

Poetry Series

Don Stratford
- poems -

Publication Date:

2007

Publisher:

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Don Stratford()

I am an ordinary bloke who has always especially liked Australiana, Australian bush poetry and yarns and the humour it provides. I decided to try my hand at it and am enjoying the experience immensely. Since finding poemhunter I am beginning to appreciate many other forms of the written verse by so many clever people.

I will continue to do both.

A Long Way Back

From the far flung reaches of the outback
To the low coastal plains by the sea
This drought is as long and as biting
That anyone a-lives ever seen

Stock numbers they are all dwindling
Not from selling them now at the yard
But because of lack of tucker and water
They're dying and that's really hard

We'd sell what we can if we could
But no money for them is to be
So more expense and being humane
A bullet is better for them don't you see

Thru the tears as the cocky fires shots
Looking in the eyes of his stock one by one
As he presses the barrel to their foreheads
And pulls the trigger of his hot smouldering gun

He can see all his work fall before him
He can see his son's future lost just as well
As he continues to shoot his starved cattle
And curses everything he knows all to hell

There appears to be nothing left for them
But to abandon the family farm in one call
And leave it all to the bank man
That'll see him end up with nothing at all

The generations that have all gone before him
His father and grandad alike
Had all done it hard he remembers
When he was just a small tyke

But to endure what he has now for years
That the toughest of tough couldn't do
To destroy all you love and have worked for
His pain and desperation just grew

When finally the job that he started
Was completed and all was quite still
He sat down there right beside them
And cried until he was ill

Finally he raised his bent head
As he slowly walked back to the homestead
With thoughts running rampant like crazy
To tell loved ones of what he now dread

To say to his wife and his children
"No longer the farm life for us
We'll now have to pack our belongings
Were now town folk", he said with a cuss

But the cocky he is very resilient
And some time had elapsed fortunately
As he slowly put dollars together
To get his farm back now can't you see?

It's taken a long time to deliver
To get back his roots and all his zest
To the place that he was brought up on
Where generations of family graves rest

So now they are back at their homestead
"But by Christ it's been hard", he would say
"It's a long way back when you're flat as a tack
But the fights worth every penny today"

(11 / 4 / 2007-Inspired by the poem "rain from nowhere" by Murray Hartin)

Don Stratford

A Spanners Life

I once was new and shinny
Made of steel and hardened true
And I sat upon the old shop shelf
Just waiting for my cue

Then along came a new boy, no less
Looking for his brand new toy
To take to his new work shop
Where he could use me with great joy

After every single use from there
He would wipe me down real good
And put me care-fu-ll-y away
Like all good mechanics should

Now over years as time marched on
He slackened off a bit
He did forget to wipe me down
And it felt like I'd been hit

From then it was all downhill
He didn't wipe me down at all
And even had me lay around
He didn't listen to my call

Now many years have passed away
I get thrown from here to there
Along with all the other lads
In the toll box if you dare

I'm now all rusty, marked and bent
From my toil and just hard work
But it doesn't seem to bother him
I'm just another jerk

So I say to all my steely mates
Avoid the spanners life
Its glamour and its packaging
Will only lead you into strife

Don Stratford © 30 / 9 / 2005

Don Stratford

Be A Man

To be man you don't cry
You must stand up and be tall
It's the way of the world
Oh bugger it all

How to deal with the pain
That is burning inside
For the loss of my wife
I won't cry it's called pride

But deep in the night
When I lay all alone
The pain it is there
Who will I call on the phone?

To release all emotions
All pent up and strong
The pain and the suffering
From her death all along

I'm going it alone
If I have to let go
Because cry I am going to
So be it!

Don Stratford © 13/9/2005

Don Stratford

Brothers In Arms

They crossed the high country
The flats and the plains
In cars, trucks and buses
And even in trains
Together they travelled
Across this great land
The width and the breadth
Always hand in hand

The jobs that they shared
Adventures untold
Both working together
Through the heat and the cold
The man in his check shirt
In boots and in jeans
With his dog he calls Windbag
Who is heard but not seen

But it's all in his mind
He hasn't left home at all
This brother of mine
Who always walks tall?
"Cause I'm proud to be with him
Proud to be mates
To help him live his life
Outside of his gates

Don Stratford May 10,2001 ©

Don Stratford

Bush Mechanic Ingenuity

The cursin' and the swearin' could be heard for miles around
As the bush mechanic worked and toiled with great gusto and great sound
There were problems with the thing-a-majig and the whatsit gismo failed
And he couldn't fix the flamin' thing no matter how he wailed

He attacked it with a hammer, chisel, heat and cold as well
He tried all manner of things he could and cursed them all to hell
Nothin' he tried would budge it he was miffed beyond belief
So he threw the bloody thing away it was such a big relief

Never one to get beat, you see, he got his dander up, you bet
So he took his crayon from desk draw, he'd beat that damn thing yet
On dirty paper no less you'd expect, his formula and sum
He'd make the bloody thing work all-right, he'd make that damn thing hum

After drawing hard throughout the day and half the night as well
The scratchings on the paper were, as you'd guess, a little hard to tell
He rubbed out this and that you see as he thought of another way
It all just looked like one big mess but by golly he'd make it pay

He set to work to make that thing so it would last a long, long while
With lots of welds to this and that all the time he has a smile
'Cause he knows it will look silly but i-t will surely work
And for many years to come they'll say that that's a real strange quirk

A success it was and it all worked fine "but boy" did it look weird
Things jutted here and jutted there and people they just leered
But there's no denying what he'd done to improve upon the life
Of the thing-a-majig and gismo that gave him all that strife

His idea has now been stolen as no patent did he file
But the bush mechanic has no concerns as he knows that all the while
That it was he who has created it, the thing that's gone world wide
As it's all his in-gen-uity that fills him full of pride

Don Stratford © Roma Qld.27 / 8 / 2005

Don Stratford

Dare To Be True

The way ahead may not be clear
The way ahead should hold no fear
Have an inner peace
Conviction strong
To sail your path
To sing your song

Live it to the full
Be kind and brave
And don't hold back
When you strike a wave
Just charge on thru
'cause on the other side
Is what you've wanted
The life you crave

And should you find
That you were wrong
All is not lost
Just change your song
A new direction
More inner strength
And start again
Jump another fence
Adjust, adapt but don't despair
It will work out if you only dare

Don Stratford © 18 September 2004

Don Stratford

Dunny Budgie Heaven

It was the start of something new
The very start of a new home
The dunny budgie will be pleased
Somewhere new for him to roam

He will come for miles around
For a stake in this new fare
He will fight you tooth and nail
To ensure he gets his share

The pit it has been dug
And the walls will soon be there
And then they'll put the roof on
Then the door and then the chair

And once it has been used
And I'll tell you it won't take long
For the dunny budgie to arrive
To put you off your song

18 / 9 / 2005

Don Stratford

Flower Of Life

The rose is a flower to delight and behold
From its scent to its touch it is nature's pure gold
With colours and perfumes for all that they're worth
To be cherished and nurtured right from their birth

From the very beginning of life that they come
A seed to be planted and nurtured like some
With food and love tender from time since begun
They grow up to give pleasure to ev-ery-one

From a bud to begin with that will hit a cord
To the magnificent flowers that are much adored
On stems that are straight and covered in thorns
That are there to protect them from predator's horns

From the soft touch of the petals so tender and light
To the gnarly old wood that holds them up-right
From blossom and bloom to the end of their day
They are joy to be part of our life all the way

It's just how I find you like the flower of a rose
Like the soft, gentle petals all sweetness of pose
So tender, so fragile, so sweet and so strong
To be held, nurtured and cherished and loved all along

To be fed with the right mixture of tenderness and love
Encouragement, commitment and faith from above
To allow you to prosper and encourage you to grow
With me as your backstop and to halt any blow

Our life to be lived, enriched by each others care
With joy, laughter and happiness that we will share
To belong to each other with the commitment of life
And we'll stand strong together to ward off all strife

So join me in a future and let it unfold
As long as we have each other it will be pure gold
We will fight the good fight and together we'll stand
Always side by side and always hand in hand

Don Stratford © 5 / 5 / 2005

Don Stratford

Garden Fork Boogie

In childhood days things they were tough, no money was to spare
We had to grow our fruit and vegies for all of us to share
And when things needed burning, no fancy fire place was there
It was a forty four with holes in it, so the fire could get some air

The garden fork took pride of place and was jammed into the ground
Right next to where it's needed to stir the fire around
There was a nut that's jammed on tight from many years before
It was on the right hand prong, up one third, or maybe even more

Now I went down this fateful night with mum to help her out
And after stirring up the fire she soon let out a shout
She had stuck the fork back in the ground and then just right on cue
The prong was now jammed thru her foot with the nut right thru her shoe

The boogie now it did take place because Mum just couldn't move
We tried to ease the dammed thing but it was stuck right in the groove
Any movement of the fork at all was too painful for her to bear
The bloody thing was jammed so hard we had to take great care

How to try to ease a fork stuck thru foot and in the ground
We tried to wiggle it back and forth, but it was stuck real sound
Each time we moved it to and fro my Mum let out a moan
You could hear it tearing skin and muscle as well as bloody bone

I got a stick to try to lever under neath the outside edge
But nary a movement did I get I needed like a wedge
So to the shed I bounded for a shovel there to take
To slip under my Mothers foot to try to ease her ache

Slowly, slowly we did pry with shovel and the stick
With Mother groaning, moaning and making like she's sick
Which did not at all surprise me given that her fate was so?
In trying to get the dammed fork out that's jammed right near her toe

But try we might it wouldn't budge, it really was that bad
It seemed at one stage she'd have to stay there, it was looking sad
You could hear the squishy, squelching as we tried to move that fork
As we tried to pull it from the ground and Mum, well she couldn't talk

A miracle was now required, she's too crook to go on now
Extract that dammed fork was our cry to get it out somehow
We prized in little fits and starts an hour or maybe more
Until it popped out with a squelch, relief was by the score

The problem then was one of what to do and how much we should care
You see the fork was still attached; her foot was hanging in the air
So like a crutch the fork was used, little movements were the go
As she leaned upon my shoulders but we had to go real slow

Hobbling slow and painfully we made it to the shed
Where mum had finally got to sit but she'd sooner have a bed
Off to the house I now did run to find the car keys on the hook
And raced back down to where Mum was, mate she was looking crook

How to get her to the Doctors now, she couldn't drive at all
The car was but a manual and I had to help her, I recall
So on the floor between her legs a seven year old did sit
With mother shouting directions as though she'd had a fit

The clutch was hard to push right in and I was full of fear
I'd push it down with both hands now so mum could find a gear
"Slowly" she said "let it out" so we could back out of the shed
But I let it out now way too fast which was something that she dread

Many times we tried to move and many times we failed
Until co-ordination reigned and Mum let out a wail
of shear delight and hope a tunnel light to see
that to the Doctors we could go, relief for her and me

So while she steered the car around I was on the floor
Between her legs working pedals from directions by the score
Push slowly on the power one now and now push in the clutch
Which one is that please let me know, I don't know all that much

So off we set with me now doing all the things Mum said
Push in clutch, now on the brake, and speed it up instead
But some how we did manage with pedal duty me
While Mum kept right on steering and moving gear stick on the tree

The Doctors we did finally make and then I raced inside

A panting and a puffing from excitement and of pride
in helping Mum to get unstuck and driving her just now
To get her to the help required but I really don't know how

Mum got fixed that night, be sure, but many months went by
Before she was to gladly say she's right now, with a sigh
And to this day some people ask about the missing prong
on our fork that's still down by the drum to stir the fire along

Mum never talked about that night, not that I remember, so
But I'll never forget the night we had when we were down real low
You don't want many of them you see 'cause it was not a goodie
The night my Mum and I did dance that painful "Garden Fork Boogie"

Don Stratford © 5 / 11 / 2006

Don Stratford

Great Australian Wave

You can do it in the garden
You can do it in the bar
You can do it at the barbie
You can do it in the car

You can do it at the beach
And you can do it out the back
You can do it almost anywhere
Including on a hack

You can do it walking by
Or you can do it on the run
You can do it sitting by a lake
But let me tell you it's no fun

It's a pastime that you cannot dodge
To wave your arms and curse and cry
It's called the great Australian wave
To shoo away that pesky fly

Don Stratford © 13 / 9 / 2005

Don Stratford

How To Fool Your Mum

There's time aplenty you can tell
When you can fool your mum to hell
Or think you can and you should think
That she knows all from kitchen sink

A trip now planned down to the creek
To float our boat we made last week
Was not allowed so I'll be bold
And not take note of what I'm told

To Sunday school and church it was
in Sundays best attire because
that is what happened on that day
Then quickly home to change and play

Time was of the essence now
No time was there to change somehow
So to the creek in Sunday's best
To float our boat, no time to rest

I was first in to float it so
A wonky ride that was the go
Until the middle I did get
And fell right out to get all wet

To bank I swam all dripping wet
Oh lordy how could I forget
To change into my old play clothes
I wished I had now, I suppose

Home quickly now to wring them out
But slime it sticks so I did shout
Oh bugger, damn, know what I mean
I'll put them in the wash machine

Ah! woollen pants I so did scrub
In washing round and round the tub
But frayed they came out so it seems
They fell apart right at the seams

Do you think she'll know once they are dry?
I'll hide them in my draw, I cried
And when Mum asks just where they are
They did get lost somewhere afar

A day or two it did go by
And not a word from Mum did pry
But on the third she did just say
What happened to the pants all frayed

How could she know, I hid them well
They were stashed away and didn't smell
A hiding now seemed likely, so
A small white lie seemed like the go

As kids you don't suspect who'll talk
A neighbour's chat about the walk
down at the creek this Sunday past
To learn how not to build a craft

A hiding didn't come my way
But suspension from my time at play
And all the time you always dread
'bout the eyes in the back of Mothers head

Don Stratford © 20/11/2006

Don Stratford

Judgement Day

The old fella was weary, of that you could tell
as he trudged down the highways wheeling push bike with bell,
collecting old cans and bottles from the edge of the road
to take into the bottle 'o' and there to un-load

He was dressed always the same in his faded attire
under a First World War great coat that wouldn't inspire
you to endear yourself to him in any real way,
and you can be certain of that, 'or so they would say'

It didn't matter the day or the week, you could tell
He would always be out there without taking a spell
as he went on about his leg-weary job
Filling spud bags for saddle bags that would earn him a bob

Thru the heat and the cold he was always there,
not stopping for anything, not even to stare
at those who would taunt him, who were very unfair?
driving past in their cars because they had their share

A part of the landscape, he was always around
trudging wearily onwards, do tell, I'll be bound,
Then when he went missing and some time had elapsed
for the town folk to realise he may have collapsed

A small note in the paper was all that was found
to say of this poor fellow he's no longer around
With just a bare handful to say their goodbyes
all standing together under darkening skies

And as months rolled on all forgotten was he
until headlines appeared, declaring boldly with glee
of the mystery man and his big money tree
left in charities favour - a few Million you see

He has now pride of place in the centre of town
with a plaque in his honour - no more trudging around
To finally rest-up with his dignity to call,
this leg-weary traveller to be admired by all

13 / 7 / 2006

Don Stratford

Life Time Commitment

From the highest of North's to the depth's of the South
From the width's of the East to breadth of the West
My arms wrapped around you to comfort and console
From this day forward to have and to hold

My love does grow deeper, day after day
All the things that you are, are on display
From the top of you head to the tips of your toes
Our love shows no bounds as it grows and it grows

I can feel all your being and I know you can too
And that you understand that comfortable shoe
It fits us so neatly, together we'll be
And no matter what there will be you and me

For a lifetime together to rejoice and enjoy
With fun, laughter and happiness, that is our ploy
To be served with a mixture of tenderness and love
With all of the blessings of Him up above

So join me my lovely for a future divine
All circled together so it can-not unwind
For now and for always we will just adore
Our lifetime together, for ever-more

Don Stratford © 11 / 7 / 2006

Don Stratford

Loss

There are tears in my eyes
From the loss of my mate
And I think
It will hurt till my end

Don Stratford © 1/10/2005

Don Stratford

Love Me Or Leave Me

How can you say you love me?
How can you say you care?
When you never, never show me
That you are prepared to share

How can you talk of sorry?
How can you talk of pain?
It's time you looked at what you do
There's much for you to gain

What is it you expect of life?
Is it just your selfish ways
Or do you think that you know all
And wish to keep me in a haze

It's time for things to alter
You need to change your hard, fast life
If we're to have a future
You need to listen to your wife

Don Stratford © 1/10/2005

Don Stratford

Missing

Material things
Missing a shield
Who gives a tinkers cuss
Emotional it is

Money it helps
The love of your life
That's what counts

What to do at the loss
A best mate fallen
No longer to be seen
Memories are all that's left

To go on is life
Strength is required
Get through it you can
Meet again is the plan

A call to your arms
Once again
For a moment I dream
Because I love you so

Don Stratford © 1/10/2005

Don Stratford

Moira's Song

There are songs about Mary
And Becky and Sue
There are songs about Gloria
And Calendar girls too
There are songs about sweethearts
And longings so true
But Moira my love
This song is for you

Chorus

So don't despair darling
With all certainty
This will last forever
Through e - tern - ity

There are songs about Leah
And Jo-leane as well
There are songs about lost loves
They came and they fell
My love stands eternal un - con - ditional
There is nothing that I
wou - ld not do for you

Chorus

There are songs about Daisy
Maggie and Jude
About Claudette and Mary -Lou
and Peggy-Sue too
Many songs of loved women
Throu - out his- tory
You have waited a long time
And I hope you can see

Chorus

So hold your head high dear
In decades to come

A young man and young woman
Will faa-aaal in love
And he to will resurrect
A song of the past
For his love one called Moira
That shows that it lasts

Chorus

Don Stratford May 10, 2001 ©

Don Stratford

Mossies

For Raynette

You can hear those blighters coming
You can look hard but cannot see
The small and biting insects
They'll get to you and get to me

The mossie he is cunning
He'll wait till almost dark
'Cause he knows it's hard to see him
When he flies in for his mark

He doesn't really care if it's an arm
Or it's a leg
Or any other part of you
He doesn't have to beg

He'll dine on for a while
Until you realise he is there
Then you let fly and squash him
And carry on with great f-a-n fare

You think you have done well
One more or less for you to care
But what you hadn't realised
There is plenty more to share

So on and on it goes
Until you give up in discussed
And go inside to safety
Into peace and silent lust

19/9/2005

Don Stratford

My Shed Nightmare (Part One)

"Go down and chop the wood" Mum said "it's going to be cold"
So off I trudged into the mist while trying to be bold
It was getting dark and sounds appeared that were not there before
My inner self was shaking hard as shadows lengthened more

The chopping block had pride of place outside the old shed doors
It was big and old and gnarled and it'd seen so many chores
From splitting wood to kindling to the decapitation of a bird?
That was put into the cooking pot to feed the hungry herd

The surface was now part con-caved from all the use it had
But I couldn't get it levelled out because I asked my dad
and he just said "son get on with it and don't mind that it's so
just be careful every log you hit that you don't hit your toe"

As darkness set it did get tough to see what logs there were to split
The barrow now was almost full and I was thinking that was it
It was time to get back to the house those sounds were getting worse
Then a blood curdling scream deep within the shed that sounded like a curse

I took off back up to the house, my feet, they didn't touch the ground
From what I can remember I did it all in just one bound
I raced into the kitchen and I was white as white could be
And told mum what'd happened and she just laughed and said, "let's see"

For quite some time I wouldn't budge, to the kitchen I was bound
Mum kept on saying that its OK we'll go down to find that sound
So taking torch and candles - we slowly did adjourn
Down to the shed and wood heap where I almost had my turn

Mum whistled away quite merrily - she didn't seem to care
Of what was now awaiting us she was sure to lay it bare
To find the awful creature that gave me such a start
And lay it all to rest be sure - and to settle my thumping heart

Slowly step by step we went as we progressed towards the shed
And I gotta tell you right here and now it was something that I dread
To face that god damn awful thing that made that eerie sound
That set my heart a thumpin' and spun me round and round

By now it was getting pretty dark and images appeared
No matter where I looked or turned those shadows they just leered
As if to say come here young lad we'll have you in our spell
And I'm not bloody kiddin' mate I was as scared as hell!

My knuckles were all white and stiff hanging on to Mum so tight
And every little sound and move they gave me such a fright
Till the shed we did arrive at and scratching sounds were heard
From deep within that haunted shed but there was not a word

The light from torch and candles were not all that good those days
But we fumbled on in any case, in all our awkward ways
Then we found ourselves inside the shed drenched only in half light
With shadows only lengthening and projecting an eerie sight

Then out of the corner of my eye a movement I did spy
I wasn't sure of what it was but it was big - and I let out a cry
And clung onto me Mum much tighter th-an she thought I should
As we swung our light to see it more as it ducked behind the wood

"Come out you nasty thing right now and show your face to us"
But our lights they were not strong enough and Mum let out a cuss
Slowly, slowly it did rise and walked towards our light, "Ye-gad!"
The face that stepped into the light was that of my own Dad

Don Stratford 20 / 9 /2006

Don Stratford

My Shed Nightmare (Part Two)

To say that I was cranky and to say that I was sore
About the bloody trick played out that went straight to my core
From my old man who laughed and laughed about his little prank
That had me passing razorblades that I have him to thank!

The look that was upon his face as he came into our light
Was one of only pleasure and just sheer damn delight?
Of a trick and of tom-foolery that caught his victim well
But all that I could think of was that you can go to hell!

He tried to put his arm round me and console his frightened son
But I brushed away his advances now and told him I'd have none
of his condolences, not now, nor probably never could
From such a dastly deed played out while I was chopping wood

Now I don't know to this very day if Mum was at all aware
Of what my Dad intended and how he planned to scare
the living wits right out of me in the shed on that one night
But to this day I've not found out if she knew about the fright

For quite some time I didn't speak to my old man at all
He kept on saying that it's all right stand up and you be tall
And don't you ever back away if you know that you are right
'Cause someday son you'll work it out and you will see the light

Now you've gotta know, as years went on, that episode been told
to many an ear that would listen and to dad it was pure gold
A lesson that he taught his son that should stand him in good stead
To enable him to live his life and for him to get ahead

I gotta tell you now that over years and since that scary night
My life did change, I'm not scared now and it gave me much insight
So don't be concerned and have a go no matter how things look
Nothing can be that scary and nothing can be that crook

My Dad and I we reminisce and all that has been said
He tells me now how proud he is that not a tear was shed
And that I made something of life and really had a go
Which justified all that he did to so many years ago?

So I tell you now if sons you have you wish to teach them how
to have a go and live their life and for you to be so proud
Don't send them down to chop the wood on their own and in the dark
Nor scare the living life from them to leave such an indelible mark

Don Stratford © 15 / 10 / 2006

Don Stratford

Pay Back

At age sixteen I started work - I couldn't wait - that could be seen.
The need to learn of all new things, I gotta tell you - I was keen.
My first real pay it did arrive, and it went just as quick
I'd spent the lot in nothing flat - it almost made me sick.

Mum tried to pulled me into gear, as mothers often do
to try to stop me spending up, and to 'save a bob or two'.
Now that went down a treat I'll tell you not. No way that that would work!
She walked away and shook her head just saying 'you're a jerk! '

'If you're to spend up all your dough I'll hit you for a six'
'Its board you'll pay from this day forth just try that on for kicks'
She hit me for a fiver and as we argued black and blue
Week in week out - a fiver it was - and no more could I do

I soon got jack of that do tell, as I continued with my chore.
I took a stand and called her bluff, 'a Tenner now, be gone'
'I'll not do anything round here', I did let out a cry
'That's all-right son, be on you way, don't worry I won't pry'

Things they got tense between the two and neither would give in.
The old girl had the upper hand, she had me in a spin.
But stubbornness it did step up a costly blow to me.
There's no way she would say a word, and that's how it would be.

And as I reached the age of man, a party was the go,
with all my mates and family around, it was a roaring show.
Next day I took the time to see what all the presents were,
then I found the one from mum - a special one from her.

It was a bank book full up to the brim of all those weeks of board!
I'll tell you now, there was no doubt, this really hit a cord.
A lesson learned from then till now, and even thou she's gone
it's remained with me for all these years, - and now it's been passed on.

I've taught this lesson to my kids, and I know of how they are.
I'd like to think she's up there now - a shining twinkling star.
A legacy that's been passed on - for now and evermore.
'Thank you Mum', for what you've done, for generations by the score.

18 / 7 / 2006

Don Stratford

Poets Never Sleep

There seems a never ending line
Of verse and rhyming words
From the poets at Poemhunter
They come galloping in herds

A never ending stream of poems
To delight and make you laugh
From the pens of all you poets
As they come across my path

The styles they vary greatly
Some are glad and some are sad
And some are lovey dovey
But none of them are bad

But there seems to be a feeling
From one and all who travel here?
That we basically are all the same
We all come here to peer

To have our little say
Of what we think about the things
That effect us and our world
And to help us spread our wings

So to you all I'd like to say
God bless, keep writing please
'Cause this is how I get my fix
To stop would be to tease

Thank you all

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Don Stratford

Reflections Of Love

A child is born, the world goes on, and the effect creates a ripple
Mothers pride and Fathers joy as the child takes to her nipple
Strong and healthy he does seem with lungs that tell us all
I'm here to stay and have my say even wrapped up in a shawl

He starts to walk and questions come of life and things around
What's this and that and how's this work and tell me what's that sound?
I'm going to climb this big high tree to see a nest that's way up high
It's so far up that while I'm there I think I'll touch the sky

To school it is and weekends come and play time is such fun
With mates all round and dad to share they're all kept on the run
Teachings of life and natures ways it's sometimes cruel but true
Of lessons learned that's hard to wear yet gentleness shows thru

As time goes by the joys are shared as part of a full life
There's no such thing as what to do or is there any strife?
There's things to do and time to spend alone and with the two
The bond that has been building is set like concrete and like glue

The time has come for him to share and turn another page
To spread his wings and make his way upon the big wide open stage
To venture down and carve his track in life's journey long and true
With best of wishes from all of those who know him thru and thru

The path that he has taken it was forged right from the start
It's nature that has got him in and goes straight to his heart
And he knows of how that happened and why that it is so
From all those trips that he went on that helped to make him grow

And now the time has come to pass he's grown in all his ways
He's set out now on his life's work down nature's tracks he plays
And to say that I'm so proud of him and dearly love him so
From me to you Simon my son, I know you know it's so

Don Stratford 1/4/2006 ©

The Feral Ute

A feral ute they claim it is
But it wasn't always so
It once was clean and shiny
It was new and all the go

There was gleaming paint and chrome work
No dirt could there be found
Not even in the ash tray
Today, that's sacred ground

I drove it really carefully
As you always do
And always went out of my way
To drive around the poo

Inevitably one fateful day
A scratch it did appear
And as I bawled me eyes out Mum said
"There, it's alright dear"

By and bye more marks appeared
And slowly over time
Just one more scratch or dent you see
Didn't seem like such a crime

Now down the track as years went on
It fell into a mess
So I sent it to the workshop
Where they'd clean it up, I guess

It came out looking mighty fine
And drove and went real good
But then again for what it cost
I suppose it bloody should

Years lingered on for this old girl
And over all the while
We re-place-ed the this and that
And did it with a smile

And again the dents and scratches came
All the while there getting worse
But it got beyond the fixin' stage
No more dollars in me purse

So to the scrub we took y'see
Down tracks and creeks aghast
There were times we almost lost it
We were going so bloody fast

Because we drove her very hard
And hadn't really cared
The old girl she got knocked around
No panel could be spared

The doors were shut with wire ties
No springs were in the seat
We had to bash the mudguards out
It wasn't lookin' neat

Off to the ute mus-ter we went
We were lookin' for a prize
She went in with the ferule utes
To try that on for size

We hadn't any bloody hope
We thought we were all cursed
There was no one more surprised than us
When the old girl she got first

The trophy now has pride of place
To be ad-mired by one and all
It's placed in a secure spot
No chance that it will fall

She's all done now, she's had her day
And no more can she do
I'll put her out to pasture now
Down near the outside loo

So now she's down behind the shed

Looking up towards the house
So she can see me anytime
And think of times so "grouse"

So, it's back down to the shop I trudge
To see what was on show
To buy a clean and shiny ute
That's new and all the go

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Don Stratford

The Old Man And His Horse And Gig

He sat upon the wooden seat
He sat tall and proud and wise
As he worked his way along the road
Heading up towards the rise

This old man and his horse and gig
Were legends hereabouts?
His old parched skin and craggy face
Showed he had received his share of clouts

His weather beaten features
They could tell a yarn or two
From working way down in the mines
To fixin' up a shoe

Sun tanned lines etched deep within
His life's work for all to see
There was not a lie from this old bloke
He was as straight as straight could be

His broad brimmed hat was worn and holed
That matched his whole attire
But he would have it no other way
There was nothing else to desire

With skill that came from gentleness
The draft horse now just knew
Of what the old man wanted
And what he expected him to do

Straight to the pub to see old friends
And to share a pot or two
Just one last time with all his mates
Before his life was thru

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The Shed

A mans' gotta have a shed y'know
A place he calls his own
Where he can go and loose himself
Like a king upon his throne

It can be neat and tidy
With everything in place
Or one un -wholly bloody mess
Where there isn't any space

But you can rest assured old friend
No matter how it fares
It's his domain and castle
Down to the worn out chairs

He proudly shows it to his mates
Who goo and gar and ask
What's this and that you got in here
Including in the flask

There's pictures stuck up on the wall
The likes that women scorn
But it wouldn't be the same you see
Without his female porn

And if someone dare to take control
Woe betide the feathers fly
Until he once again can say
Don't come in here and pry

When it's why on this one fateful day
A hapless brown came in
And all that happened after that
Boy, you should have heard the din

Jo blake slipped here and he slipped there
To keep out of old mates way
But old mate was having none of that
As he entered in the fray

Things they went here and they went there
As the chase in-ten-si-fied
With old mate going hell for leather
To get that snake outside

Almost a full one hour had gone
And neither would give in
The snake kept just enough in front
To save it's slippery skin

Until it spied a big wide space
That was in fact the door
And slipped out quick as anything
Away from that bloody floor

When old mate stopped and looked around
When the battle was complete
He couldn't believe the mess there was
He was out to it on his feet

But satisfaction slowly grew
Sweat began to dis-si-pate
As he softly whispered to himself
I'll not share with any snake

So, take heed all those who enter there
And know it's in his head
He'll do whatever it does take
To defend his bloody shed

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Don Stratford

Where Two Hearts Meet

In days of old where time was gold
Now tears and sorrow fall
Upon the threshold of our doors
Hark! Can you hear the call?

Frustrations bound in every step
And waking time of pain
A loss of such a magnitude
What is there to be gained?

Time marches on, a healing sort
to ease an aching heart
Keeping busy, a brave new face
That's keeping things apart

Memories now are what remain
Of past and glorious days
As thoughts drift off into the mist
To rest on sun drenched rays

Then into light a stepping stone
A hope that there is more
to life than one of misery
But you have to be so sure

Then it comes, a whirlwind tune
It hits you like a truck
A sense of what is happening here!
You can't have that much luck?

A bolt from way out of left field
A feeling of delight
It almost has you wondering now
It gives you such a fright

How can this happen, and be this quick
Was it meant to be?
I'm sure it is and you can tell
That we are now both free

A feeling of belonging
To one another when we greet
Over phone or now in person
Where our two hearts now meet

To live a life filled full of love
In each others arms
To have, to hold, from this day forth
Giving in to all our charms

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