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**Media Release**

## Poetry slam wins over Mount Barker

The slam poetry scene has experienced significant growth throughout Australia in recent years, and events like the Summit Slam at the Mount Barker Croquet Club on Friday 7 July, demonstrate the power of poetry to connect people of all ages and cultural backgrounds.

Slam poetry is a form of spoken word poetry that is performed dramatically, within a time limit, and in front of a lively audience and a panel of judges, randomly drawn from the audience, who mark each poem performance out of ten.

The brainchild of Mount Barker District Council's Arts Officer, Sally Hardy, the Summit Slam brought some of South Australia's most highly esteemed slam poets to the region and provided a platform for the many talented poets living in the district.

The last poetry slam event in Mount Barker was back in 2007 when Morgan Taubert, who was a special guest poet at the Summit Slam, won the heat held at the Mount Barker Community Library and eventually went on to win the State final, earning a place at the Nationals at the State Library of NSW.

An essential part of slam events is audience involvement and at the Summit Slam, the audience actively participated and played a crucial role in creating a welcoming and supportive atmosphere for the poets.

Mt Barker Council Arts Officer, Sally Hardy said that audience engagement is a hallmark of slam poetry events, where the audience's energy and reaction can greatly influence the performance of the poets.

"Judging from the enthusiastic response from the audience at the Summit Slam, it suggests that there is a demand for more slam poetry events in the district," Sally said.

The poets at the Summit Slam explored a wide range of subjects, sparking excitement and emotions among the audience. From deep and thought-provoking topics like fatherhood's generational impact and feminine power to lighter and humorous themes like lost love and hedgehog exploits, the poets showcased their exceptional skills in delivering captivating performances.

Host MC Kami, a slam poet legend in his own right, and the musical contribution from local musician Mo O'Farrell with his beautiful original songs and acoustic guitar, added to the overall ambiance and success of the Summit Slam.

“Having a skilled MC and live music enhances the experience and keeps the audience engaged throughout the event,” Sally said.

The competition at the Summit Slam was fierce, with twelve poets of exceptionally high standard vying for the top spots. In the end, former SA state slam champion, Emilia Haskey's talent and performance stood out, earning her the first-place win.

“Emilia’s victory at the Summit Slam is certainly a remarkable achievement,” Sally said. “At such a young age, her talent and skill in poetry are truly impressive.”

“It's crucial to recognise the efforts of all the participating poets, as they collectively contributed to the vibrant and thriving poetry scene in Mount Barker.

“The success of the Summit Slam shows that slam poetry events are not only well-received but also have the potential to grow and continue making a positive impact in our community.”

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