

Eastwood/Hills FAW 2016 Annual Literary Competition

Boree Log Award Judges' Report

Brian Beesley

It was a pleasure to judge the Boree Log competition for 2016. However, I do not believe the standard was as high as in previous years.

Many entries lacked the discipline of maintaining correct rhythm and rhymes. Rhythm, or metre, is most important to keep the reader interested and captured by the rhythmic flow of the poem. Nothing will break the attention of the reader more than flaws in rhythm.

Obvious mistakes in rhyme patterns were most disappointing. Plural rhymes are not acceptable as in – bought/sorts. Assonance, which is the resemblance of sounds by the rhyming of vowels, or identical consonants with different vowels, is also not acceptable. Some authors gave up all together and failed to rhyme some lines at all. The English language does not lend itself easily to rhyme but it will work beautifully if the writer is prepared to put in the time and hone their work to the sharpest it can possibly be. I mention this because there are many poets writing good quality verse, so to achieve a place in competitions requires one to be conscious of their rhyme and metre.

However, the successful entries in this competition were worthy of their places, expressing humour, pathos and revealing slices of history. The winning poem is a well crafted piece containing a subtle, unforced mid-line rhyme throughout, telling of little known historical events. This ballad may become published on the Australian Bush Poets Association website. I urge those who did not receive a mention in this competition to try to locate this poem to see the simple artistry of rhyme, metre and language that earned it first place.

Congratulations to the successful entrants. Thank you to all who entered but failed to gain a place, you obviously have a passion to write, so keep trying and keep learning.

Commended	Bushed – Carol Heuchan
Commended	From Alice Springs – Hugh Allan
Highly Commended	Coal Mine Convict – Brenda Joy
Highly Commended	Bluey – Tom McIlveen
Highly Commended	When Bobby Comes Marching Home – Tom McIlveen
First Place	Wills – Brenda Joy