

A hand holding a purple quill pen, positioned as if about to write. The background is a soft, watercolor-style wash of light yellow and beige tones. The quill is a vibrant purple color. The hand is rendered in a soft, pinkish-red hue.

A Poetic View

Poetry from VIEW World



The first Poetry Writing Competition was held in 1969 and won by Mrs E Howard of Oatley VIEW Club. This competition continued, with winners announced on Display Day, until 1974 when V.I.E.W. Arts Day originated and trophies were presented on that day during Convention Week.

The poetry became another avenue for VIEW women to display their talent and throughout the following decades VIEW World published verse, not all of this was entered in competition but very often simply reflected the desire of VIEW members to offer their verse to fellow members.

A number of these poets went on to publish volumes of their collected works and some won prizes in State and National Competitions.

A time for grief

Anida Watkins
Hornsby VIEW Club 1971

*A telephone ringing in chill morning air
That stab of pain will mark this day forever.
Grief must wait – make haste
The living need our care – “God be our
strength this day”.
Into the morning
Tinted with new-day promises’
Dim silhouettes, a garden path, a door
Here at last reality,
Age in the shock of anguish.
Still barriers hold, where Death has been —
Awe, Grief, retreat before a hasty search,
A calling voice
Thus patterned the day is set
A myriad prosaic tasks
Strengthened by unspoken love*

*Comings and goings are done,
A key turns and fifty years of living.
We face an evening sky,
Clear, golden. peace of sunset:
A poet, immemorial, whispers.
The barriers are down.
There was no “sadness of farewell”,
For Grief – so little time this day,
One stab of pain — “God be our strength”.*



Dependence

Margaret Dawson
Springwood VIEW Club
1st Prize Poetry Competition 1976

*That fleeting euphoria why the need
what is there to find in powdered dreams?
Small round objects of forgetfulness —
Pierced skin
High elation
The aftermath a deep despondency.
Quickly
Pierce the skin again
Lest that high disappear
Unscrew the bottle
Open the packet fingers trembling
Lest the loneliness intrude
Then sink again into profane forgetfulness*

*Special buses pick them up
So that mother may have a rest
From constant caring.
But what rest for them
From the burden of their handicap?*

*Crutches and wheelchairs
As necessary as bread and milk.
Too many faces look away
When pens are offered.
But inside they dream and hope,*

*Just as you
Whose handicap the world does not see*

Handicapped

Peggy Dawson
Springwood VIEW Club

Poverty

Margaret Dawson
Springwood VIEW Club

*Because I was born this way
in this environment
is this how it must always be?*

*Is it true that poverty breeds poverty?
Is there some way to break the status quo?
Must my children too live in squalour*

*A hand to mouth existence in places
where the sun doesn't penetrate?*

*Must they always go cap in hand for help?
For help, though given benignly,
must sometime take away my dignity.*

*Somehow I must estrange my life style.
Can it be done?
It must be done or be trapped forever.*

Moody Mum

Milita Houlahan
Illawarra VIEW Club 1978

*I'm a moody mum — it's such a shame!
But I wonder, am I all to blame?
Temperaments okay in some,
Are just not accepted in a mum!
Somehow, a mum must always be the picture of serenity!
I'm a moody mum, there is no doubt,
But mostly moody when THEY'RE about!
I'm a moody mum — it gets me down,*

*The family says: "Why must you frown?"
I cannot say, "It's because of you I do not smile, my mood is blue".
Their cares and worries are all mine,
When THEY are happy, I feel fine!
I'm a moody mum and I know it shows —
But why I'm moody, no one knows!*

Supplication

Patricia Broadhurst,
St Georges Basin VIEW Club 1978

*God through Jesus help me this day,
in my work and my play.
Give me patience to bear all trials,
the will to do, the grace to smile.
Strength of body and heart I pray,
humbleness of mind to guard my way.
For my loved ones too I pray,
guide their footsteps well this day.
Succour to the needy give,
Thy love divine for all who live,
and I pray our sins forgive.
Eternal rest for my loved ones dead,
and all who pass that way in dread.*

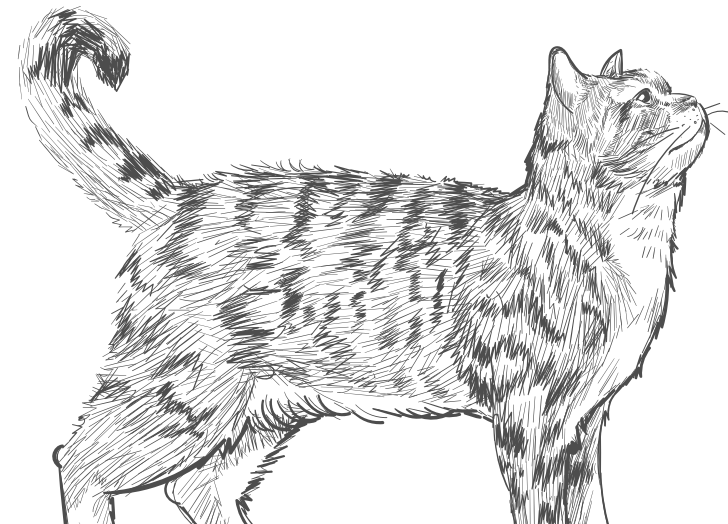
My Man

Phyl Allen
Terrigal VIEW Club 1978

*I love my man so dearly,
I adore him very much,
I dwell upon his every word
And tingle at his touch.
He's really very handsome,
Quite dark with shining eyes,
Which makes me think I'm foolish
To fret about his size.
He makes me laugh quite often
Which brightens up my life,
Although I must admit
At times he gets me into strife.*

*He escorts me to the bathroom,
He guards me in my bed,
I wouldn't change this man of mine
No matter what you said.*

*Who owns this true devotion,
A love as deep as that?
It's not my husband like you think,
But Sambo, my little cat.*



Nurse

Peggy Dawson,
Springwood VIEW Club 1978

*Fasting!
That's what it said
at the head of the bed.
But when she looked, the patient was dead!*

Nuclear Games

Marie Cookson
Campbelltown VIEW Club
Highly Commended Poetry Competition 1978

*They're making the neutron bomb, you know,
The one which saves the buildings
And only kills the people —
Including those, of course,
Who do not die at once but suffer
The slow agonizing death from radiation.
A 'clean' bomb, they call it — humane.*

*Then there is the ballistic missile
Programmed from thousands of miles away
To demolish its helpless target
With ruthless accuracy.
As well, there's the laser gun —
Not yet quite perfected,
Said to be the ultimate in effectively blinding the enemy.*

*Anti-Proliferation? Strategic Arms Limitation?
Well yes, they say talks are proceeding.
Meanwhile, billions pour into the stockpile of destruction
— but those already marked for death,
The piteous empty pot-bellied children,
The hopeless weary have-nots of the world still crave
deliverance.
Helpless as they, we shrink
From the final holocaust*

On A Summer Storm

Christine Goulstone,
Ingleburn VIEW Club
Highly Commended, Poetry Competition 1978

*A slow roll of drums in the orchestra of the elements
Heralds the coming of the storm.
The parched earth listens eagerly to the quickening crescendo,
Then, for a breathless moment, all is silent and still.
Even the trembling air itself is waiting.
The conductor quietly raises his baton of flame
With a sweep of his arm to trace brilliant arcs in the sky.
At last the long season of drought is rewarded:
The storm breaks.*

*The pale, brittle grass, now rejoicing in triumph,
Has visions of greenery almost forgotten,
In the long, tedious heat.
The torrents cascade down the drainpipes, washing the dust
From the rooftops
To rush down the gulleys in miniature rivers
Where children will paddle and sail paper boats
When the storm, the first storm of summer, is over.*

*The rain becomes gradually slower and steadier,
Until, with a gentle caressing farewell,
The recital is ended.
Leaves and blossoms drip in applause,
The ground oozes appreciation,
The curtains are lowered and the musicians retire,
Leaving behind an exultantly satisfied audience.*

Navigation

Peg Wright,
Macarthur Evening VIEW Club

*Navigation is not my specialty
and this ominous article is a reality.
A detestable street directory
which has been placed
strategically on my knee.
The lines and spaces,
names and dots
tell me I'm a stupid clot.
How can one who is normally bright
melt inside and dissolve in fright
when told "We're going out today,
here's a map — read it this way."
No help available, it's my fate
to feel so absolutely desolate.*

NOW

*At the second street turn right,
wonder if there'll be a fight,
'cause it should have been left at the
first.
Now I've developed an awful thirst,
my stomach is in knots,
My head feels void
and the driver is becoming very
annoyed.
Nerves on edge, reached
our destination,
thank goodness, no more navigation.
But can't relax, inwardly groan,
I have to guide the way back home.*

A Sad Disgrace

Valmai Heath,
Rockdale VIEW Club 1980

*The monkeys sat in a coconut tree
Discussing things as they're said to be,
Said one to the others, "Now listen you two,
There's a certain rumour that can't be true,
That man descended from our noble race,
The very idea is a sad disgrace.
No monkey ever deserted his wife,
Starved her babies and ruined her life.
And you've never known a Mother Monk
To leave her babies with others to bunk,
And pass them on from one to another
Till they scarcely know who is their mother.
And another thing you'll never see
A monk build a fence round a coconut tree
Letting the coconuts go to waste,
Forbidding all other monkeys a taste.
Why, if I put a fence around a tree,
Starvation would force you to steal from me.
Here's another thing a monkey won't do,
Go out at night and get on a 'stew'.
Or use a gun, a club or a knife,
To take some other monkey's life.
Yes! Man's descended it's certainly thus,
But, brother, he didn't descend from us!"*

The Ray of Life

Barbara Prescott,
Oatley VIEW Club.1980

*The ray of life, how bright it beams,
We have our hopes, we have our dreams,
Of days gone by, when He was King,
It was indeed a wondrous thing.
Now, in the coming generation,
Will there be the veneration,
Of life and all it means to me?
For that was what our Lord did see.
So let mankind all come in peace,
And pray to Him for hate to cease.
To hope their love and trust discovers
That man can meet as equal brothers.
And that all nations, creeds and race
Will find a peace to hold us fast.*

Pollution

Heather Grieve
Liverpool VIEW Club 1980

*I've read about pollution,
Of the earth and of the sea,
The atmosphere around us,
The dangers to you and me.
To future generations
A disturbed ecology
Will mean the loss of native
Plants, animals and trees.
I feel the worst pollution
Insidious as can be
Is the kind that ruins minds
Or a child's simplicity.
Those receptive little brains
Which respond so eagerly
To new ideas put forward
By a sick society.
I urge all thinking parents
To rise up and take a stand
To rid us of the evil
Which is flooding our dear land.*

The Lawless English Language

Yass Evening VIEW Club 1980

*We'll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes;
But the plural of ox should be oxen not oxes.
Then one fowl is a goose, but two are called geese,
Yet the plural of mouse should never be meese!
You may find a lone mouse or a whole nest of mice,
But the plural of house is houses, not hise!
If the plural of man is always called men,
Why shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?
If I speak of a foot, and you show me your feet,
And I give you a boot — would a pair be called beet'?
If one is a tooth, and a whole set are teeth,
Why should not the plural of booth be called beeth?
Then one may be than and three would be those,
Yet hat in the plural would never be hose;
And the plural of cat is cats, and not cose!
We speak of a brother, and also of brethren,
But though we say mother, we never say methren!
Then masculine pronouns are he, his and him,
But imagine the feminine, she, shis and shim!
So English, I fancy, you all will agree,
Is the funniest language you ever did see!*

Montage

Marie Maguire,
Leeton VIEW Club
1st Prize, Poetry Competition 1981

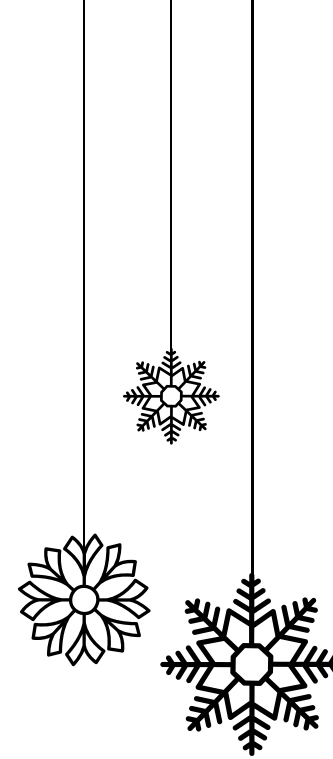
*Oh let me paint the wide horizon's
Curving sweep of hill and crest,
Draped with the textured cloth of blue
That distance weaves of trees close pressed,
Apportioning the depth of view;
Then patterning the red brown earth
With leafy planted miles, review
The labour of a vineyard's birth.
Rule straight the regimented rows
Of trellis posts. On wired vines
Hand turned and formed like living clay,
Add light, for there were dancing lines
of jewels strung on cobweb strands
As patiently I twined the canes
And held a sunbeam in my hands.
Record the seasons' pagentry
In colours to commemorate
The fleeting glory of the leaves,
The hint of sadness they create;
The "danse macabre" of winter's bones*

*In grotesque choreography
Of flashing blades and tossing canes
as prunings find their liberty.
Show the anxiety I feel
For those frost tender buds of spring
And speed the seasons' turning wheel,
Through spread of leaves and blossoming
To summer's end, when sweet cascades
Of tumbling ripened fruit will flow
To join the vintage cavalcades,
Like waves receding, row by row.
Let me express in this montage
That I have loved this stubborn soil,
Though dreams and beckoning mirage
Led on to bonds of humble toil.
A painting cannot signify
The true rewards of projects planned,
But all my words shall testify
That happiness grew from this land.*

Rainbow Birds

Milita Houlahan
Illawarra VIEW Club 1981

*In Arnhem Land we went by boat
Around the great lagoon,
Amid the myriad water-birds
on a July afternoon;
And in the trees along the verge,
Swift darting in their play,
Lovely, dazzling rainbow birds;
inquisitive little rainbow birds;
followed us all the way.
Little, rounded, green-capped heads
watched our progress slow.
Peeping from behind the leaves
To see which way we'd go.
Then swooping to the trees ahead,
Displaying in their flight
Stripes of pink and blue and green
In colours clear and bright.
Gold-hearted water lilies,
Blue, yellow, pink and white,
Enchant you with their beauty
And add to your delight.
Great lumbering buffaloes wallow there;
Gaunt crocodiles slither by.
And underneath the surface calm
The barramundi lie.
Enchanting place! A "dreamtime" land!
Down south, when winters here
I often long to be once more
On those waters, soft and clear
Where the magpie geese and the jabiru
Find a living easily won
And the rainbow birds of Arnhem Land;
those living jewels of Arnhem Land,
Flash brightly in the sun.*



Snow

Lilla Chadderton
Shellharbour VIEW Club

*Out of a darkened sky I see the falling snow
I close my eyes against the feathery touch I know.
I gasp as cold winds ice my lips and then
The morning brings the still white silence again,
With a deadened world, bereaved of all scents.*

To A Plane Tree

Laura McGrath
Albury Day VIEW Club

*Plane tree, you are slowly losing
Foliage, once green now gold,
Losing all your autumn glory,
Falling leaves you cannot hold.
Plane tree, don't feel bare or barren,
Don't feel naked, for you see
A different beauty now emerges,
You are still a lovely tree.
Sitting here beneath your branches,
Marbled trunk of browns and greys,
Limbs of mottled agate magic
Brighten dreary winter days.
Plane tree shed your autumn glory,
Let them go, they fall and fade.
Soon, surging sap will stir your dreamtime
When nature fits you out for shade.*

Terrigal

Fran Povey
Terrigal VIEW Club

*In Terrigal I'm back at home,
From here I vow no more to roam.
The golden sands, the deep blue sea,
This place is good enough for me.
Catamarans go sailing by
Underneath a clear blue sky,
White gulls searching round for food
—
I watch them in a pensive mood.
I must be mad to stray from here,
From everything that I hold dear.*

Where Knowledge Dwells

Beryl Sygraves
2nd Prize: Poetry Writing, 1989

*Mirrored on my soul
the image of another
hid in deep recesses
this vision of some other.
Through dark days and nights
when happiness hides its face
I search for some lost knowledge
in a lonely desert place
my soul succumbs to pain
in this season of sorrow
searching—searching
understanding not—tomorrow
then a hand outstretched
beckons
and bids me enter in
the land where understanding
love—hope—begin.
Mirrored on my soul
the image of another
hid in deep recesses
this vision of . . . my mother.*

Easter

Ferna McLean
Spears Point V.I.E.W. Club

*The world was dark
and death
was victor for that time
when God's own Son
hung limp upon the cross,
but out of death and darkness
light was born
and life, more life
sprang from the seed
sown there in anguish,
moistened with sweat
blood . . .
the risen Christ
became the living tree
and holds out nail-scarred
of life,
abundant, free.*

Link

Jessie McLoughlin
Cessnock V.I.E.W. Club
Commended Poetry Competition 1979

*The endless red dust wilderness
Halt in zenith still,
in hot-breathed, wide-eyed silence, sleeps.
We, sunk in noonday anoesis,
City senses space-stunned, solitude oppressed,
We too are silent, still.
Until, a minute preponderant movement
Catches the listless eye.*

*We see, travelling in secure accordant link,
A train of caterpillars
Each exact copy of the one in front,
Like products live, press-button activated,
on a factory assembly line
Or a regimented crocodile of children,
uniformed,
From a strictly disciplined boarding school.
This train, incredibly, soundless speeds
In easy co-operative humping-back gait,
Instinct drawn, perhaps to some destined
Larvae to pupae metamorphose place?*

*Near our pair of car clumsy coupled caravans
Roadside stopped
We, fascinated, watch*

*Emotions batteries recharged, thought
vibrates again.
In our imaginations, civilisation-hoop-trained,
caged —
We see steel sets of rails,
Precise, anonymous-manmade, sweat-laboured
laid,
Our separates selves at an embarking point
Self-proposed, self-attained.
Hear the hell-gate grates, the rattles, creaks
The querulous grumbles, growls, the screech,
The groans and walls —
ineffectual tantrums of engine-compelled
unwilling carriages.
Feel the swelling of rebellious nerves in our
migrained heads
Glimpse blear stranger faces, fortuitously,
briefly met,
But they become, in memory, some small
part of self,
See our exhausted, self-determining selves at
last
Reaching a purposed journey's end.
We speak not then, but sigh. Not analysing
why!
Then,*

*A mote of sound!
That fissioned into boulder, bangs and
bounces down a hill,
It dislodging other boulders, they likewise.
Timbre changes. Tumble-distant-rumble is
succeeded by
A rampaging steel-scaled monster's clang and
clank
its scrop and scrunch, its belly-depth,
brazen roar
A speed-despot lurched road-train rages past.*

*This dragon-dictator of highways scornfully
spumes the dust
That thick-hides the bitumen road. With giant
tail swish
Almost knocks us off our feet, with angry air
blast pain-splinters our ears.
Then, unknowing, uncaring thunders away
towards
Some target-specific city or town.*

*Quiet, and the dust, settle again.
Each one regards the rest of the group,
Insanely, high-pitched, laughs.
the dust could be feathers and tar, we reject*

*freaks from a far-off star
Only the bloodshot eyes reveal, human mind
dominion, earthly soul.
Recovered, we search for the caterpillars
Those crying-in-wildness prophets mute
Of sacred butterfly life.
And find them! On the edge of the road!
Sacrifice to the Juggernaut! Dead!*

*We shrug away the incident as piffling, past.
But oblivious road-train, caterpillars dead,
Our knowing, self-unknowing, selves
Are together and forever chained,
Because a prick in Time, a dot of space
In an eternity of both, by chance combined.
And who can tell what new event
Momentous or small, may yet join this chain?
Contrariwise, had those caterpillars lived
Perhaps, some chance poet, butterfly inspired
May have winged his singing way to heaven
And so begun a different train of circumstance?
but vain to speculate!
For no wisp-link in the Oneness of all life
Can ever be replaced, ever be rethread.*

The Tortured Willow Tree

Peg Wright
MacArthur Evening V.I.E.W. Club
Highly Commended 1979

*The leaves of my tortured willow tree
turned from green to brown,
gold and yellow in autumn,
then began to fall, like tears
as though it knew, come winter,
it would be bare,
like the corner of my heart
that cries for the one who's gone.*

*Soon, black sticks were etched against the sky,
spindly arms reached up to Heaven,
resembling many fingers
earnestly
entreating God to protect it
from
winter's cold and frost.
Sunrise on the thin branches*

*makes them appear like
spiders' webs
the dew dripping from the ends,
sparkles like diamonds.
Or are they tears?*

*In spring the leaves will grow
and once more the willow
will bend and sway in the wind;
happy to be whole again,
but not my heart,
that corner cannot be filled.
I am not like the willow tree
which changes with the seasons*

*Summer saw a prolific growth
of rich green to my willow tree*

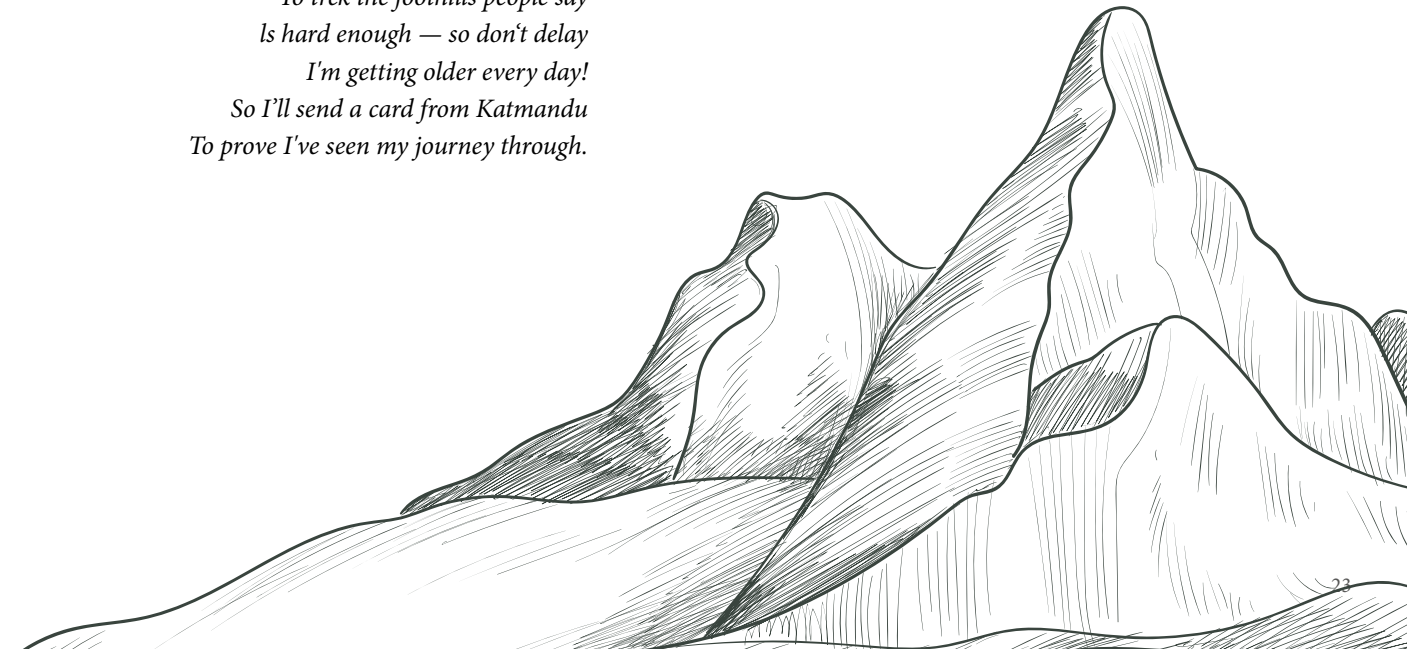
*and with the oppressive heat
it wilted and bent low,
like a woman heavy with child
anxious to be relieved
of her heavy burden.*

*Before long, the cycle
will repeat itself
and once again the willow tree
will be dropping leaves, like tears.
Not quickly, in one great burst,
but slowly,
saving more for tomorrow,
until gradually,
there aren't any more to shed.
Will I ever be like
my tortured willow tree?*

*I sit here quietly dreaming
And often breathe a sigh
When I think of all the beauty
Of my mountain top so high.
My thoughts dwell on it often
And the plans I have in mind
To climb it is my goal in life
I shake my head and sigh!
What! me climb up a mountain
When terrified of heights am I
I wonder I could be so bold
When I know I cannot stand the cold.
But there it rises, standing firm
Glorious and breathtaking — and I still yearn.
But maybe there's a compromise
I'll walk the foothills I surmise
And partly I'll attain my goal
And appease the yearning of my soul
To trek the foothills people say
Is hard enough — so don't delay
I'm getting older every day!
So I'll send a card from Katmandu
To prove I've seen my journey through.*

Ode to Mt. Everest

Audrey Coles
Hornsby VIEW Club



Austral Heritage

Mai Moxham
Twin Towns VIEW Club

*The clearest seas,
and brightest skies,
the warming sun,
A paradise.
This spacious land,
where mainly thrives
these lucky ones,
Whose luck survives by being here...
Not far away they live in want,
A chance of joy denied them,
They live in fear, neglect and want,
Do we help or share or hide them?
Do we appreciate the chance, to help them
and provide
or do we follow selfish needs.
an incompleated charter, undone deeds, neglected
plans, ignoring will to action.
This Land deserves a Nation, who possess a
mighty spirit
Not selfish satisfaction, nor platitudes of "Life,
Be in it."*

Discontent

Elsie S. Campbell,
Submitted by Beth Lush, Drummoyne VIEW
Club 1978

*I woke this morning in an awkward mood,
A strangely discontented frame of mind.
But as I made my way up to the town,
I met one who was blind!
"Oh, this incessant noise," I said. "This din.
It's really getting more than I can bear."
And then I met the sad, pathetic gaze
Of one who could not hear!
"Folk buzzing round," I grumbled, "all day long.
I scarcely have an hour to call my own."
Then I remembered, with a pang, a friend
Who had to live alone!*

A Summer's Day

Isabel Brooke
Campbelltown Day V.I.E.W. Club

*A cloudless sky of clearest blue,
A hot and dusty way—
A rambling cart with oxen two,
All on a Summer's day.
A battlefield of fighting men,
A frightened horse's neigh-
A cannon's roar, a bugle call
All on a Summer's day.
A convent chapel, cool and quiet,
A child who comes to pray—
A loving heart that turns to God
All on a Summer's day.*

The Shadow

Betty Cummins
Berowra Evening V.I.E.W. Club
1st Prize Poetry Competition 1989

*Going north for the winter
leaving the job, the cold and
the shadow.
I should be taking Mary
my good companion of 20
years.*

*Going north, knowing that
Mary will be the hitch-hiker
who hails me at the
crossroads
the girl in the pub for whom I
light a cigarette
the one with the long legs,
who laughing
melts into a corner.*

*Mary's image will blur each
photograph I take
her bony elbow jab me in my
sleeping bag.
For such a scrawny girl Mary
casts a long shadow.*

Trees

Phyllis Telfer
St Ives V.I.E.W. Club

*The wattle trees hold out their arms
To show their golden treasure.
The cherry trees around the farms
Wear blossoms for our pleasure.
The willow trees wear trailing gowns
With fringe as light as air,
But Christmas trees wear shining crowns
And tinsel in their hair,
With sprinkled snow
And candle glow,
And magic everywhere.*



I am Home

Milita Houlihan
Illawarra V.I.E.W. Club
1st Prize poetry Competition 1986

*Here I stand, as I have stood
Throughout a hundred years;
The windows are my eyes to see,
The walls my eager ears.
And those who dwell within my frame
Have felt my beating heart;
In all their lives, from start to end,
I have played a special part.
For I am Home
— unpretentious;
Humble; safe and warm;
Behind my doors they've sheltered
From the fury of life's storm.
I have heard their happy laughter;
Listened sadly to them cry;
Been witness to a baby's birth,
And watched an old man die.
Seemingly, my walls would stretch
Making room for 'just one more';*

*And no-one seemed to mind at all
The creaking in my floor!
Thru each new generation
I was filled with love and pride;
Warmth came, not only from my open hearth,
But from the hearts of those beside
So here I stand; as I have stood
Those hundred years or more;
Sheltering and shielding those
Who entered thru my door.
All their dreams and all their passions;
All their secrets safe with me;
I am Home and where their hearts are —
And somehow will always be.
And I am quite contented,
As I watch 'my children' grow
For I know that I am with them
Wherever they may go.*

Thoughts on The Unknown

Catherine Waters
St. Ives V.I.E.W Club
1st Prize Poetry Writing 1988

*Had we awareness in infinity
Before life's spark decreed us earthlings?
Did we inhabit space and tideless Sky?
Our life span brief, uncertain,
clings to the present by whim of beating heart.
Tomorrow hovers unrevealed,
and then becomes today
Space locks mankind in firm grasp
trapping us in light years,
flickering stars,
and warmth of failing sun.
Where lies our destiny?
Will we at last be one with earth and sea,
existing only in memory?
Yet
if Life has Wings
perhaps in flight the soul will soar
beyond vast spheres of aging moons,
finespun dust of stars,
toward a realm of never-fading light,
and there resolve the mystery*

Organ Music

Ferma McLean
Speers Point VIEW Club

*I am caught
in the swell of sound
and swept far back
on the ebb tide
of memory to become
a tremulous bride,
misted in voile and tulle,
moving with timorous tread
towards the upright figure
turned to take my hand.
I feel that handclasp now,
hear the evocative
Mendelssohn,
see greying temples,
approbative eyes and know
the ease of deep content
after vicissitudes
of intervening years.*

When We Met

Ferma McLean
St. Ives VIEW Club
(First published — Twentieth Century)

*There was no shooting star,
no violent thunderclap,
to announce your coming:
only a quiet step
and quiet voice
to change the ordered quietness
of my life
into a swirling chaos
of agitated thoughts
tumbling turning like homing pigeons
on that certain course
towards the new-found centre
of my universe.*

???

Gwen Wheatley
Central Blue Mountains VIEW Club

*Is there a different planet
peopled with another race?
Is there greed and hate and
anger clear on every face?
Do they persecute their
neighbours, abhor the blacks
with hate?
Do they leave the starving
children to their cruel and
dreadful fate!
Perhaps those other people on
a planet, there, above
Know only kind compassion,
togetherness and love.
While we, the earthbound
people destroy our world with
greed
Through selfishness and
hatred, we bring our world to
need.
Do they know desperate
poverty, or do they work as
one
In understanding tenderness,
up there, beyond the sun?*

Death of A Tree

Marie Cookson
Campbelltown VIEW Club
2nd Prize Poetry Competition 1976

*I saw you first a fresh straight sapling,
Eagerly you grew beside the house
Shining new,
Filled with the promise of young love.
Recklessly you grew,
Plunging roots to succour strength,
Rearing branches high and wide,
Tossing glossy scented mane
Burgeoning leafy shade.
Dappling babes asleep below —
impatient babes. impatient boys
Climbing, swinging through the years,
Storing treasured secrets in your heart.*

*Seasons smiled and swelled your glorious prime,
Riding storms lashed in by savage seas,
Blotting blaze of fierce westering suns,
Shimmering shapes in moonshine's silken breeze.*

*Then in the mellow years —
Children long departed,
A family's precious lifetime
Locked within the house,
You leaned a little closer
To its frailness, sheltering
Its empty lonely shell.*

*There you were each time I passed
My refreshing joy, familiar haven,
Unaware of planned development
Until today, grey unyielding day
When spreading greed grabbed you,
Tore at you with giant jaws of steel —
Trunk split wide, a sickening shudder
Wrenched you, twisted branches
Flailing frenziedly — implacably
It crashed you down, crunched you,*

*Strangled roots gasping to the sky —
With merciless ease that cold machine
Tossed you — you and your dear frail
Match-boxed house — in a grotesque
Mountainous pyre, sinking
In an ashen shroud of dust.*

*I shall never share your splendour again.
Time, in subtle fulfilment,
Has shrivelled and discarded me —
Saddened, shamed to see you die
Ignominiously.*

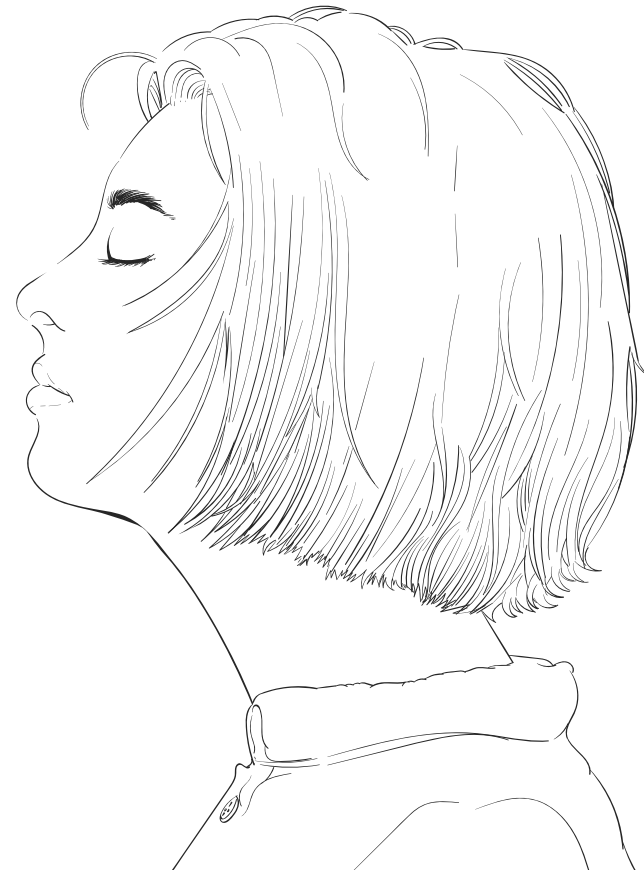
Man's Greed

Margaret Dawson,
Springwood VIEW Club.

*Inflation?
It wasn't us mate!
We only wanted
a little more.
What's wrong with that?
Terrible though, ain't it,
the way prices
keep going up?
Course, it wasn't us —
we only asked for
adjustments:
it was the other fellow
who made the unreasonable demands.
No, you got it all wrong mate:
we work
we do a fair day's work
for a day's pay.
Well, don't we?
Why shouldn't we
have a piece of the cake?*

*Jack's as good as his master,
didn't you know?
in fact,
he's a damn sight better
in our view.
They can't do without us
didn't you know?
Let's have a strike,
let's make them see
how much they need us.
Why shouldn't we
have as much as they?
We could have founded
industrial empires,
but we never had a chance, see?
We didn't have the time,
or the inclination,
for study. see?
Still, that's no reason
why we*

*shouldn't earn as much
as he who did.
We've got a right to have as
much.
Inflation?
Too bad ain't it mate.
Not that it's our fault,
we've all got the right
to harbour views.
You've got to have
the odd strike
ain't yer?
Just to let them know
we're important, see?
Power doesn't corrupt
course it don't.
Inflation?
Not our fault, mate.
You got it all wrong,
see?*



Thoughts at A Store Parade

Marie Cookson
Campbelltown VIEW Club.

*You, with your superior
slither-walk,
Sliding eyes barely veiling
boredom,
Flouncing by with
contemptuous skinny hips
You really leave me flat.
No warmth surrounds you, no
rapport,
Even your electric smile,
flashed computer style,
Stirs no envy in this matron's
breast.
My legs are tired, my feet are
sore,
Not for me your latest way-
out fashion,
Just a cup of tea, a good
sit down,
Then perhaps I'll buy a paper
pattern.*

My Jewel

Freda Vendy
Epping VIEW Club.

*I have a jewel which none can take from me,
A blessed gift from God, the gift of memory.
Sometimes it glitters brightly, when I remember spring
And years long past, when I heard the wild birds sing.
My jewel shone like a star when my first love came to me,
That day is still as bright in my jewel of memory.*

*When I'm alone sitting in placid reverie,
My jewel begins to glow, my jewel of memory.
Then I think of trusted friends and places I have been
And my jewel does not remind me of things that might
have been.
its glow bids me thankful for the happiness I've had
And keeps me from remembering all that was wrong or sad.*

*May I always keep my jewel, this gem of memory,
Gleaming with all the happy things that have been dear to me:
Laughing children full of pranks, wild flowers sweet on
mossy banks,
Meeting people, making friends, helping others.
There's no end to what my jewel does for me.
Let loneliness pass me by, even as I thank you God for
memory.*

The First Homecoming

Anida Watkins
Hornsby VIEW Club.
2nd Prize, Poetry Competition 1977

*Nybroder - Copenhagen
Blood ties and kindred yet unknown,
dreams made urgent by flying years,
stretched taut bonds across the sea
Drew us from our southern home
like magnets, to a soft, green land,
where voices, not pens, were saying
in our tongue and theirs,
Welcome to our home.*

*In a peaceful village within city zone,
built by a King for seafaring men;
eager footsteps ringing on ancient cobbles,
fell silent, by a house of stone:
Where time melded memory with love
as other gentle voices whispered:
Remember, your roots are here,
Welcome to your father's home.*



Long Reef

Isabel Gaven
Pittwater VIEW Club.

*I have walked where only sea gulls tread
On golden days where sandy stretches spread
To meet the sloping green of grass-grown hills.
And scrambled over rocks in wind-flung spray
When all the gold has turned to misty grey.*

*And I have lain, drowsy limbed,
in sun-washed grassy hollow
On summer days of blue and green
When limpid pools are shallow
And seen through quick transparent water.
Golden dapples laugh on sand.*

*At evening I have watched the light of day
Slow change from brightest gold to palest grey
Through softly merging shades of pink,
then mauve, then blue;
And seen the twisted shapes of storm-tormented trees
Against the satin shine of rose and turquoise seas.*

The Beach Race

Dorothy Miller
New Lambton VIEW Club. 1965

*What is lovelier on this earth
Than blue expanse of sea and shy,
Untrodden sand. The children's mirth
As they race on. The seagulls' cry
When, startled by our splashing pace,
They wheel and soar with easy grace,
Then hank and turn, and coldly stare
At strong brown limbs and saltcaked hair.*

*I'll have this day to warm my heart
When winter winds and rain-swept sand,
Seeming now a world apart,
Shall keep us from this sun-filled place.
When, bundled in our heavy clothes,
We can no longer laugh and race
With heaving chests and spray-stung eyes.
Dear heaven! This is paradise!*

On Flight North

Mary Osmotherly,
Killarney Vale VIEW Club

*Across the wide and starry sky,
This large and glorious bird does fly,
and brings me to the place I once called home.
A long long night we sat and slept,
But now as daylight breaks,
Up comes the sun over the desert as a bright
red dome.
No sign of life there far below,
Just barren earth, mysterious looking,
In the reddish glow of the rising sun,
The last leg of our journey has just begun.
A few more hours and I will be there,
Memories of my childhood and my youth
are unfolding in my mind.
But, whatever I will find,
My thoughts already roam far ahead,
to my return to the land I love,
And where I want to be
Till I gasp my dying breath, Australia.*

Just For Today

Nola Stevens,
Coffs Harbour VIEW Club.

*I will do someone a good turn
and see what I can learn,
Then for strength I will pray
to be unafraid; just for today.
Just for today; I will see beauty
and conserve it as my duty,
Then to world, peace, I will give
making it a better place to live,
Just for today.
I will live through this day
knowing the price I must pay
I will learn a useful way
To improve myself; just for today.
I will not find fault with friend
or make them change or bend,
Think before each word I say
exercise my character; just for today.*

What Makes A Mother

Kaylene Tremble,
Goulburn Evening VIEW Club.

*The birth of a baby
Is a wonderful thing
The pain and the waiting
Is worth the happiness it brings.
Giving birth doesn't make a Mother
Believe me because I know
It's the sharing of your lifetime
The care and the loving that you show.
It's walking up and down the floor
in the middle of the night,
"He didn't come with instructions"
Dear God, am I doing right?
It's sponging a clammy little face
When his temperature does soar
What a great relief when all is well
and you creep out of the bedroom door.
As you look at his little body
Your eyes begin to smart;
I didn't give you birth, my son;
But I am your Mum
I love you with all my heart.*

Motherhood

Milita Houlahan,
Illawarra VIEW Club.

*Motherhood is woman's role; Mother
Nature's own decree,
It often means great sacrifice and it's never
trouble free.
There are moments of supremest joy,
some of carefree fun,
And the greatest satisfaction in a job that's
been well done!
Yet, would there be a mother, in this troubled
world today,
Who could, with utmost honesty,
ever really say
That she hasn't often wondered what
motherhood's about,
Amidst the trials and tribulations, nagging
conscience and self-doubt?
Would there be a mother who hasn't felt
like giving up?
Who hasn't had her fill of care, in overflowing
cup?
And would there be a mother, ever loving,
sometimes wise,
Who could say it isn't worth it, despite the
problems that arise?
From the moment of conception to the
wonder of the birth,*

*There isn't any other feeling to compare
with this on earth.
From babyhood to childhood we tend their
every need,
Admonishing, administering, praying they
will heed.
Through chicken pox and measles, they are
nursed with loving care,
Through every major crisis they know that
we'll be there.
We cope with tantrums and with temper,
with all their childish schemes,
We share their secrets and their sorrows
and their adolescent dreams.
We lovingly protect them and teach them
right from wrong,
Emphasising always that truth is ever strong.
Sometimes we feel we fail them, that our
task is just too great;
We wonder how we manage, but we haven't
long to wait
To know it's worth the effort, when we see
them fully grown,
And know with pride they've blossomed from
the seeds that we have sown!*

Stress

Margaret Dawson,
Springwood VIEW Club.

*They say that I don't relate,
That I am totally withdrawn,
I don't function anymore
As a person should.
They don't
understand the
loneliness
I feel.
That when
I reach out
There is no one there
Only noise and stress.
And everyone demanding
That I succeed,
That I realise my potential,
That my children excel
At everything.
But I am only
One
With limitations,
Which is why
I withdraw
From the unequal
Struggle.*



Autumn

M. Osmotherly
Killarney Vale VIEW Club

*Walking in a country lane, I came by some trees
Beeches and poplars they were,
They had shed their leaves, their branches bare
I pondered that it seemed only days ago
trees,
bare.
Since they were in their golden autumn glory;
Oh, how time goes by!
Some mighty pines nearby, hovered hinter
As if to shield them from harsh winds
Coming off the snow-capped hills in winter
My thoughts went out to us,
Now in the autumn of our lives;
How, like those trees, we shield one another with our love,
Warming our hearts into the winter.
There is only one different thing; unlike the trees,
We cannot prepare again for spring.*



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