

BULLY TIN



& Yarn Spinners

★ Next Muster - June 1st 2007, 7.30pm ★
Mt Pleasant Bowling Club, Bedford Rd, Ardross

June, being Western Australia's "Foundation Month" I thought I'd include a bit of local history as well as featuring WA Poets or poems

Western Australia's Colonial history officially started in September 1791 when Cmdr George Vancouver RN made the first formal claim for land on behalf of King George III of England at what he call Possession Point near Albany. In 1826, Governor Darling of NSW, set up a small garrison in the same area. There was concern at the time that the French would try and establish a colony there.

On June 1st, 1829, our original British free settlers got their first glimpse of the coast near where Fremantle now sits, but bad weather made them land at Garden Island where most of them stayed for some time.

Exploratory trips to the mainland resulted in the locations for two towns, Fremantle and Perth being established in what was then called the "Swan River Colony". The official proclamation was made on June 18th with a full ceremony held later on August 12th when conditions had allowed more of those on Garden Island to be present. To commemorate this, the first Monday in June is now the Public Holiday we call Foundation Day

Due mainly to very slow growth and low prosperity, Western Australia did not get full independence from England until 1890. On October 21st of that year, WA was proclaimed an independent colony with its own constitution (It is worth noting that the "Aboriginal Protection Board" was retained by England. Western Australia unilaterally passed the 1899 Constitution Amendment Act, taking control of Aboriginal Affairs without approval of the British House of Commons) WA (reluctantly) joined the other colonies to become Australia on Jan 1st 1901.

That was not the end of WA as a separate colony, for in 1933, following worldwide turmoil due to the great depression and the perception that the Commonwealth Government was neglecting WA in favour of the eastern states, 68% of electors in WA voted to secede from the rest of Australia. A petition was sent to the British Government but was not allowed to proceed. The thoughts being that SA and Tasmania would soon follow if this was granted. There remains in WA a small secessionist movement.

It seems that man's priorities haven't changed a lot in 100 years,. Maybe his first priority, but the lower ones would still seem to apply. This poem was written about 100 years ago by Edwin Greenslade "Dryblower" Murphy, (1868—1939) who's first book "Jarrahdale Jingles" (1908) was the first book of verse of any consequence published in Western Australia. This poem has been told as jokes and yarns over the years, but this was probably the first time the story was put to paper.

His Quest

'Twas on the old Kalgoorlie track we met him swaggering in
 He was middle aged and ginger. haggard eyed and famine thin
 And while he munched some damper and a pannikin of tea
 He asked us if we thought he'd catch the Perth express at three.

There was not a watch amongst us but I reckoned by the sun
 If he cut across the leases it could easily be done
 But Mickey brought a clock to light he'd pinched at Hogan's store
 And said "Why strike me purple what's your blinkin' hurry for?"

You've done the rattler in today, you ain't got Buckley's hope
 But there's one goes down at night time when the stoney brokers slope"
 The stranger gulped his gargle and unstrapped his scanty swag
 And drew a crumpled letter from a dirtied linen bag

His wasted hands were trembling and I turned a bit aside
 So as not to see the anguish he was trying hard to hide
 "Is there anything amiss at home?" I said to him at last
 He put the letter back again and tied the laces fast

"There is," he said, "the worst a man can bump agin' in life
 A bloke that boarded with us has skedaddled with me wife
 I trusted him I did my God and many a time an oft
 I fed him when he'd not the gilt to pay for what he'd scoffed

A neighbour sent this letter and he's given me the tip
 Where I'll find the pair who made me chuck my job and take this trip"
 "Any nippers?" chipped in Mickey with a scowl upon his brow
 "But if for not I'd belt the hide from off the bloomin' cow"

The stranger sighed `n shook his head and Mickey said, "I see
 'Spose they've been and done ya for your bit of £LSD"
 "No hope," the stranger murmured, "for I hadn't none to take"
 "Then," said Mick, "you mean to maul him just for old acquaintance sake?"

"A man who shakes his cobber's wife deserves an ounce of lead"
 Again the stranger looked at us and sadly shook his head
 "That ain't the trouble mate," he said, "she isn't worth a fight
 For ever since I married her we've never hit it right"

"Then wot on earth's yer hurry," hollered Mickey with a sniff "
 If you ain't goin' after boodle and you ain't goin' after biff?"
 "Just this," the stranger answered as he rose from off his log
 "When the pair of blighters bolted, spare me days, they took me dog!"

Droppings from "The Boss Cocky"



G'day to you all in Bush Poetry world.

I don't know when I have missed a muster for not feeling well, or for any reason for that matter, until last month. Had been feeling 'off' all week with some kind of a stomach wog [at the risk of being named racist], thought I had it under control when it reoccurred big time that day, the last thing I felt like doing was going anywhere, so I went to bed. Feel OK. now. Thanks for the letters, cards, phone calls, em mails etc. from concerned members, only joking, the devil looks after his own, so I'm safe. Reports coming in tell me it was a good night despite the absence of some poetic perennials, it proves the depth and resilience of our organization to give performers and would be performers somewhere or a stage on which to 'give it a go' which was one of the original tenets when our unique genre of the arts was founded. You don't have to aspire to the dizzy heights, if you have or hear, or write a particular poem or song, work on it, practise, just a bit at a time, so when the opportunity arrives, you are ready to 'give it a go', you will not be taken to task for having a go, rather you will be encouraged by the perennials I spoke of.

Another tenet is to encourage young people to be involved in what we are on about, not only for their own self esteem and confidence or any pecuniary gains [don't hold your breath] but for our national heritage and ethos, via rhyming verse, it is so important to conserve it in this age of globalisation. Having said all that, I am delighted with Grace Williamson's efforts so far in endeavouring to get a viable junior comp. up and walking [not running yet]. We have dispensed with trying to batter down the doors of the education system - all you get is sore knuckles - you may have seen our well placed ad. in the local Com.News, we are going outside the system to give ALL young people in the City of Melville, the opportunity, to, 'give it a go'

By my reckoning, the AGM. will be July 6, those ubiquitous forms will be around, should you feel you would like to put something back into the movement, put your name on one, you will not be disappointed. Bush Poets are good people to be around and Bush Poetry generally is a happy, friendly experience with an ever increasing following nationwide - GET INVOLVED.

At time of writing, Silvia Rowell is recovering from a bout of foot surgery, we all wish you a quick recovery Silvia and that you are soon back on your feet [both of them]. That's about all for now, apart from thanking the 'harmony trio', Loralie T. for doing a good job as compere, Brian L. a good, sound man, VP. Tom C. for helping to keep the show moving, plus all the performers who weighed in to make the May Muster a friendly and enjoyable occasion.

Rusty C. The Boss Cocky.

Not a poetic venture, but certainly of interest to members — this is a report from our living treasure, member and poet, Arthur Leggett on a pilgrimage he made last April to Thailand.

THAILAND PILGRIMAGE.

The horror, misery and slavery suffered by British Prisoners of War, and the civilian population, in constructing The Burma-Thailand Railway during the period of Japanese occupation is well documented and available in public libraries and there is no need for me to expand upon it here.

Although I was a P.O.W. in Europe I have been vigorously supported by all Ps.O.W. during my tenure of office as president so, this year, I joined "The Quiet Lion Tour" and went to Thailand for the Anzac Day Commemorations. It proved to be a very emotionally disturbing and challenging experience.

We walked through Hellfire Pass, in darkness, to a cairn where the Dawn Service was conducted; this was eerie but returning through it in the early morning light was truly spiritually sensitive. So many men of my generation died through starvation, disease or brutality during the hammering, tapping and rock-carrying on this spot that their presence can be felt and their voices seem to be whispering on the slight, early-morning breeze.

Anzac Day Service was held, later in the day, at Kanchanaburi War Cemetery where the graves of 7,500 British servicemen lie row upon row.

A large concourse of people assembled for this ceremony and I felt over-awed to be aware we were not in our homeland and we were conducting a ceremony revered by our own nation yet this impressive crowd had assembled in Thailand for Anzac Day.

I was privileged to lay two wreaths; one for The W.A. Ex Ps.O.W. Assn. and the other on behalf of The Australian Ex Prisoners of War Association. I was also honoured in being requested to recite The Ode which concludes with the words:-

LEST WE FORGET.

Arthur Leggett. O.A.M.

HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS?

Please tell us ASAP if you have changed your address so that we can make sure your BULLY TIN gets to you on time

Walking Different Tracks - WAPI

The 2007 Perth Poetry Festival will be held between Oct 13—21. WABP will have a dedicated evening spot on the evening of Wed 17th. We would also like to be well represented at the lunchtime opening in Murray St on Monday 15th. We'd like to have a cross section of our various talents at both of these events

WA Poets Inc (WAPI) who are a cross section of many poetic groups and styles are organising the Poetry Week events. You can find out more about what's going on from their new web address at www.thewordisout.net.au

Part of their activities is publication of a glossy journal, "The Word Is Out" to coincide with Poetry week. As you can appreciate, these don't come cheap and so a fundraising event has been planned to raise money to produce it. This will take the form of a movie night at the Astor Theatre in Mt. Lawley. This will be on July 26th, commencing 6pm and will **premier** the film "Amazing Grace", based on the life of the anti-slavery pioneer William Wilberforce. Tickets are \$15 each—there will also be a raffle with great prizes.

Pre-order tickets from wapi@iprimus.com.au or ring Helen on 9343 0072 Mob. 0404 666 156 - Tickets must be paid for before the event.—To ensure your seats, please send a cheque or postal order with SSAE to "Amazing Grace" WA Poets Inc, PO Box 684 INGLEWOOD 6932 - There will be some flyers about this event at the next muster.

Staying West Australian, last month was the annual "Moondyne Joe" festival at Toodyay. Moondyne Joe was supposedly WA's only bushranger, but history shows that this title was more a media beat up than reality. At the very worst, Joe was nothing more than a petty thief. In his whole 'career' he stole one horse, some chickens and a bit of food. He also killed an ox. What gave him notoriety was that the prison system found it difficult to keep him locked up. In all he escaped about ten times, some from local lockups, but several times from Fremantle prison.

Back in April, we had another WA bushranger, this was WABP member, singer, playwright, actor and director, Peter "Stinger" Nettleton. He was performing at Fairbridge in the world premier of his one man narrative play "Harry Power and the Boy Bushranger".

Set in the wilds of north-eastern Victoria in 1870, this is the true story of Henry Johnstone, alias Harry Power, arguably the most successful bushranger in Australia's history and his relationship with his star pupil, the teenage Ned Kelly.

Harry was an ex-convict and a highwayman in the classic mould. He had an uncanny ability to appear from nowhere in the path of a mail coach, then disappear just as mysteriously into the bush, having relieved the occupants of their valuables, only to reappear somewhere else many miles away within a very short space of time. He is officially recorded as having committed more than 25 robberies in the period of just over one year.

Unlike his immediate predecessor, 'Mad Dan' Morgan and his successor, Edward 'Ned' Kelly, Power never shed blood, nor even did any physical injury to any of his victims. In many ways, he was a 'Robin Hood' style character and frequently handed money back to those he had just robbed, upon learning that they were even poorer than he.

As a vigorously-hunted fugitive from justice, Harry's lifestyle necessitated the reliance on the good faith of numerous 'supporters', whose loyalty did not always come cheap. Among these were the Quinn-Lloyd-Kelly clan, the heir apparent to which was a surly 15 year old youth known as 'Ned'. Harry took Ned on as his apprentice for a time, teaching him how to survive in the bush and avoid capture. It was this relationship which eventually led to Power's downfall.

Harry Power was captured and gaoled for 15 years, of which he served full term. Meanwhile, Ned Kelly went on to become a cop-killer, bank robber, high-priced outlaw and political terrorist, thus earning himself the mantle of national icon. Harry was still in Pentridge with 5 years left to serve when Ned was hanged in 1880. He died a free man in 1891, aged 72.



Did you know

I read somewhere that 91 different rhyming patterns have been identified in Australian Rhyming Verse. While many of them are familiar and relatively simple, others, far more complex need to be read in order to establish just what the rhyming pattern is. How many rhyming patterns can you identify? Give yourself 10 minutes and see how you go.

NATIONAL Bush Poetry Champions

The 2007 National Bush Poetry Championships were held at Dunedoo, NSW in March

Full details on our website—Competitions Page

Eucalyptus Marginata is one of the unique hardwood trees found only in the south west corner of Australia. We know it better as Jarrah, a tree renowned for both its strength as a construction timber and for its decorative properties. For many years, Jarrah was marketed in England and Europe as Swan River Mahogany. Furniture made from its rich red timber, able to be polished to a mirror finish can be found in many a stately home or company boardroom.

The first company in Western Australia to commercially cut and export this magnificent timber was owned by Benjamin Mason, who was granted a license in 1864 to cut timber in the hills to the east of Perth. By 1866, he had set up a milling operation employing over 100 men. From the mill (located on what is now Mason Mill Rd near Kalamunda) he had a 15km horse drawn tramway constructed to a landing on the Canning River (now called Masons Landing) in Cannington. From there, the timber was taken by barge to Fremantle.

To assist in moving the barges, a fence like structure was built in the Canning River. This provided anchor points for ropes which were used to haul the barges through the shallow waters. The remains of some parts of this fence can still be seen today in the river near Shelley.

Mason's enterprise succumbed to heavy competition and closed in 1882. Such was the economic climate at the time that there were no bidders when the company's assets went up for auction.

Eucalyptus Marginata has, unfortunately, a far more tragic claim to fame. As many of these large trees were left growing alongside country roads, speeding vehicles often came to rest against them, usually with fatal results.

Considering the current road toll situation, little seems to have changed.

The poem in the next column by well known local poet Phill Strutt reflects on this ,

Four Funerals and a Wedding

There's an angled sock upon the floor
And one rolled up behind the door
Piled dishes from the night before
Stacked up in Chalet thirty-four

Smart suits and cummerbunds abound
Once worn sleek dresses hang around
The walls still echo to the sound
Of fun with which the day was crowned

The droplets from the morning showers
Still clinging after several hours
A moistened moth has lost its powers
Its dream of nights of flight now sours

'They'll all be late again for tea'
Says mum to aunt in thirty-three
'Those kids will be the death of me!'
Grandma nodding says 'we agree'.

All weddings future, weddings past
Are overshadowed by that blast
They took the bend just far too fast!
Shattered youth asunder cast

Eucalyptus Marginata
Meets and mangles metallic martyr
Black armbands now replace the garter
Silence - the bells and Bach cantata

Towering jarrah - a splendid sight
Seasonally flowering white
At its base since that crystal night
Four crosses where four souls took flight

I've since stayed in Chalet Thirty-four
There were no ghosts or spirits four
But in the night I swore I saw
An angled sock upon the floor.

Written in late 1917 when many of the Australian Troops had returned home, to be greeted with much flag waving and political posturing, while those who remained on the Western Front were virtually ignored. This poem could equally apply today with our troops serving in unpopular war zones.

The Fellows who haven't been shot

Now you've finished your flapping of flags and such
And you've cheered as the lads marched by
You have quaffed to them deeply in beer, or such
With a smile or a tear or a sigh.

Your pulses have stirred with the Anzac pride
You are swollen with Anzac fame

You are proud of the fellows who fought and died
And the sick and the crippled and lame

But answer me this, Have you given a thought
To as just such heroic a lot

Have you done what you might, have you done what you ought
For the fellows who've never been shot

Thomas Henry "Crosscut" Wilson (1865—1925)

'Crosscut', born in England, came to NSW where he became friendly with several writers and poets including Henry Lawson.

In 1895, he came west to seek his fortune on the goldfields. Like most, this didn't happen and he had many different jobs, eventually becoming a journalist for the Kalgoorlie Sun and the Sunday Times.

State Championships are planned for the 29 / 30 of Sept

Please pass this information on to any writers and performers you know who are not members of the WABP&YS, Championship entries are open to ALL Bush Poets, irrespective of any affiliations.

Entry forms and conditions from Secretary Joyce or download from our website

SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN LIVING IN MELVILLE

Bush Poetry Written and Performance Competition.

Great Prizes

Entry forms and conditions from Melville Libraries, Co-ordinator Grace 9361 4265 or download from our website

Don't forget our website
www.wabushpoets.com

May Muster Wrap-up - by Dot

Loralie Tacoma was our MC for the night.

A big welcome was extended to our new people and visitors Pam and Don, from that other Island, NZ

Wayne Pantall started the evening and dedicated his poem "This Year's Valentine" to his 'current wife'.

This Sheila knows her place, to roll his fags and help carry the esky and look after his kids. With her glass eye shinning, his secrets are safe cos she is deaf and mute. But he is willing to forgive all these stunning attributes when she shares her lotto winnings.

Not many animals have any road sense says **Phill Strutt** when he introduced his poem "Ravens Reply". While we may sound like an old lady we are ravens not crows and we are in the good book, but when we fly away no one cares because we are black and everyone is colour prejudiced.

Grace Williamson's poem by Henry Lawson, "Scots of the Riverina" was spine tingling and such a poignant poem of a Father who is unforgiving of his son leaving home and scratched his name from the family bible. When the boy enlisted, the old man still turned his back on him. When the boy was killed where only the best die young, the old man kept on with his ploughing. Later, when the family came home, the old man had died but had his hand outstretched to where a name had been re inscribed in the bible.

Henry Lawson's "Faces in the Street" performed for us by **John Hayes**, tells of the passing parade of people as seen through the window. As the day passes so the people ebb and flow, but it is the sallow, sunken faces that stay the same. 'Twas despair's conscripted army that was marching down the street! .

After these two very emotional poems, **Trish Joyce** followed with a song dedicated to all "Mothers". With the spelling out of the letters that when you put them all together they spell Mother.

Beth Scott with one of her own "Mothers". Who is the hand that rocks the cradle? She is the doctor, chef, storyteller, maid, teacher, baby sitter and moneylender with a shoulder to cry on and so many skills all rolled up together.

Brian Langley dedicated his poem to Rod Lee, unfortunately Rod wasn't here. "Playing Aussie Songs" had us believing that Brian could play his guitar while we all sang along. We could sing of flood, drought, boom and bust, wives, sweethearts and friends. But unfortunately, as Rod demonstrated last month, the guitar playing needs an awful lot of practice.

In a dedication to his beloved dog Hobo who had taken that long journey to perpetual pleasures, **Wayne Pantall** told of this pedigree "Romin' Australis" with his mum a Heinz 57 crossed with Blend 43 and his dad any or all of a mixture of streetwise pooches. While he wandered the suburbs, he never got lost and it's the council ranger that's been bamboozled for whilst he's been talking Hobo has eaten his lunch and christened every one of his tires. Farwell Hobo.

Loralie was getting a bit concerned about not enough poets and she tried her best to stretch her points out and needed some extra's from the audience.

Rita Paul was then persuaded by Anne Hayes to perform. Because it wasn't about the bush she was slightly reluctant but "Smoke gets in your Eyes" has enough of a smoky flavour to be considered Bushy. As an impromptu performance with no piano accompaniment Rita sang with passion and longing.

In a singing mood **Phill Strutt** followed with the story of "David Laments" from the earliest book about how the mighty has fallen and a lot of the comments used by sporting commentators were even back then being written about.

His second, "The Last Thyalacine" (Tasmanian Tiger) he tells us is a true story (Hmmmmm!) This unique, dog like creature, knowing that to preserve his kind he had better find a willing mate. Because he was the last of his species he was finding the going tough so he resorted to propositioning a possum, kangaroo, sheep, moose and a caribou. Unfortunately for him, they all turned him down. Finally, he came upon a lady greyhound who was more accommodating. So - look at the dogs as they race past and if you see a stripe or two, think where that could have come from.

Overcoming a few hitches of the urn not getting hot, Edna and her crew had our cups of tea and coffee ready for the half time break.

For the Reading from the Classics **Jerome** (I am sorry I didn't get your surname) made comment on 'why are we a nation of poets?' Judith Wright (1915—2000) is not a poet we see much of in the "Bush Poetry" field, for much of her work is free verse or, at best "part rhyme", however her poem chosen by Jerome falls well within our style of verse. "The True Religion" is about mineral sands mining. The rutile and zircon development that took 'useless wastelands that never earned a cent' which were bull-dozed and dredged to tidy up the country. Technology will continue to do 'good work', and nature lovers will weep upon the never-ending bare sands where Casuarinas trees once stood. There's not a dune or forest can't be bought or sold to further the search for profit.

The Wool Classer from Albany, **Peter Drayton** couldn't find us last month (we moved because of the Easter holiday). With the first premier performance of his poem "Water Lilies, Water and Whitecaps" he took us where the great southern bay meets the great southern beach and the black stingray swims just out of reach, while in the distance, the tankers are escorted along the sea-lanes.

Grace Williamson followed with a poem by West Australian Joan Strange. "Dear Mrs. Harrison" which has a new person coming to live at the old house. It's a story of the women in the old house, those who had gone before. How did they manage with their English rose complexion in the unfamiliar setting, with their garments long and flowing as they sat, sewing in the lamplight? Note: Joan had a terminal illness and after her death her children gathered up her poems and published them as 'Stepping Stones'.

With **Brian Langley** moving the furniture about, his poem "The Bloke I Used to Know" got off to a shaky start, but he was soon away with the memories of a friend known long ago. The memory is fading and most of the facts have got confused or disappeared but still, there are "some blokes you remember all your life."

The furniture moving became apparent for his next poem "Dinkum Dan" as he had to play two parts. The old chap is visited by someone whom he doesn't quite recall, and as he reminisces he takes us back through the years of his youth with his best friend Dan. The memories of this past life are caught up in his present life and it is with sadness that we realize that the visitor is actually Dan come to visit his old mate. While his mate slips into quiet slumber, Dan, with tears in his eyes walks slowly off.

John Hayes's "One Day in Paradise" paints a word picture of the Mitchell Plateau up in the Kimberleys. With a tent pitched to watch the morning sunrise and with the music of rippling notes you can watch the cockatoos descend. Then blending with the sunset, the silence could be heard as a grand display of earth, air, water and fire for just this one day.

Trish Joyce read a story about this Chauffer who didn't want his boss to use his surname when he asked to be taken home. As 'Home Darling' wouldn't be quite right.

Peter Drayton's second poem by Banjo Paterson "Johnson's Antidote". With his terrible fear of snakes King Billy had pointed out to Johnson that if you watched a snake bite a fella, that fella would drop down dead, but if you watched a snake bite a goanna you can watch while the goanna cures himself by eating a little tree. Armed with the leaves of the tree he asked a scientific fellow to test the antidote. So one dog was bitten by the deadliest snake and the other fed the antidote only to see one dog as hale as can be while the dog with the antidote was dead as mutton. It seems those leaves were one of the most deadly poison weeds you could find.

Tom Conway then stepped up to the mic' with some yarns mostly concerning an Aussie, an Englishman and an Irishman, and a rather naughty one about a nude Nun who thought the blind man would not be able to see her. But Oh Dear! He was the man from the Blind Company coming to fit the new blinds!

Jerome returned to the front with a reading from Banjo Paterson about "Salt Bush Bill" who on being informed that he was now a JP thought of the money he could make on the side. Reminiscent of modern 'lurks and perks' he burned down a humpy and swore the natives in as an inquest jury. With each juryman receiving tobacco as his jury fee and Bill notching up credits for the inquest, more humpy's were burnt down so that everyone gained. When Salt Bush Bill left town with the fees he had earned, the next traveling JP arrived but was horrified when asked if he wanted humpies burned so that the jury members could get some more tobacco.

Beth Scott's "Grandma's Lament" told about her hubby's lack of inventiveness in the bedroom. After buying some sexy gear she tried to teach him, but while his blood pressure went up everything else went down. Lamenting that the experience made him die of fright, she is getting a toy boy instead.

Her second "Great Grandma's Regret", had us believing that she was a recycled virgin and, with a new boyfriend and a new life she opened up a knocking shop. The customers reckoned that she should pay rather than they. With a Viagra pill wrapped tightly in her hand she is pondering her future but she finds that she is just too tired.

With her third poem for the evening **Grace Williamson** gave us Val Read's "Grandad's Internment". Out in the bush granddad died and his wish was to have his ashes returned to his home in Scotland. After the funeral and unable to find a suitable container for his ashes, the family sent him back to Scotland in a Sunshine Milk Tin. The relatives lamented their bereavement but were puzzled with the parcel and thanked them for sending the makings for a cake, but where were Grandad's ashes?

A BIG thank you to the "extra" poets and performers who stepped up to the microphone tonight. Without your unstinting help and preparedness to get up and give it a go we would have had a very early night.

Dot Note - a tale for the blokes!!

Sure God created man before woman.

But then you always make a rough draft before **The Final Masterpiece!**

