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□ Next Muster April 1st, 2011 7.30pm MC Jill Miller  
Auditorium, Bentley Park, 26 Plantation Dve Bentley 6102,



**April is**  
Autumn, April Fools day,  
School Holidays, Easter  
ANZAC Day (25th)  
The Royal Wedding (29th)  
World Penguin Day  
Int. Road Safety Week

This being the month of ANZAC Day, I have featured several war poems. While most of the newer war poems look at the serious side of war, during WWI, many of the poems written on the battlefield took a much more light hearted look at what was going on. This poem, written in the Dardanelles during 1915 is taken from "The ANZAC BOOK"

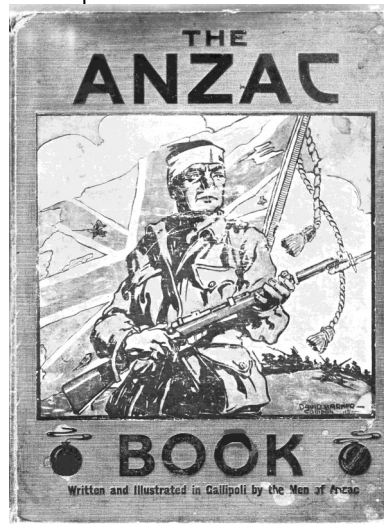
The ANZAC Book, originally published in 1916 was reprinted in 1975 and was republished in 2010, this time including some material which was not originally included

**AFTER THE WAR** By Sapper Cumine (Kew)

When I am done with this blasted war  
I will go where the bul-bul sings,  
And be at my ease under suitable trees  
Discoursing on scandalous things.  
I will buy me a mug that will hold me a quart  
And fill it with foaming ale,  
Which I'll frequently quaff while I proudly scoff  
At any heroic tale.

For men will tell how "Abdul" ran  
And how our blood ran red,  
But I will relate, in a thoughtful state,  
Of how the general fed,  
Of various tins I saw on the beach,  
Asparagus, chicken and tongue;  
How around his head in his beautiful bed  
Immaculate net-work hung.

Oh, I will tell of portly men  
In their dug-outs with soft settees,  
Of bottles and corks I found on my walks  
By the graves of our brave O.C.s  
And I will laugh at their tales of war  
As I leer at my tankard's brim,  
For my soul will find peace when the babblings cease  
And the clamour of war grows dim



THE NEVER-ENDING CHASE



Whilst seated one day in my dug-out, Weary and ill at ease  
I saw a gunner carefully, examine his sunburnt knees.  
I asked him why he was searching, and what was he looking for  
But his only reply was a long drawn out sigh  
As he quietly killed one more

What was he looking for? Fleas? , lice? Probably both - Ed

## CONGRATULATIONS PETER BLYTH

WA 2011 BUSH POET PERFORMANCE  
CHAMPION

2nd Place Bill Gordon

3rd Place Irene Conner

Full details - page 5

## THE FUTURE OF the WABP&YS Assn ?

**NOW ON COUNTDOWN**

**4 MONTHS and THEN WHAT?**

**This Bully Tin has been printed with the generous assistance of  
the office of Steve Irons, Federal Member for the seat of Swan**





## Walking Different Tracks

**Not much time left for these – sorry but I've just been advised**

### 2011 ACT Poetry Prize

The ACT Government offers three national prizes that recognise excellence in poetry: The Judith Wright Prize for a published collection (valued at \$10,000); The Alec Bolton Prize for an unpublished manuscript (\$5,000); and The Rosemary Dobson Prize for an unpublished poem (\$3,000). Submissions close 1 April. For details and entry forms, go to

[www.arts.act.gov.au/pages/page176.asp](http://www.arts.act.gov.au/pages/page176.asp)

### Cafe Poet Program

This Australian Poetry initiative places poets in cafes as 'poets in residence' for a six month period. The poet is given space to write (maybe two or three times a week – in consultation with the cafe) as well as complimentary tea and/or coffee and in return the cafe gets: to be part of this community, promotion, and the opportunity to plan events with the poet enriching the cultural life of the cafe. For details on how to apply, . Deadline 31 March.

<http://www.australianpoetry.org/cafe-poet-program/>

### ANZAC Day ([Poem courtesy of anzacday.org.au](http://anzacday.org.au))

By: *D. Hunter*

(A veteran of Shaggy Ridge with the 2/12 Battalion in WW2)

I saw a kid marchin' with medals on his chest.  
He marched alongside Diggers marching six abreast.  
He knew that it was ANZAC Day - he walked along with pride.  
He did his best to keep in step with the Diggers by his side.

And when the march was over the kid was rather tired.  
A Digger said "Whose medals, son?" to which the kid replied:  
"They belong to daddy, but he did not come back.  
He died up in New Guinea on a lonely jungle track".

The kid looked rather sad then and a tear came to his eye.  
The Digger said "Don't cry my son and I will tell you why.  
Your daddy marched with us today - all the blooming way.  
We Diggers know that he was there - it's like that on ANZAC Day".

The kid looked rather puzzled and didn't understand,  
But the Digger went on talking and started to wave his hand.  
"For this great land we live in, there's a price we have to pay  
For we all love fun and merriment in this country where we live.  
The price was that some soldier his precious life must give.

For you to go to school my lad and worship God at will,  
Someone had to pay the price so the Diggers paid the bill.  
Your daddy died for us my son - for all things good and true.  
I wonder if you understand the things I've said to you".

The kid looked up at the Digger - just for a little while  
And with a changed expression, said, with a lovely smile:  
"I know my dad marched here today - this is ANZAC Day.  
♦ I know he did. I know he did, all the bloomin' way".

**Poems for the Bully Tin**—over the years, I've had a number of poems sent to the Bully Tin, Many have been published, but many others, like the most recent one to arrive in my in-box are not suitable. This latest one, like so many before it is far too long - OK it's largish print, but even shrunk to 10 point is still almost 3 pages long

One column (that's about 55 lines) is about the longest that can be accommodated. SO, should you be intending to send in a poem please make it a reasonable length, or chances are it will either get dropped or only have excerpts printed.

Our featured **Poet from the Past**, whose story appears on the next page wrote many verses in his day. Among them, "Westward Ho", "Since the Country Carried Sheep", "The Austral Light" "A Bachelor's View" (in a previous Bully Tin) "At the Crossing of War-rigal Creek", and "Who's Riding Old Harlequin Now?"

This is his very last poem, written in Pretoria, South Africa in February 1902

### **BUTCHERED TO MAKE A DUTCHMAN'S HOLIDAY**

In prison cell I sadly sit—  
A d-d crestfallen chappy!  
And own to you I feel a bit—  
A little bit unhappy!

It really aint the place nor time,  
To reel off rhyming diction,  
But yet we'll write a final rhyme.  
While waiting crucifixion!

No matter what 'end' they decide,  
Quicklime or "'b'iling 'ile" sir!  
We'll do our best when crucified  
To finish off in style, sir!

But we bequeath a parting tip,  
For sound advice as such men  
Who come across in transport ships,  
To polish off the Dutchmen.

If you encounter any Boers,  
You really must not loot 'em,  
And if you wish to leave these shores,  
For pity sake don't shoot 'em!

And if you'd earn a D.S.O -  
Why every British sinner  
Should know the proper way to go  
Is "*ask the Boer to dinner!*"

Let's toss a bumper down our throat  
Before we pass to heaven,  
And toast : 'The trim set petticoat  
We leave behind in Devon

The last Rhyme and Testament of  
"The Breaker"

**Poets From the Past** In this, the month of ANZAC Day, I have chosen to look at a military poet, one who has gone down in the annals of Australian History as a scapegoat to British Military, incompetence, arrogance, inadequacies, bungling and secrecy. I refer of course to **Harry (The Breaker) Morant**. (c1864—1902) Over the years, much has been written about him, but probably the most informative source of information is to be found in a book “Breaker Morant” by FM Cutlack. (Pub Ure Smith 1962). The author met “the Breaker” when he was a 12 year old and Harry was working on his fathers property “Paringa” near Renmark in SA in 1899.



Morant's early life before coming to Australia is shrouded in 'unknowns'. He was known to be well educated with a love of poetry and literature — One of his versions is that he was the illegitimate son of George Morant, an admiral in the Royal Navy. Others suggest his parents were Edwin Murrant and Catherine Reily, but no one is sure. The Morant family denied his family connections ( he claimed to have left under a cloud) but, after he was raised from the ranks to Lieutenant (during the Boer War) he apparently spent one leave in England with the family. They denied his existence again after his 'disgrace'.

The Breaker first came to notice in outback Qld in 1884 where he gained notoriety for his horsemanship and being a 'bit of a rogue' In one account of his life, shortly after coming to the public notice, he had a very short lived marriage with Daisy O'Dwyer (later the anthropologist Daisy Bates) He spent many years in various parts of Queensland working with horses and was said 'to have a way with them' (ie current term horse whisperer) He apparently spent many weeks in various Qld hospitals with broken bones from his work. He was one of the few horsemen who managed to ride the notorious buckjumper, *Dargin's Grey*, in a battle that became a roughriding legend. During his life in Australia, he is know to have written some 65 poems, most of which were published in the Sydney Bulletin. He corresponded regularly with Banjo Paterson, Henry Lawson and Will Ogilvie on all manner of subjects, but often on matters relating to horses. In the late 1890s, he was to be found around Sydney, being a jockey and playing polo. He was apparently also very popular with the ladies. In 1902, he enlisted in the British Army in Renmark SA and went off to South Africa to fight the Boers. His ability with horses and being able to plan and fight a 'commando' style war soon had him elevated from the ranks to Lieutenant. He took part in several "irregular" campaigns, the final one being where he carried out his orders to shoot any Boers wearing British uniforms—no prisoners to be taken. He, along with Fellow Australian Lieutenants Hancock and Witton and Englishman Picton were subsequently court marshalled for 'murder', Picton being "cashiered" Witton receiving a life sentence (released in 1904) while Morant and Hancock were executed by firing squad on Feb 8th, 1902. The court marshal proceedings were not told to the Australian Government until after the execution.— Official records of the trial were conveniently 'lost' thus making a post-humus review almost impossible. Morant worked in a variety of occupations; he reportedly traded in horses in [Charters Towers](#), then worked for a time on a newspaper at [Hughenden](#) in 1884, but there are suggestions<sup>[who?]</sup> that he left both towns as a result of

#### (Mainly) Aussie — April History

- 1st 1897 Jandamurra, Kimberley aboriginal leader and activist killed
- 5th 1932 Racehorse Phar Lap dies in suspicious circumstances in Mexico
- 6th 1895 “Waltzing Matilda” has first public performance
- 8th 1817 Australia's first Bank (Bank of NSW) opens
- 12th 1861 US Civil War starts
- 17th 1931 QANTAS first overseas flight
- 19th 1984 Advance Australia fair becomes our National Anthem
- 21st 1970 Hutt River Province secedes from WA
- 25th 1896 SA women get the vote (first in Aus)  
1915 ANZACS land at Gallipoli
- 26th 1939 Robert Menzies become Prime Minister for first time
- 27th 1968 First KFC in Australia  
1971 wreck of the Batavia found
- 28th 1996 Port Arthur (Tas) massacre
- 29th 1988 Stockmans Hall of fame in Longreach (Qld) opened

#### N BRIEF



Still nothing from members for this column— It is YOUR NEWSLETTER TOO How about something to fill the columns?

#### APRIL MUSTER

- ◆ Not much time left to get your poem written for the April Muster Short Poetry Competition. Remember the rules.
  - ◆ Max 16 lines
  - ◆ Max 13 syllables per line
  - ◆ Max 2 poems per poet
  - ◆ Entry - FREE
  - ◆ topic—**April Fool” or anything similar**
- Judging is by audience members There will be a Small Prize for 1st , plus certificates for the top 3

While you can submit entries on the night, Could intending entrants please e-mail Pres Brian and / or MC Jill Miller so that we have some idea of total timings before the event

**THIS SPACE RESERVED FOR  
YOUR CONTRIBUTION**

## ◆CALLING OUR WA BUSH POETS

- ◆
- ◆I've been thinking 'bout our poets  
who are absolutely grand,
- ◆who revere the clever poems  
all about this wondrous land.
- ◆I'm worried 'bout our future  
if our poet's group should close,
- ◆'cause our President's retiring  
as well everybody knows.

He's been sending out the message  
in the monthly Bully Tin,  
But his pleas receive no answer  
and all hope is wearing thin  
that there'll be a new committee  
when he rolls his swag to go,  
And his lovely wife goes with him  
who has helped to run the show.

I'll admit the task is daunting,  
for they've done a mighty job  
Will anyone replace them  
though it doesn't pay a bob?  
We must gather round the campfire,  
put a billy on the coals,  
Heed the message that he's giving,  
put the flame back in our goals.

Brian's made the firm decision,  
and he well deserves a rest,  
For he's given true devotion  
and he's always done his best.  
Now it's no more, no more hurry.  
Take it easy. Time to dream,  
just relaxing 'neath a gum tree  
throwing lines into a stream.

We've learned from odes he's written  
that he loves the Aussie style,  
The simple things of bygone days;  
the times of 'wait a while.'  
To sit beside the ocean  
watching sunsets flame the sky,  
Or camp beneath the starlight  
watching moonlight gild the sky.

Our committee's earned gold medals,  
for they've gladly done their share.  
They've all done heavy yakka  
that has caused some wear and tear.  
And they've never grudged a moment  
all their labour given free;  
they deserve our admiration  
for it's done for you and me.

We are not a mob of shirkers;  
we are Aussies through and through,  
and we'll always 'have a go, mate';  
we're fair dinkum and true blue.

You may not have a clue now,  
but you'll get a helping hand.  
Once the fire is ignited,  
we're a mighty loyal band

Dot and Brian, we salute you both.  
We're grateful for your toil.  
Go ahead and roll your swags up,  
get the billy on the boil.  
Get out and see your country.

Kick your heels and have some fun,  
be assured the new committee will  
continue what you've done.

V.P. Read, Feb 2011

Thank you Val for the accolades. We just hope that someone will  
come along to take the reins - B & D

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## Results from Boyup Brook State Performance Championships

### Yarnspinning:

- 1st Dave Smith (Collie) "Aboriginal Carving"
- 2nd Bill Gordon (Boyup Brook) "Condobolin Mosquitoes"
- 3rd Brian Langley (Perth) "The Kitten Incident"

### Contemporary:

- 1st Barry Higgins (Perth) "Bush Justice" (Magor)
- 2nd Bill Gordon (Boyup Brook) "Turbulence" (Hartin)
- 3rd John Hayes (Perth) "From the Lanterns" (McGoffin)

### Poet's Brawl:

- 1st Robert Gunn (Perth) "Eastern States Tourists"
- 2nd Shirl Frietag (Mandurah) "Bloody Kangaroos"

### Original Humorous: #

- 1st Peg Vickers (Albany) "Grandpa's Chooks" &
- 1st Peter Blyth (Albany) "After Ewe"
- 3rd Bill Gordon (Boyup Brook) "Boyup Brook"

### Original Serious: #

- 1st Brian Langley (Perth) "Old Hector"
- 2nd Peter Blyth (Albany) "Talking Ground"
- 3rd Catherine McLernan (Geraldton) "Red Poppies" &
- 3rd Roger Cracknell (Geraldton) "Old Silver"

### Traditional: #

- 1st Irene Conner (Jurien) "Women of the West" (Evans)
- 2nd Peter Blyth (Albany) "Fencer's Yarn" (Jenkins)
- 3rd Brian Langley (Perth) "What of the Pioneers" (Murphy)

### Overall Champion (Combined Marks of those events marked #)

- 1st Peter Blyth (Albany)**
- 2nd Bill Gordon (Boyup Brook)**
- 3rd Irene Conner (Jurien)**

It was very pleasing to see the wide range of talent. As can be seen, in the 6 categories of competition, there were 7 different people took out first place. In almost all events, only a few marks separated the top four or five competitors. The overall standard was very high, receiving many accolades from the 3 professional judges from Eastern Parts, in particular for the Original Serious category.

A special thanks to the three Eastern States poets Melanie Hall, Susan Carcery and Neil McArthur who gave up their valuable free time to drive the judging panel. Each event had two of these very talented people plus one local:

Thanks also to those WA people who volunteered for judging and MCing duties and a huge Thank You also to the principle of St Mary's Primary School who came to the rescue when the printer we had organised decided that it didn't want to print on card. The school's printer was used to print the award certificates

All in all, it was a great festival, made better by the combining of the Championships with the already very successful Annual Bush Poetry Program

## March 2011 Muster Wrap-up by Teresa Rose

This month, we've given Teresa a double amount of room to give her interpretations of the poems from the March Muster. Probably can't do this regularly, but she put so much work into it, I couldn't bear to cut it down - Ed

As **Dot Langley** was our **MC** for the evening, she handed the "Write Up" baton to me. She must be congratulated on doing a fantastic job and for putting so much time and effort into researching and planning a very varied and interesting programme. Not only did she have everything timed to perfection, she had to deal with last minute phone calls from presenters who were unable to attend; last minute e-mails from poets; and then last-minute requests for inclusion in the programme! Well done Dot!

Our first writer for the evening was **Adrian Egan** from Bunbury, where he is involved in the Bush Poets Brekky on April 10<sup>th</sup>. His e-mail to Dot was in verse and combined his thoughts on the time he now has to write poetry dealing with all things rural, together with a 'plug' for the up-coming show. Then it was time for his submitted poems for the evening which were presented by Dot herself. "**Rural Golf**" tells the tale of a local golfing legend, Sweet Lisa who, after struggling around the hazards usually found on a country course, such as strange angles, weeds and marsupials, finishes her round by hitting the ducks with her final ball. Back in the clubhouse she upset the rest of the 'losers' by claiming a birdie on the 18<sup>th</sup> hole! Local wildlife can turn out to be a bonus on your scorecard! Adrian's second offering, "**Feral Undertaking**", points out that in our country that is so badly affected by all things feral, the very worst he wants to hunt down is our "Fer'al Gummerment"! original

**Helen Lancaster** is one of many local, (WA) poets whose works were included in the anthology, "Prime Time Rhyme", having entered a competition held by the Mandurah Coastal Writers' Group. Her poem, "**Charlie's Hut**" was presented by **Elsie Harris**. Charlie was a farmer who lived and died in his old weatherboard shack near the winding Blackwood River. With all its leaks and cracks it was still home sweet home for Charlie and his faithful dog, Red. Whilst people in fine city buildings or prosperous farms enjoyed the luxuries of wines and comfortable living, Charlie was content with the simple things such as his rainwater tank and hurricane lamp. After a hard life on the land ruled by the changing seasons, Charlie's life ended with nothing to mark his passing, apart from the old shack and its ghosts.

**Terry Piggott** has been writing his award-winning poetry for some time but does not usually perform. However, he decided to present his poem, "**The Land Endures**" himself. Our land is frequently ravaged by the terrible droughts that cause so much suffering, hunger and death. Despite the torture that the land endures, it is Nature's way and it will recover. This land of dust storms, Spinifex and drifting sand is untameable, although the indigenous tribes found a way to survive. Even with modern mills and water bores, starvation can still have the final say, but there are those who stay on in the hope that the cycle will turn again and that the rains will come once more.

**Pat Sandstrom** lives in the village and has written several poems, sometimes presenting them herself. Her poem, "**The Best Boots**" was presented this evening by her neighbour and fellow member, **Marjory Cobb**. Rabbit-o Dan was remembered for his shiny boots that squeaked as he walked to the door of the old church to roar and swear at his dogs who created a ruckus under the floor as they chased rabbits. Poor old Dan had to keep getting up from his creaky knees and squeak his way to the door, much to the amusement of the congregation. Fortunately old Parson Brown was too deaf to hear what was happening and warmly shook Dan's hand each week. Although that old church is in ruins, you can still hear Dan's boots squeaking if you're quiet.

**Irene Connor** is known to most of us in the group and particularly her love of horses. **Leslie McAlpine** presented, "**Gumnut's Hidden Fear**". 'Gumnut' climbed over the fence to gather horse poo whilst the horses seem to be asleep. A rumble and shake makes it obvious that a rearing horse was about to descend on him and scatter his 'bits' over the block. Picturing a war-like Irene coming after him, he took off across the paddocks and stumbled, thankfully rolling under a bush. Expecting the worst as the horsey teeth came near his face, he was amazed to feel a raspy tongue licking his cheek. The story was embellished in its telling but no-one would ever know that 'Gumnut's' real fear was of Irene, had he hurt the horse!

**Graham Armstrong** is one of our newer members who has written several poems. As he was unable to be present this time, **Dave Smith** presented his poem, "**Time Was On His Side**". From an early age he knew the value of discipline and control in living a life alone. With a good education to start him off, he began his wider knowledge through experience, first in the country and then in the city. Confiding in his mother, he held on to the belief that time was on his side, even when fate brought changes to his plans. With a woman in his life, he felt the urge to go back to the land but disappointments forced him back to the city. With Mother no longer around, he found himself with a family to support and no-longer able to roam where he pleased, but was still confident that time was on his side. The marriage broke down but the sons kept this belief alive and then came another change with its new love and life, full of plans and dreams. Through it all he came to realise his life was complete and that time was still on his side.

**Janet Wells** originally hails from England but, having been swept off her feet by a Kimberley cattle man, she became an 'Aussie' and her poetry is inspired by her life up there in the Kimberleys. Her poem, "**Neglected Cemetery**", was read by **Shan-Rose Brown**. It describes a typical outback town where, despite the harsh climate and conditions, the gardens are well-cared for, the homes comfortable and modern, and the streets clean and tidy.

Yet, further down the track, all the loving care is missing from the local cemetery; Surely in these easier times, those early strugglers deserve to be remembered and treasured by showing some care and concern for their final resting place?

**Dixie Solly** grew up in the WA goldfields and as an adult worked successfully on the land and bred horses. Claiming kinship with Lawson on account of liking a drink, he wrote his poem, "**The Brewery Strike**" which was presented by **Ron Ingham**. With a theme reminiscent of Slim Dusty's song, it talks of the man sitting in a pub that has no beer for him to spend his money on. The brewery boys have gone on strike and the pub is so empty and quiet that only the ants and spiders are busy. Cook has gone crazy and has cooked the cat; look out dog! Whiskey and gin have all gone, and it's only a matter of time before St. Peter calls him to the Pearly Gates. He's just hoping that he'll be offered a beer when he gets there because by the time the brewery trucks start rolling again, he'll have died of thirst in Barton's Pingrup Bar!

**Bill Gordon**, fresh from a very successful Boyup Brook Festival, stepped in at the last minute to present one of his own poems. Introducing, "**The Super Stirrer**", Bill noted that farmers can be very innovative. Sometimes this is good; sometimes it definitely isn't! Farmers complain when the dams run dry, then whinge again when they get too much rain. Around these dams, the sheep leave their accumulated droppings which sooner or later hit the water and create a terrible stink. The farmer hits on a great idea; tells his daughter he will back the boat up to the dam and rest the prop where it can mix up the poo and water. He has to feed his sheep so he disconnects the ute and puts chocks under each trailer wheel to stop it slipping. So he started up the motor and went off to his sheep, proud of his cleverness. The nosey jersey cow came to investigate and when she licked the salt spray off the controller, the boat took off, just like a hovercraft. Fencing and the backyard loo didn't stand a chance against the runaway motor; the sheep and dog went off their brains and the chocks were frightened off their egg-laying. After hitting the dunny and the mailbox, the boat headed into town, frightening the local drunk who swore off the drink. The cop wasn't sure what charges to lay and the townsfolk all turned up to see the commotion. Poor old farmer learnt a hard lesson; when trying anything mechanical always lock up the cow first, and if aerating the dam, have a designated driver and anchor.

**Helen Sanders** is a local poet who writes on many topical subjects. Her poem, "**Yes! We Know The Way To San Jose**" was presented by **Brian Langley**, and was inspired by the rescue last year of the thirty three miners trapped in Chile. While the mine owners kept their distance, a make-do "Camp Hope" was set up by the families who gathered to wait and pray for their loved ones. Before long the story went world-wide, and the miners trapped nearly a mile below ground existed on limited food and waning hope. After seventeen days, a little spark of hope came with a scribbled note that the men were still alive. Their hope suffered setbacks as the rescuers encountered solid rock while they drilled. But the men kept drilling and hoping, while the media hung around keeping the world informed each day of progress. The first of the men to reach the surface was met by his wife and son and the President. He didn't show much emotion but the next one raised in fists in the air and cheers went up as gradually they all made it to the surface, with the greatest for the last one, "Don Louis".

**Margaret Bull** was something of a goldfields' identity who not only wrote her own poetry, but also put together an anthology of poems from that era. **Grace Williamson** presented one of Margaret's poems, "**Our Home Town**". In 1893, Paddy Hannan and his mate found gold and soon after a makeshift town was set up as men and their families came to try their luck. Conditions were harsh and relentless and after much disappointment and heartache, they began to think of giving up and leaving. C.Y.O'Connor brought about change with his machinery and pipes to pump water and slowly the town began to develop as people branched out into supplying all those goods needed by the miners. Soon it was obvious that schools were needed for the children, and after the mothers created an outcry, The Kalgoorlie Infants' School was finally established in 1900. For 60 years it has proved its worth and helped hundreds of children to learn the lessons and values of life.

**Dot** closed the first half by giving the first "public airing" of **Brian's** poem, "**Parenting Is Such A Joy**". Told from the perspective of a '30 something, Upwardly Mobile Modern Mum', the parent of the poem is thrilled with her choice of children, one of each. They are now independent enough to take to the beach and will soon be away at school so that they will not disrupt their parents' busy lives. Confident that they will have the best and most appropriate care, it's a bit of a nuisance having to dress and bathe them both before taking them to day care. Still, she can still get to the gym and look after herself as the day care staff will feed the children. Hubby is really struggling because he can't get his golf handicap down and though he would like to spend more time with the kids, he needs to leave early each day if he is to get ahead. It's lucky that her mother is able to pick the children up after her work and she's sure that it's no bother for her to feed them but it's rather annoying that there are always toys and things cluttering her house. Mother is looking rather peaky but she's sure it's her job that's the trouble. She'll never understand how her mother managed with four of them but of course she didn't take on all the commitments that the two of them had. It's wonderful being a parent but the noise is tiresome and it would be so nice to have some "us time" at weekends.

*(Hmmm! Do I detect a little cynicism in there , Brian?).*

**Dave Smith** was first up to the microphone after supper and he treated us to one of his own poems, "**A Credo Surprise**". Going out to the goldfields to visit some mates, they were startled to see a bare bum following a mower around the lawn. They yelled out to warn him of their presence and had to rub their poor old eyes, just to clear them of the dust, of course. Hiding in the van, they regained their composure with a cup of tea and some fresh scones and jam, and were relieved to see their mate had put his trousers on. They love to visit their mates but, in

future, will warn them when they're coming so those sun lovers can at least put a hat on!

**Lynette White** entered the Coastal Writers' Competition and her poem was entered in the anthology. **Beryl Cooper** presented this poem, "**Nesting Time**". The magpie hen chose her site carefully and started to collect all the sticks and useful materials for construction of the nest. Always on the lookout for something special, the final touch of some basket lining was added for comfort. It would have been a wonderful thing to have watched this little family grow and thrive from closer quarters but as it was, there was still a special link between observer and birds.

**Irene Connor's** love of horses was combined with her talent for tackling difficult subjects in her next poem, "**Earaheedy Station**" which was presented by **Ron Ingham**. The story of Earraheedy Station is a shameful one because of the way the special breed of horses there were treated. Part of our history, the horses had served our nation in so many faithful ways and in some terrible conditions. When the station was sold and the land drained, the horses along with so many other animals that had thrived with the waterholes, now faced a slow and painful death. Fortunately, someone with a kind heart acted on what she saw and rescued as many of the creatures as she could, moving them to greener pastures and a better life. Sadly it was too late for many others. Let's all call on the powers to return water to the station and stop this needless cruelty.

**Peg Vickers** is always popular at musters with her special brand of humorous poetry. **Dot Langley** presented two of her "Grandpa" poems. The first, "**Grandpa and the Cockatoo**" relates the tale of Grandpa's first ever flight on a plane. His nervousness gave way to amazement when he found his travelling companion was a talking cockatoo. The bird turned out to be loud and obnoxious and made Grandpa very nervous again as he behaved and talked so rudely. Despite his appalling attitude, the bird was given every attention whilst Grandpa felt neglected. So he decided to follow suit and behave equally badly. Eventually the hostess could take no more and threw them both out of the plane. As they plummeted to earth, the cocky told Grandpa that he was OK and asked Grandpa if he wished he too had wings and could fly! The second yarn, "**Grandpa and the Rabbit**", tells of Grandpa and his butcher's shop. He often bought rabbits from the local farmers and so was able to keep his prices down. Down to his last rabbit, Mrs Smith wanted a bigger one, so he took it out back and stretched and flattened it until it looked bigger. Mrs Smith was so delighted that she asked for both of the rabbits!

**Terry Piggott** presented another of his poems, "**The Reception From Hell**", in which a full scale battle broke out between the two 'warring' families, brought about by an acrimonious divorce. Friends and relatives of the groom could only cower and huddle in fear as the Uncles and Aunties all vented their spleen. It wasn't long before a food fight broke out, followed by a free-for-all between the opposing Grannies. Families tried to calm them down and their hubbies laughed until they were spotted. The Coppers, when they came, had to call up reserves before it was stopped. Amazingly, the marriage worked out ok, but there's always a punch up at family celebrations.

**Janet Wells** called another of her Kimberley poems, "**Stockcamp Evening**" and it was presented by **Leslie McAlpine**. The tired and dusty stockmen arrive slowly at the camp at the end of another tough day. The cook watches them as they move the cattle in against the backdrop of the darkening sky, later than usual. The tired riders take care of their equally tired horses before the evening meal and the boss hands out a few rare words of praise. The boys settle by the campfire and eat their tea, and she listens to all the sounds of the bush at night. Alone now in the darkness, she washes the dishes and dampens the fire before going to bed. She dreams of working in a top city kitchen, cooking gourmet meals, but in her heart knows that her life as a station cook is good enough.

**Val Read** has written many award-winning poems and is well-known to many in the Association. **Rosa Cilenza** presented two of her poems. The first, "**Lillian's Wedding Day**", tells the tale of Lillian who, against all advice from her family, wanted to marry the loud and obnoxious Ron instead of the charming Andrew. She persisted in her choice and so all those invited to the wedding threw their invitations away. Sadly, on the special day, not a soul was there to wish her well but she went in to the church where she was met by a mournful priest who had a letter from the careless Ron, stating he didn't love her anymore. Too late, Lillian realised the mistake she had made in rejecting Andrew but, he arrived in the nick of time, to be her knight in shining armour. Quickly an ecstatic mother and father rallied around the guests and the wedding went ahead. Now they have a happy family and Ronny is living as a hippy at Byron Bay. Rosa then read, "**Alfred River Cemetery**" as she felt it echoed the sentiments of Janet Wells' poem. Whilst taking photos in the country cemetery to record its history, the author observed the quiet beauty of the Church and its grotto. She felt a sense of peace and compassion for those buried there. Suddenly an apparition of a young woman and her small son appeared. The woman spoke of her hard life during the Depression and the loss of her young husband. The time passed quickly and then she was gone but the memory of that strange and wondrous day will live on.

**Rosa** then gave us a poem she had written herself, "**Now I'm Sixty Four**". The poem relates the problems faced by the passage of time, not that she's keeping score! The wrinkles and pimples, gummy smiles and excess flab, just to name a few. She's not keeping score of the loss of eyesight and memory, the puffing and panting and so on. But, she will cherish each day and the sights and sounds of the world that cheer her; her family and friends and all God's gifts. She'll keep score of all those and give an ovation!

**Dame Mary Durack** is a name familiar to most of us, mostly through her historical novels. **Grace Williamson** presented one of her poems, "**The Boab Tree**", in what we believe is its first public airing. She wrote it for her father back in the 1930s after the tree at his favourite campsite had been hit by lightning. She later gave the po-



em to past member John McMicking to “do with it whatever you want”. - The Boab Tree had lived where the red earth stretches to the river and the bank bears the marks of floods and passing feet. The ancient rocks are places for the birds to rest and preen and the tree itself had seen countless seasons as it grew from seed to tree. The young people coming to that place felt a sense of magic there, stars seeming to cling to the branches like tears. With dreams of the future, they carved their names into its bark. With the passing of years the young ones ceased to gather there as their fortunes changed from good to bad and back. They believed the tree would remain forever as a beacon in that landscape, but nature had other ideas and fire consumed the once-mighty boab tree, leaving nothing but ashes, grey and grief.

**Leigh Matthews** was a man who appears to be obsessed by gates; at least that’s the story **Jack Matthews** told us when he presented the poem, “**Gates**”. (Sorry if I got this part wrong, Jack, but I was a bit ‘brain dead’ by this time of the evening!) Up at the pearly gates, St Peter couldn’t believe his eyes as an old codger came tramping up, followed by flies. Dropping his swag, he stares at those gates and tells the tales of all the places he’s been and the gates he’s seen. After all that he can’t believe that he’s reached another ‘bloody gate’. He’s had a lifetime of coping with all kinds of gates in every kind of condition. St Peter listens as he pours out his woes and finishes with the statement that he’d rather miss out on Heaven than open another gate. Recognising the old man as Australian he invites him in; the man can’t believe that St Peter is going to open and close the gates for him. It must be Paradise!

**Roger Tulloch’s** quirky sense of humour was apparent in his poem, “**Pat Quokka from Rottnest**”, which was presented by **Shan-Rose Brown**. On Rottnest Island, Pat the Quokka tells indignantly of the history of the name given to him and his kind by the Dutch. He points out that they are nothing like rats and are more like kangaroos which are much nicer. There are lots of names for them now and they like to eat grass and stuff and carry their young in a nice little pouch. They only live here in the west and as he left he remarked that a quokka is a gentleman and could never be a rat!

**Edwin Greenslade (Dryblower) Murphy** is a well-known name amongst the “classic” writers of Australian Rhyming Poetry. His poem, “**The Storm**”, read by myself, (**Teresa Rose**), was certainly an appropriate choice, given the terrible natural disasters that we have been experiencing across our country in recent months. The writer *is* the storm and relates its life from its beginning as a product of the frozen arctic wastes and the equatorial heat. It is nursed in the oceans and grows stronger in the Antarctic hills. Gaining breath it heads North to the tropics and the monsoon gathers momentum, gathering up fire and fury. Cyclone and typhoon let loose their power on ships that ply the coast and huge winds rip through camps and mining towns. From the tropics to the mangroves and thence to the South where it becomes dry and cold, then wet and warm. From the Abrolhos Islands, across beaches and over to the eastern states, the storm cuts a swathe through orchards and gardens. Back to Fremantle where it smashes shop windows and away again to the Torrens where it sinks the boats. Buildings that once were strong and sturdy are no match for the power of the storm. Neither are gardens and massive gum trees. The old and the young are left frightened as buildings collapse until at last, the storm slowly weakens and sinks to rest.

**Ivy Higgs** also has a poem in the Coastal Writers’ Anthology. “**What’s in a Name?**” was the last work for the night and our last presenter was **Grace Williamson**. Our English language is very strange, especially when it comes to words that are all spelled the same but pronounced differently. The surname, HOUGH, should be easy enough as it only has five letters, and Mum and Dad said it rhymes with *bough*. However, if only one letter is changed it can mean something entirely different, depending on how you say it! If that’s not confusing enough, more changes can make it *cough* or *through*. Then of course there are the rhymes like *rough* and *tough*. Finally the solution came when the lady in question got married and didn’t have to worry about it anymore!

Having run out of time, there were no more poems presented, so Dot and Brian wrapped up the very successful evening. Dot finished with a warning that next year things will need to change. She will probably be available for MC but YOU will be responsible for choosing your own WA Poem. Please think seriously about giving it a go. Thank you once again Dot for a great job!

## Committee Members—WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners 2010—2011

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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 gen-

April 1	WABP&YS Muster	Auditorium, Bentley Park	Inc Short Poetry Comp	Topic <b>April Fool</b>
April 9-10	Bunbury Horse and Country Music Show (Inc Bush Poetry)			Adrian <a href="mailto:aregan2@bigpond.com">aregan2@bigpond.com</a> 9791 9701
May 6	WABP&YS Muster	Auditorium, Bentley Park		
May 8	Poets in the Park	Kalamunda	Stirk Park 2pm	(part of Kalamunda Autumn Festival)
Mid May??	Geraldton Heritage Week—	Bush Poetry events	TBA	

Regular events - Albany Bush Poetry group      4th Tuesday of each month      Peter 9844 6606

I've heard that Catherine McLernan in Gerald ton is getting her local poets organized—there are a few events in her world coming up during the year, the first of them in May.

**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.**

### 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.

**Muster MCs and Classics Readers are always needed - See John Hayes**

**Don't forget our website  
[www.wabushpoets.com](http://www.wabushpoets.com)**

**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 <a href="http://www.wabushpoets.com">www.wabushpoets.com</a> Go to the "Performance Poets" page	<b>Members' Poetic Products</b>	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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