

MULGA WIRE

INCLUDING
SINGABOUT



2020 - Centenary of John Meredith's birth

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MULGA WIRE

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BUSH DANCES

September - December

BEECROFT Community Centre

Becroft Road (opposite Fire Stn)

7:30pm—11:30pm

Becroft Dances are currently suspended due to restrictions on gatherings and social contact.

Enquiries: Wilma 9489 5594

Dukes Place

Duke's Place is currently suspended due to restrictions on gatherings and social contact.

Bush Music Club enquiries:

0466 877 423 or

bmcmail1954@gmail.com

Also see our web site for Club doings, history, articles and blog:

www.bushmusic.org.au

Cover:

John Meredith in Hobart in 1987.

Photo Tony Rees
(Wikimedia Commons)

President's
Message

Greetings from lockdown and I hope everyone is going ok.

How things have changed in 6 months with Covid 19. All the BMC activities were put on hold for 3 months and only the monthly Poets' Corner and Monday Slow and Music Sessions recommenced in July under very strict conditions with no singing or wind instruments, numbers being limited, sanitising and attendance records kept. The Pennant Hills Workshops and Beecroft Dances are still on hold until the government gives the green light for dancing to recommence. Unfortunately this is not in the near future.

There have been so many concerts on Zoom including the Sydney Folk Festival which was very popular, the Homebaked Concertina Convergence concerts and a Chaika concert that I 'attended' which was terrific.

The BMC AGM is set for Saturday 26th September 2020 at 2pm at the hut with suitable distancing measures in place and we are looking at making the meeting available via one of the online platforms...please check out the details on our website or send a message to the club's phone 0466 877 423.

Stay warm and well and we'll all be looking forward to life returning to normal...whatever that is!!

Sharyn Mattern

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Worth Noting

The **Covideo Folk Club** has been established as a private group on Facebook. Lots of good items if you are on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/142692067094518/>

Jason and Chloe Roweth are running a weekly live stream on Facebook called Saturday Streaming. Details and a donation link are on their website and the recordings of past events are on YouTube.

<https://www.rowethmusic.com.au>

Hornsby Folk Club is having live concerts again with restricted numbers (though August got cancelled), and are also running online session nights via Zoom.

<https://www.facebook.com/hornsby.folk.club>

There is a growing series of YouTube videos under the title **Homebaked Concertina Australia 2020**.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=homebaked+concertina

Wikipedia has a **List of Songs About Sydney**.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_songs_about_Sydney

Stephen Taberner, spookmeister, has posted a new song on YouTube about Julian Assange called "Like a Movie". Clip also features **Susie Bishop** on violin.

https://youtu.be/TvsJCJ7BO_8

The **Spooky Men** have also been busy and have gone online with a Tuesday "Singlet"

<https://www.facebook.com/spookymen/>

<https://www.facebook.com/massivesinglet>

How Australia's 'fake genuine Russian choir' **Dustyesky** went viral during the coronavirus pandemic.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-05-25/>

[australian-fake-russian-choir-dustyesky-goes-viral-mullumbimby/12270670/](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-05-25/australian-fake-russian-choir-dustyesky-goes-viral-mullumbimby/12270670/)

As the attendees at past Heritage and Subscription Balls would know, social distancing is not all that new. The hoop skirts or crinolines worn by the ladies can certainly be a considerable aid in keeping partners at a suitable distance!

Upcoming Festivals

Festivals are generally not running at present, and due to the need for long preparation times are unlikely to resume until mid 2021.

Bush Music Club Inc.
2020 Annual General Meeting

Where: Hut 44, Addison Rd Community Centre, Marrickville

When: 2pm, Saturday 26th September 2020

FORM OF APPOINTMENT OF PROXY

I, _____
(full name)

of _____
(address)

being a current financial member of the Bush Music Club Incorporated

hereby appoint _____
(full name of proxy)

of _____
(address)

being a member of that incorporated association, as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the annual general meeting of the association to be held on the 26th day of September 2020 and at any adjournment of that meeting.

My proxy is authorised to vote in favour of/against (delete as appropriate) the resolution (insert details).

Date: _____

Signature of member appointing proxy _____

NOTE: A proxy vote may not be given to a person who is not a member of the association.

NOMINATION FOR COMMITTEE

I, _____
being a current financial member of the Bush Music Club Incorporated,

hereby nominate _____

for the position of _____
(President/Vice President/Treasurer/Secretary/Committee Member)

Signed (nominee) _____ Date _____

Signed (proposer) _____ Date _____

Signed (seconder) _____ Date _____

Return completed form(s) to Secretary Bush Music Club GPO Box 433 Sydney 2001 or
<bmcm11954@gmail.com> no later than 18th September 2020

The Swagman at the Golden Gate

Anon

Saint Peter put his quart-pot down and rubbed his saintly eyes,
As through the cloud a figure, bowed and pursued by swarms of flies,
Came tramping up to Heaven's Gate and stood there in amaze.
He dropped his swag and tuckerbag and said, 'Well, spare me days!'

'I've humped this old Matilda since the age of seventeen.
There's not a track in the great outback that we two haven't seen;
So when I rolled me final swag I thought I'd cleaned the slate –
But stone the crows! Before me nose I see another gate!'

'In fifty years of tramping and covering all the while
Twelve miles a day, at least to say with two gates to the mile –
I'm not much good at figures but the way I calculate
In my career I've opened near on fifty thousand gates.'

'There was gates that fairly haunt me, there was gates of every sort,
Sagging gates and dragging gates; high, low, long and short.
Gates that seemed to challenge you and gates that seemed to grin -
Lazy gates and crazy gates that hung by half a hinge;'

'Gates tied up with fencing wire and gates with fancy scrolls,
With patent catch and homemade latch, and gates made out of poles.
Wide gates and narrow gates, big barriers and small,
Rusted gates and busted gates – I've wrestled with them all;'

'Now, I've opened them and shut 'em till the sight of all I hate,
And I'd sooner miss yer Heavenly Bliss than open that there gate!
What's that? You say you'll open it! Well, that's what I call nice!
And close it too when I've got through? This MUST be Paradise.'

POETRY anyone?

We've started our Poetry sessions back at the BMC Hut at Marrickville.

If you enjoy reciting / reading / performing poems you like or perhaps write yourself, please join us in the Hut.

When: Usually **second** Saturday of the month, 2pm to 4pm

Remaining dates for **2020:** Sep 12, Oct 10, Nov 14, Dec 12.

Cost: \$5

Where: Tritton Hall, Hut 44, Addison Road Centre, 142 Addison Rd, Marrickville.

Contact: Karen 0432527737 (text messages preferred) OR
karenmclean0806@gmail.com

Have you got time for a bit of a chat?

We are now in the 66th Year of the Bush Music Club and our 70th is just around the corner. The Club has decided it is time to collect all those special memories of people and events. It would just be a friendly chat to talk about old times (and new times). Hopefully from this the Club will be able to publish these reminiscences for the 70th Birthday Celebrations. You don't need to have been President of the Club (but that would be good), everyone has stories to tell and we would love to hear them. We need to hear from dancers, reciters and the musicians.

If you are interested in contributing to this project and would like more information contact Kerry: mandokerry@gmail.com or 0409 600 949.

DUKE'S PLACE

**Australian Songs
in Concert & session**



**Usually Second Friday of
the Month Feb - Dec**

Doors open 7:30pm
Concert 8 - 10.30pm, followed by
singing session
(gates close midnight)

Tritton Hall - Hut 44
Addison Rd Community Centre
142 Addison Rd, Marrickville

\$10 - Bring a plate - bring songs

August - No Dukes - Sydney Festival

Friday 11th September - Cancelled

Friday 9th October - Cancelled

Friday 13th November -

Friday 11th December -

Mulga Wire: 2020 Publishing Deadlines

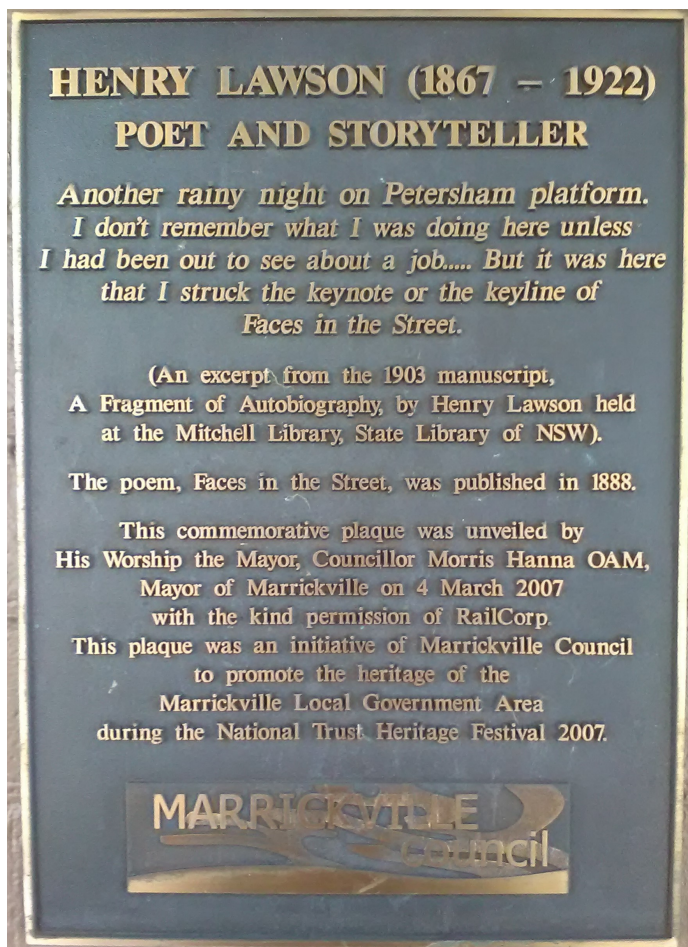
Item Deadline	To Printers	Folding Session
20 November	27 November	1 December
12 February	19 February	23 February

Pennant Hills Dance Activities
Pennant Hills Community Centre: (lower, air-conditioned hall)

Unfortunately dancing has had to stop as the risk of spreading infection is much too great in such a close contact activity.

At this stage it is hard to see the workshop being possible before 2021.

See you at Pennant Hills when restrictions ease sufficiently!



Plaque on Petersham Station commemorating Lawson's association with the location.

Playford Dancing at the Hut

Next meetings:

None planned for the remainder of 2020

The Bush Music Club is hosting Sydney Playford dancing in our headquarters: Hut 44 (Tritton Hall) Addison Road Community Centre, Marrickville.

We meet on the first Tuesday of each month (except January). There will be live music as often as possible.

Cost \$7.

For more information contact:

Julie Bishop 9524 0247

Have you visited the **BMC Blog** recently? There are lots of new articles and photos of our activities over the past year. The address is:

<http://blog.bushmusic.org.au>

or follow the link from the BMC website.

ELECTRONIC DELIVERY OF **MULGA WIRE**

The Committee is offering the option of electronic delivery alongside traditional paper copies. If you would prefer to receive an electronic copy - rather than a paper one, please contact us on **bmcm1954@gmail.com**

Making Direct Deposit Payments (Membership/Shop/Ball)

Direct Deposit details:

BSB: 062-005

Acct: 0090 7524 (Commonwealth bank)

Ref: Member's Name & payment purpose

Email details of payment to treasurer:

Allen Davis <allendavis@iprimus.com.au>

Membership forms or ball ticket forms still need to be sent, either by mail, filled out online, or scanned and sent by email.

Traditional Irish Music 'Slow Session'

The Sydney Slow Session is a place where musicians can learn a new Irish Folk tune each week at a pace that suits beginners and intermediate players.

Every Sunday 6:30pm at Tritton Hall, Hut 44, Addison Rd Community Centre, 142 Addison Rd, Marrickville.

Cost \$10 (concession \$5), includes tea and bikkies.

Enquiries: Colum <colum.hickey@gmail.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/SydneySlowSession/>

Bush Music Club Beecroft Bush Dance



Beecroft Community Centre
Beecroft Road (cnr Copeland Rd)
Cost: \$19 Adult, \$14 BMC Members
Includes supper

Due to current and likely future restrictions, the Beecroft Bush Dance has been cancelled for the remainder of 2020.

Beecroft Spot Prizes

At recent Beecroft dances we have been handing out special prizes to dancers at certain points during the night. The prizes are donated by the following local businesses:

Woolworths Thornleigh

Dan Murphys

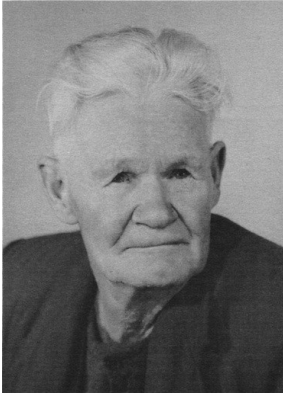
La Thai Restaurant Thornleigh

Topiary Café Epping

Westleigh Quality Meats Westleigh

From the Archives

Harold Percival Croydon “Duke” Tritton 1886 – 1965 Life Member



In early 1955 John Meredith received an excited phone call from Nancy Keesing saying that she had met an old shearer who knew the entire words to the song ‘Goorianawa’. The old song had proved elusive to collectors, even for Banjo Paterson. John Meredith was going to take no chances so he decided to write to him but before he could post it Duke appeared at the door. John put the tape recorder on and recorded 18 songs including ‘Goorianawa’, ‘Travelling, Down the Castlereagh’, ‘The Shores of Botany Bay’ and others. Duke offered to sing some of his own songs but John was only interested in the traditional songs. We can thank Alan Scott for collecting songs such as ‘The Sandy Hollow Line’, ‘Shearing at the Bar’ and many others.

Duke had been born in Five Dock, New South Wales and after leaving school at 13 he worked a variety of jobs such as a shearer, fencer, timber cutter, coach driver, road worker, fossicker, rabbitter and boxer. The last one provided him with his nickname of “Duke”.

Duke was soon accompanying John on his field trips and introducing him to other performers. Duke began to attend the Concert party. He would normally sing Solo as he was difficult to accompany because he would vary the tempo when he sang. This did not worry anyone as they enjoyed his singing. Not only a performer and composer, his book ‘Time Means Tucker’, tells the story of how, in 1905, at the age of 19, Duke Tritton and his mate ‘Dutchy’ Bishop rolled up their swags and went ‘bush’ in search of work and experience. ‘Time Means Tucker’ was at first published in the Bulletin but later was republished as a book. He sang for the concert party, ABC radio, appeared with Peter Seeger and upstaged Dave Allen on the Dave Allen show.

A final word on the “Duke”: when offered free tickets to the smash hit “*Guys and Dolls*”, which was showing in Sydney, he declined saying if it was called “*Blokes and Sheilas*” he would go. They changed the name for the night!

BUSH MUSIC CLUB inc

GPO Box 433, SYDNEY NSW 2001

Founded 1954

MEMBERSHIP

APPLICATION []

RENEWAL []

UPDATE []

Name:

Address:

.....

Phone: Home () Mobile.....

Email

Would you like to receive: Electronic *Mulga Wire* [] Yes. Regular electronic news updates [] Yes

YEARLY MEMBERSHIP

[] SINGLE \$30 [] FAMILY \$40 [] PENSIONER \$20

[] AFFILIATION (Clubs only) \$70 [] DONATION \$ _____

5 YEAR MEMBERSHIP

[] SINGLE \$120 [] FAMILY \$150

[] AFFILIATION \$250 [] PENSIONER \$70

CASH / CHEQUE Enclosed \$(No cash through post please)

Signature: Date:

Direct deposit details: BSB 062-005 Reference: Your Name & "Membership"
Account 0090 7524 Bank: Commonwealth

Email this form or details of payment to treasurer, Allen Davis: allendavis@iprimus.com.au

Office Use Only

Feb	Apr	Jun	Aug	Oct	Dec	
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Fee received ---- / ---- / ----	Appl approved ---- / ---- / ----	Record updated ---- / ---- / ----	Member Number	New Card Posted ---- / ---- / ----
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INTERIM RECEIPT AND PROOF OF MEMBERSHIP

Name

Fee received by \$ Date / /
(Committee Member)

THIS IS PROOF OF MEMBERSHIP FOR 3 MONTHS FROM THIS DATE

If membership card is not received within 3 months

Please contact the Membership Secretary on (02) 9642 7950

Event Details

Addison Rd Singing Session, Hut 44, Addison Rd Community Centre, Marrickville

☎ Glenys 0419 862 005 See p7

Beecroft Bush Dance, Beecroft Community Hall, Beecroft

☎ Wilma 9489 5594

Duke's Place, Hut 44, Addison Rd Community Centre, Marrickville

☎ Sandra 9358 4886 See p8

English Country Dancing at the Hut, Hut 44, Addi Rd Com Centre, Marrickville

☎ David 0413 210 789

Gosford Bush Dance, East Gosford Progress Hall

☎ Anne Maree 0413 588 634 <http://www.ccbdma.org/schedule.htm>

Hornsby Folk Club, Beatrice Taylor Hall (in Willow Park), Edgeworth David Ave

☎ Barry 9807 9497

Keith's Dance Workshop, Upper Hall, Pennant Hills Community Centre

<http://keith-wood.name/danceworkshops.html>

Loaded Dog Folk Club, Annandale Neighbourhood Centre

☎ Sandra 9358 4886

Playford Dancing at the Hut, Hut 44, Addison Rd Comm Centre, Marrickville

☎ Julie 9524 0247 See p10

Poetry at the Hut, Hut 44, Addison Rd Community Centre, Marrickville

☎ Karen 9716 9660 See p7

Songlines Song Session, Australian Heritage Hotel, 100 Cumberland St, The Rocks

☎ Jenny 9576 2301

Sutherland Acoustic, Tradies, Gymea

☎ Jenny 9576 2301

Sydney English Country Dance

<https://englishcountrydancesydney.com>

Toongabbie Music Club, 17 Whitehaven Rd, Northmead

☎ 9639 7494

Troubadour Folk Club, 147-149 Blackwall Rd, Woy Woy

☎ Michael 4342 6716 <http://www.troubadour.org.au>

Concert Party News

The BMC Concert Party group has been meeting every Monday night again for the past 7 or 8 weeks.

We have a core group of about 8 regulars and on most nights that has increased to 12 - 14. Everyone has improved playing as it's a concentrated effort with no singing and fewer numbers than before Covid-19. There is no slacking and we get stuck into it...

We miss sorely Ralph and Eric who in previous times were our musical leaders so fortunately George Bolliger has stepped up to the mark as stand in musical director. We have started selecting a dance tune set each week, which maybe was not played much in the past, and spend about 15 minutes practicing, playing and learning that set. Everyone agrees that this extra practice has been very beneficial.

Thanks to all attendees and especially to the "Core" group of regulars who have been along every week.

It's also been really nice to have met some new "Old BMC members" who have come along for an occasional musical fix, that has also added to the enjoyment.

From my perspective it's been great running the sessions and learning new music and dance tunes, I can now actually play the Jacaranda set without totally stuffing it up...

John Burch



Concert Party Zoom session.

**New
Members**

★ Adele FIELDING ★

Online Performances

Covideo Folk Club – see Worth Noting p4

Jason & Chloe Roweth – Saturday from 7pm – see Worth Noting p4

Homebaked Concertina – YouTube – see Worth Noting p4

Sessions

Hornsby Folk Club – see Worth Noting p4

Troubadour Folk Club sessions – First and third Sundays, 2-4pm, Kariong Gardens.

Held outdoors with a zoom link.

<http://www.facebook.com/TroubadourCC>

Concert Party – Monday nights, Bush Music Club, Hut 44, Addison Rd Community Centre, Marrickville. Bookings essential so numbers can be managed.

Contact John Burch - johnwburch04@gmail.com

The Massive Singlet (a kind of singing session organised over Zoom).

<https://www.massivesinglet.com>



Yes, I know it's electric, but it's the best
we can do at the moment...

SINGABOUT

SEPTEMBER 2020

THE FLU

Many comparisons have been made between the current pandemic and those that have gone before, notably the Plague and the Spanish Flu. The latter occurred during the First World War and was spread in part by troop movements. It appears to have originated in North America, where the first cases were diagnosed, though the exact origins are not clear. The name came from there being much more open reporting from Spain as they were neutral in the war and therefore much less interested in keeping casualties a secret.

The first two poems here were written and published while the flu was circulating with a third published after it had passed. The first gives some impressions of the pandemic and the responses to it, while the second is a typically Australian take on having the virus. The final one is an interesting look at reactions after it has passed.

The attitudes and themes in the poems are interesting when compared with views today. Is history repeating itself in some way? I'll let you be the judges...

The Flu

'Tis here, 'tis here, and most severe,
At last it has got through;
What young and old alike do fear,
The dreaded Spanish flu.

It needed no great influence
To reach Australia's shores;
But with its foreign impudence,
It came, and here it scores.

You must be inoculated,
And although it is a task,
Where a crowd is congregated,
You're supposed to wear a mask.

Although doctors seem to differ,
If they're really any good;
Some do recommend our sniffer,
Oil distilled from native wood.

Though in creosote
they've dipped us,
And we're reeking
through and through
With the stink of eucalyptus
Still perhaps we'll catch the flu.

Now you can't go to the pictures,
And you cannot see a play;
And there certainly are strictures,
On the racing men to-day.

They've closed the pubs,
they've closed the schools,
They'll close the churches too;
And children will know
less than fools,
All through the blooming flu.

No merits will there be to get,
And none will be commended;
But kiddies never do regret
The holidays extended.

A parson bold enough to preach
That kissing now should stop;
But some he would hygienics teach,
Think that he's shook on top.

Young gents and flappers
are enraged,
Perhaps they'll leave the Church;
And some who've lately
been engaged
For other haunts may search.

Perhaps they'll go on Sunday
To some breezy mountain top,
Far away from Mrs Grundy,
And where parsons are *de trop*

And then they'll smooze,
and bill and coo,
All day and half the night;
So if perchance they catch the flu,
They'll find that he was right.

Poet's pen name was "Kookaburra".

Published in the Eltham and Whittlesea Shires Advertiser and Diamond Creek Valley Advocate, 21 Feb 1919, p1.

Retrieved from Trove: <https://trove.nla.gov.au>

The Digger and the 'Flu

Before I fell a victim
To the wiles of Spanish "flu";
I'd gathered from the posters,
And certain movies, too,
That when it came to nurses,
You always woke to view
Some peach of dove-like beauty,
Who slipped the pills to you.

I've read the artful fiction
About the angels fair,
Who sat beside your pillow,
And stroked your fevered hair,
And made you kind of careless
How long you lingered there
In the radiant effulgence
Of a lovely baby stare.

That may be true in cases,
The way it is in plays,
But mine was no white lady
Of lilting roundelays;
While I was outed with the "flu",
The nurse, who soothed my pain
Was Private Billy Rogers,
That "fired" on the Herberton train.

Poem by "Anonymous"
Published in the Cairns Post, 3 Jun 1919, p7
Retrieved from Trove: <https://trove.nla.gov.au>

After the 'Flu

I had nine kinds of Spanish 'flu,
with sundry German brands thrown in;
all day I coughed and said, "Ker-choo!"
all night I coughed and sneezed like sin.

The doctor said, as at my side
he mixed up pills to feed my face,
"The wonder is you have not died!
I never saw so bad a case.

I've seen a hundred taken down,
I've seen them, like the ripe grain fall;
a thousand men are sick in town,
but you are sicker than them all.

It is a feather in my cap
that I have pulled you through the strife;
that you still loiter on the map,
and breathe the well-known
breath of life."

The nurse, a lady most refined,
had kindred soothing things to say;
"By jings," she cried, "it strikes me blind
that you are still on earth to-day!

When first I heard you sneeze and choke,
and throw all kinds of fancy fits,
I said, 'Oh, chee, this guy will croak
ere I've a chance to earn two bits!' "

So in my convalescent days,
when doc announced that I was cured,
I longed to go my old-time ways,
and brag of all I had endured.

There is no sense in being ill
unless it gives you an excuse
to talk about the doctor's bill,
and boast of pain to beat the deuce.

And when at last I toiled up-town,
all primed with tales of pain and ache,
my old companions turned me down,
and said my sickness was a fake.

Old Calvin Johnson muttered,
"Shoo! You have your gall
to talk of pain!
A tin-horn ailment like the 'flu.
Your talk is frivolous and vain.

Just wait until you have the gout,
your toe swelled bigger than a brick!
Then you may prance around,
old scout,
and claim that you really
have been sick!"

Said Baldwin, "While you've been
in bed,
pretending that you had disease,
I've been at least three-quarters dead,
with rheumatiz in both my knees!

And when I've borne a hundredweight
of poultices upon my frame,
it makes me tired to have a skate
come up and boost his cheap
'flu game!"

Alas, no matter what I do,
my friends will never let me brag;
in vain I hoped my siege of 'flu would
give a chance to chew the rag.

Another anonymous poem
Published in the Gippsland Times, 20 Jun 1929, p6
Retrieved from Trove: <https://trove.nla.gov.au>