available, the newspaper owner (Mr Flannigan) printed several copies on some calico sheeting - these were pinned up around the town for all to read. - Dryblower presented this in a slightly different light

Mrs. Flannigan's Frock

It was back in Coolgardie in pioneer days
When the paper for printing 'The Miner' was shy,
And it's shandy gaff staff lifted inky horrors
When the camels came in with the monthly supply.

It was written whenever the staff had a spurt,
It was set by the 'comps' when they'd nothing to do;
Its building was brushwood, its flooring was dirt,
Its press bore a date long before Waterloo.

It recorded the rushes, the leases and claims
How far the McSalters had sunk on their reef;
The coach fare and passengers, diggers and dames,
The prices of dynamite, bluchers and beef.

Its leaders gave hark from the tomb to the toff
Who wouldn't buy mines on the prospector's word,
Its poems and pars had a surfeit of scoff
For investors who doubted, delayed and demurred.

It happened one day that the paper supply
Ran out with the nearest a fortnight away,
With editor Flannigan willing to buy
White, yellow or nondescript, salmon or grey

They printed on linen and tacked it on trees,
Free, gratis, for nothing, they nailed up the news;
Round the salmon-gums gathered the battlers like bees
For the leaders that lift or the mots that amuse.

The editor's wife, Mrs. Flannigan stout
Gave a calico costume to swell the supply;
And just as it was from the press it came out,
A frock full of poems and paragraphs dry.

That dress at Kanowna was tacked on a tree,
With its columns of ads and its columns of news;
And the fun and the fact and the fiction was free
For the whole population to see and peruse.

Soon sauntered up Sally, the queen of the gins
And guiltless as Venus of costume and cloak;
From her tousled old thatch to her skeleton shins
But the sight of the garment the woman awoke.

It hadn't been tacked up a minute or more,
A Test match was happening, right on the hip
And a crowd was computing the Englishmen's score,
When Sal pulled it off and skedaddled - pip, pip.

They chased her, but Sal got it over her head;
"This mine pfella frock;" she announced with a yell
And when it was fastened securely she fled,
All hands on the heels of this hurricane belle.

Like many a sister far fairer than she,
The dress was her downfall, she slipped in the dust
And the warden, immersed in his damper and tea,
Arose in official, indignant disgust.

"How dare you!" he thundered, "lay hands on a gin?"
But a Test match enthusiast, guiltless of crime
Explained they were anxious to know who would win,
For the Englishmen seemed to be playing out time.

"And I," said another, grabbing her gown
And trying his darndest to follow the flounce,
"Want to see if the Wildcat Extended goes down,
For it says near her placket, it might go an ounce."

"Hold hard!" yelled another, as Sally cut loose
And left half a yard of her petticoat print,
"Here's the Coroner's inquest on Charlie the Goose
And the news of the robbery down at the Mint!"

Another explained to the warden that he
Had seen a good cure for a cough on her skirt,
While another a good testimonial for tea
Was reading, when Sally had scattered the dirt.

"And what," asked the Warden, "?"are you seeking there
Of a dag who from flounces was taking his fill;
"Intestate Estates, for I'll have half share
If my old geezer snuffs without making a will."

And so with the Warden, as ring-referee,
With eyes all alert and excitable breaths,
They read from her nervous old neck to her knee,
Marriages, births, divorces and deaths.

They still tell the story in Mulgaland bars
Wherever auriferous gravel-stone glints,
How some wanted peeps at the Personal Pars,
While some wanted squints at the Cookery Hints.

And out where the dollies, the specimens crush,
The tin dishes rattle, the dryblowers rock,
Coolgardie men tell of the ravenous rush
For the pioneer print - Mrs. Flannigan's Frock!

Are you looking for Bush Poetry books or CDs—there is a website selling a range of these, along with other "self published" music etc you can also sell through them, Go to www.tradandnow.com It's an Australian group, based in Woy Woy, NSW

The First World War had a great effect on most people who survived it, The whole social structure of England changed, women now went to work, dress became less 'formal', the class structure began to crumble - Remembrance of the war became an institution with Returned Soldiers Leagues formed, Memorials built and commemoration services were held on appropriate dates across the Empire. Along with that went the stories of those that did not come home. It was estimated that a hundred thousand "British" soldiers are still missing and lie somewhere under the soil of the Somme battlefields.

In a sombre mood, Dryblower picks up this fact in his poem "A Hundred Thousand Missing men"

A HUNDRED THOUSAND MISSING MEN.

The pale moon shines on Pozieres,
On mute Messines and Polygon Wood;
The shattered shrine of Albert stares
Where once the marble fountain stood.
White crosses crowd the burial grounds.
Where British heroes lie asleep;
Above and round the mossy mounds
The womenfolk of warriors weep.
Yet, far beyond the stately piles
That mark some epoch of the war,
Along the barrage-mangled miles
Gun-guttered to the gravelled core,
There lie, commingled with the clay
Of trench and traverse, path, and pad.
The vanished dead for whom we pray
While millions sing a requiem sad.
They live in sermon and in song.
In vivid voice and praising pen.
Within our hearts for ever throng
A Hundred Thousand Missing Men.

A Hundred Thousand Missing lie
Where fought they that no wrong should be;
They came to do; they stayed to die
Unknown to kith across the sea.
A Hundred Thousand Warriors brave
Who fought that we should freedom know.
And found a sudden, undug grave
From Bruges down to Brettenoux.
Along the frontiers far of France,
From Belgium's cities to the sea,
With bomb and bayonet, sword and lance
They stemmed the tide for you and me.
Their bones lay bleak, their bones lay bare
In khaki shreds all rotted red.
For them no wreaths of lilies rare;
For them no marble overhead.
They lie unknown in Nature's breast.
By ridge and river, glade and glen.
Only God's angels know where rest
A Hundred Thousand Missing Men.

Where bloom the fairest flowers of France,
Where stolid farmers speed the plough.
Where gun-wounds of the great advance
Before all-healing Nature bow.
They lie below the sacred soil,
The bittern booming overhead,
The while the village helots toil
Task-driven for their daily bread.
Here, in some well-remembered trench.
Some mine that split apart a hill—
This was the blood that ebbed to drench
The soil wherein they slumber still.
The snarling shrapnel crashed them down
Upon the wire of No Man's Land;
The Somme's black marshes saw them drown;
They froze where Flers its river spanned.
Lost in the saps of Corbie's crest.
Death came to them, they knew not when;
The leagues are long where rudely lie
A Hundred Thousand Missing Men.

Where sleep they side by side at Loos,
Within shell-craters wide and deep
The peasant French girl walks and woos;
The lovers shy their trystings keep
The village boys and girls who knew
No sight or sound of battle days
Make daisy-chains of pink and blue
Lispings their simple childish lays
Where rifles spat their rat-tat-tats
And Long Toms hurled a ton of steel.
The velvet-coated steeple bats
Around the brazen Joy-bells wheel.
While folks from o'er the sliver streak
That severs France from England's walls
In hushed and reverent whispers speak
While the Last Post at gloaming calls.
The farm ewe signals to its young
In bleatings from the yarding pen.
All this where we have walked among
A Hundred Thousand Missing Men!

How long, dear God. must this obtain?
How long must men kill fellow-men?
What is its purpose? What its gain?
Who dares to call the why and when?
Must flowers of the human flock
But live to fructify the earth ?
Must makers of rebellion rock
The bells that give mad war its birth?
The army vast of dear ones dead
Of whom we know no resting place;
These poor mute heroes spanned and spread
Where none memorials proud may trace.
These are the souls who silent sleep
By fallowed farm, by field and fen.
While we in hallowed mem'ry keep
A Hundred Thousand Missing Men!

POET PROFILE

If you would like to feature in the Poet Profile section, please email me a short intro about yourself, along with a photo -or information regarding a poet you would like to see profiled.

With more non-poetry information to go in the Bully Tin this month, there wasn't much room for poems. Hence, you have extra pages in this magazine, so I could fit in enough poems.

A lot of our 'droving' poems tell of droving on horseback. Jim Kelly, in his book 'The Voice of the North', writes of a different type of 'drover' - which is becoming all too familiar throughout our land nowadays.

Sky Drovers
Jim Kelly

Sky Drovers, oh Sky Drovers, as they fly on silvered wings.
Can they feel the moods and changes of the bushland down below?
Do they see the brown dust curling where the drifting zephyr brings
the smell of damp new grasses where the mobs went stringing slow?

Their engines roar deep-throated o'er the bushland's lonely graves,
where some stockmen lie forgotten by a stock route's whisp'ring stream.
And from the valleys shaded purple that look to be stilled waves,
the nomads there will glance aloft and note their silver gleam.

A silver gleam that wings its way above the blue and gold of sunlit broken gorges that run the ranges through;
while from mustering camps the smoke wreaths there unfold,
in patterns queer and fanciful that fade into the blue.

At times perhaps their shadows, as they soar their way along
will sweep across old droving camps that run the stock routes down,
while full and clear the engines, above the wild birds' muted song,
will tell of winged beef Drovers on the way to Wyndham town.

I'm sure we can all relate to these words some days!!!
Accredited to the famous 'Anon'.

Just a Note

Just a note to say I'm still alive and haven't passed on yet, though these days I remember a lot less than I forget. I've got used to my arthritis and I guess I'm now resigned to my dentures and bifocals, but gee, I miss me mind!

I often can't remember, when I'm standing on the stair,
if I'm going up for something or I've just come down from there.
And I hold the fridge door open and I stand there, full of doubt;
Did I just put some food away, or come to get some out?

Just a Note... (cont)

Or I rush into the spare room and I hesitate because I needed something urgently, but can't think what it was.
Now, if it's not my turn to write, you'll pardon me I'm sure.
Sometimes I think I've written to you just the day before.

Well, I guess it's time to mail this, think that's all I have to say,
except, of course, I wish you didn't live so far away.
And I'm standing by the mailbox and boy, is my face red!
Instead of posting this to you, I've opened it instead!!

So you reckon you're really an Aussie?
Well tell me, True Blue, what's a *cossie*?
Doncha come the raw prawn!
Whenya think I was born?
Next you'll tell me yer budgie's a mozzie!

True blue: patriotic (here, a nickname for a patriot).
Cossie: swimming costume (NSW).
Don't come the raw prawn: don't try to fool me.
Budgie: budgerigar, small parrot kept as a pet.
Mozzie: mosquito.

ANZAC Centenary Poetry Competition

The ANZAC Day Centenary Poetry Project challenges poets to answer the following question: What does ANZAC Day mean to you, to today's families, communities or nations?
The outcomes of the project will include the publication of a collection of two hundred poems as well as an ANZAC Centenary Poetry Prize. Full details and entry information are available from <http://www.ozzywriters.com/index.php/anzac-centenary-overview> or by contacting the Co-ordinating Editor by phoning +61 (0)3 6362 4390, or emailing zac.poetry@pnc.com.au

Upcoming Musters/Events

- ★ **November 27th** - Poet in the Park - Geoffrey W Graham.
★ To be held at Wireless Hill, Ardross 1 - 5pm
- ★ As The Crow Flies - comedy, bush verse, music - supported by local poets.
- ★ **December** - no muster
- ★ January 6th 2011 - Muster

An Australian Song

Louise Lawson

Come gather, brave Australian sons,
and join us in a song,
and if you like the way it runs
then make it roll along.
For we can hold our own, we can,
in fight or friendly fray,
and conquer in the battle van
as on the fields at play.

Chorus

*For we hail from a land that is great and grand,
and the pride of the Southern Sea;
'Tis a sunny land, 'tis a gold land,
and the home of the brave and free.*

Tho' older nations long have tried
to treat our race with scorn,
it is our boast, our highest pride,
that we're Australian born.
And we can render scorn for scorn,
and laugh at all the sneers,
while in our veins there runs the blood
of Austral's pioneers.

Chorus

*For we hail from a land that is great and grand,
and the pride of the Southern Sea;
'Tis a sunny land, 'tis a gold land,
and the home of the brave and free.*

For honour's sake we can endure,
our word is sacred sealed;
our arm is strong, and aim as sure
as any in the field.
And when we give our hand and word
to help a friend in need,
we face the cannon and the sword,
nor from our vows recede.

Chorus

*For we hail from a land that is great and grand,
and the pride of the Southern Sea;
'Tis a sunny land, 'tis a gold land,
and the home of the brave and free.*

George Essex Evans is best known for his poem, Women of the West. This is a very different Evans poem.

In Collins Street

George Essex Evans

I stood in the heart of the city street,
I felt the throb of her pulses beat,
the thunder of life on the sunny air,
the waves of the people everywhere.
Like the stirring lilt of a mighty song
ran the fever of life in the moving throng,
with the hope and joy and the want and woe
of a million souls in its ebb and flow.

Like a floating straw in an eddy caught
my soul was whirled in the city's thought –
the purse-born pride and the scheming brain,
the grinding need and the grasping gain;
the silent strength that is born to rule,
and the shallow laugh of the feckless fool;
the fresh young face where no shadow lies,
and the quenchless pain in the harlot's eyes.

I stood in the heart of the city street,
and I heard not the tread of the passing feet,
for the days were grey and the nights were long,
and my soul was vexed with a wild sad song.
And the world like a stream flowed thro' my brain,
and I saw her lands in a dream of pain,
and her power enthroned on the people's needs,
and her heroes dead for a hundred creeds.

And I saw thro' the pageant moving on
the same dark horrors of ages gone;
the dumb despair and the dire distress,
and man still mad in his littleness.
Who cares tho' Earth be a masterpiece,
if pain and sorrow shall never cease?
Does God endure in His vaulted skies
the hopeless pain in His creatures' eyes?

Then I saw, like a glory shining thro',
what man had conquered and yet shall do.
I saw the depths where he lay of old,
and the heights of a splendour yet untold.
And I knew, in a flash, since the world began
what man had suffered and done for man.
And I felt like a note that is borne along
on the upward swell of a battle song.

<p>Old Portraits Henry Lawson</p> <p>Though you tramp the wide land over though you sail in many climes, there is nothing half so precious as the portraits of old times; of old Grandfather and Granny in the clothes that then were worn; of the house that knew our boyhood, or the hut where we were born.</p>	<p>of our parents, stiff and staring, in some portrait-takers den, on the morning of their wedding - God, they've seen some times since then!! Oh they wake the dead within us, and they bring us back at last to the courage of our fathers and the best part of the past.</p> <p>*****</p>	<p>The Exacta Denis Kevans</p> <p>One day Donny went to the races, And, after the last, he reck- oned, 'You Beauty!' always came first, 'You B*%#*d!' always came second!</p>
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Upcoming Events

Please let the editor know if you are aware of any event which might be of interest to the general membership

- ◆ November 27th 2011 Poet in the Park - As the Crow Flies. Wireless Hill, Ardross. 1 - 5pm
Geoffrey W Graham - supported by local poets
- ◆ January 6th 2012 Special General Meeting. 7.20pm at Bentley Park, immediately prior to muster
- ◆ Muster - 7.30pm Bentley Park

Regular events: Albany Bush Poetry group 4th Tuesday of each month Peter 9844 6606
Geraldton Growers market Poetry gig 2nd Saturday Catherine 0409 200 153.

Do YOU have any poetic events which need to go in this space? Or for that matter anywhere within this newsletter — it is YOUR newsletter, I would like to see more direct contributions from members and friends.

If you would like to be part of a forum—post your poetry, see what other contemporary bush poets are writing, keep up to date with poetry events throughout Australia—visit www.abpa.org.au or www.bushverse.com

Don't forget our website www.wabushpoets.com

Please contact the Webmaster, Brian Langley on 93613770 if you would like to see your poems featured in the Members Poetry section.

Country Poets -Is there anything poetic going on in your neck of the woods. If so, why not drop us a line and tell us about it

Members—Do you have poetic products for sale? If so please let the editor know so you can be added to this list Members can contact the poets via the Assn. Secretary or visit our website www.wabushpoets.com Go to the "Performance Poets" page	Members' Poetic Products	Arthur Leggett	books, inc autobiography	
	Graham Armstrong	Book		
	Victoria Brown	CD	Keith Lethbridge	books
	Peter Blyth	CDs, books	Corin Linch	books
	Rusty Christensen	CDs	Val Read	books
	Brian Gale	CD & books	Caroline Sambridge	book
	John Hayes	CDs & books	Peg Vickers	books & CD
	Tim Heffernan	book		
	Brian Langley	books, CD	"Terry & Jenny"	Music CDs

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