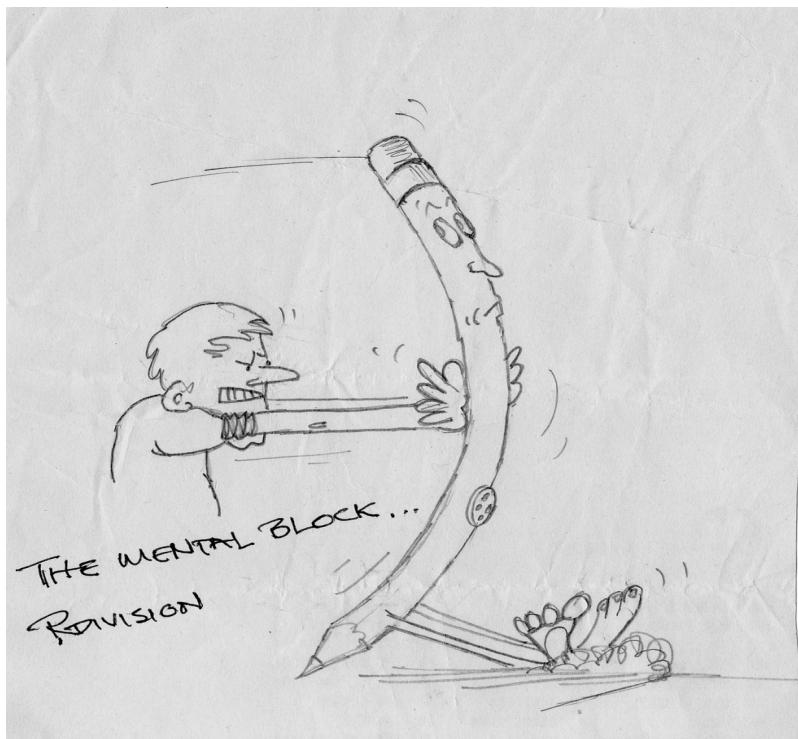


Black and White, Red, Yellow and Blue

*A Compendium of Cliché, Whimsy,
Anecdote, Stories, and
some poetry, some paintings
some cartoons, and a comic...*

Publisher : None other than your struly.



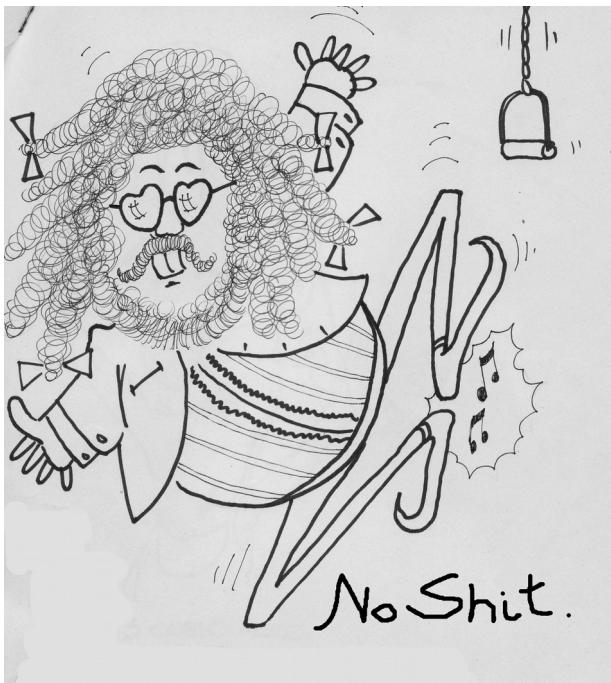
(Rdivision was my Hash House Harrier nick name)



“Redemption” – Inspired by Steven Eriksons “Gardens of the Moon” featured in his Malazan Empire saga. I am inspired to paint and write by his tireless energy and his fantastic poesy...

I seldom use an index, and I invite you to enjoy the freedom of reading from any point and in any direction you wish...

So the following is dedicated to all of Youse with the tenacity to continue reading.....,

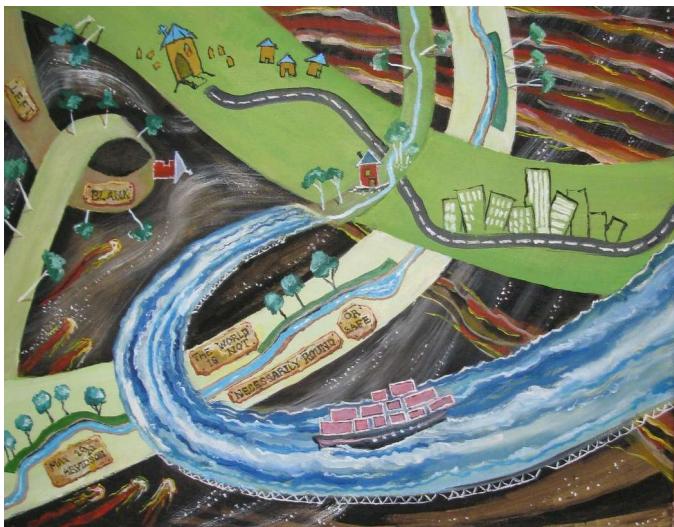


- INTRODUCTION

I have never written about washing possums. That was a scurrilous rumour. A long standing ambition to write keeps insisting I write something and so I am now about to subject myself to the process. An indulgence ?

Perhaps. Quite a bit of what follows is factual but perhaps confused !

There is no particular timeline and the theme is mostly random....



The world is not necessarily round, or
safe...





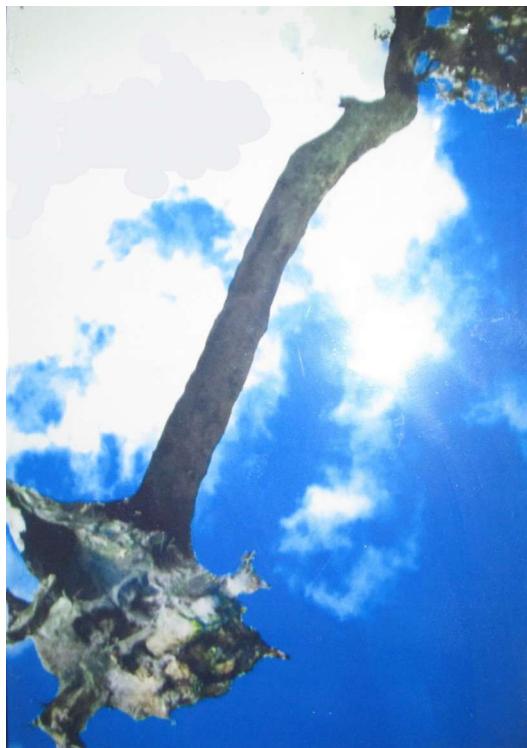
At the age of ten I already knew I was in the wrong body. In reality I was an Algonquin Indian boy.... My little companion dog was the only other one who knew . And it explains why my feet hurt. White men walk funny.

As a young Algonquin boy I probably hunted further and more often than most other hunters in the colony. All seven different kinds of deer and the wild pigs (only one kind, huge) were usually safe. I was however red hot on rabbits and pheasants. With me having the overall poorest result we relied on

Dad. Dad was a pretty good provider, what he didn't drink, we ate. So the universe is fraught with balance. A young son should never be a better provider than his father.

Even though we often hunted together, Dad was never aware he was in the company of a American Indian.....





- Some stories are true, others not so much...

Light and Water

A deer stalking weekend ;
The day is hot, as, after a long climb
through the foot hills, the boy and his
two friends approach the winter
snowline. It is summer, but the river is
snow thaw, and, shaded in deep gorges
and gullies, it never warms up.

The scent of the buck they hunted
wafts away on the breeze. He is gone...

In the heat of the day even at that
altitude just below the snowline the
swiftly flowing creek beckons. The three
of us invented a challenge.

With a quick glance, they set a goal and spontaneously, stripping off their clothes, a water race is begun.

Clothes are discarded. We each lift a water worn boulder ground smooth by the millennia. We enter the freezing stream. There is no prize for winning, just the glory the energy and the comradeship.

The boulder he has picked up and clutches to his chest, is more than a third of his body weight. It is smooth and rounded, having been worked by the river for countless years.

Entering the torrent, first the shock, then the exhilaration, breath deepening, heart almost stopped, he welcomes the embrace of the chill deep water, and strides out towards the far bank, quickly

submerging. The rock, of course, holds him under.

He looks up through the surface of the river, about two metres above him, to the sky. The water is very cold and very clear. The sky is uninterrupted blue. Cloudless. The surface of the water is roiling, as rivers do, but nonetheless, is almost completely transparent.

His hearing is overwhelmed by the sound of his heartbeat, which is pounding. He can feel the current buffeting, pushing and pulling. Streams of small bubbles trail like quicksilver. He lowers his head and pushes ahead, bare feet pummelling through the smooth stones and gravel of the river floor. Just past the halfway point and about fifteen

metres to go, he leans forward, beginning to run, moving as in slow motion, but making good headway. The increase in pace taxes his available oxygen and his lungs complain.

The river does not give easily but I recall in wonderment viewing the sky from below the surface through a trail of silver bubbles.

As I forge a trail through this unforgiving elemental and ancient course I am amazed at how long I hold my breath, how fast I run. Distance is the challenge, underwater running...

The cold the current the stony
riverbed
feet finding purchase lungs screaming
the battle is nearly over the floor rises

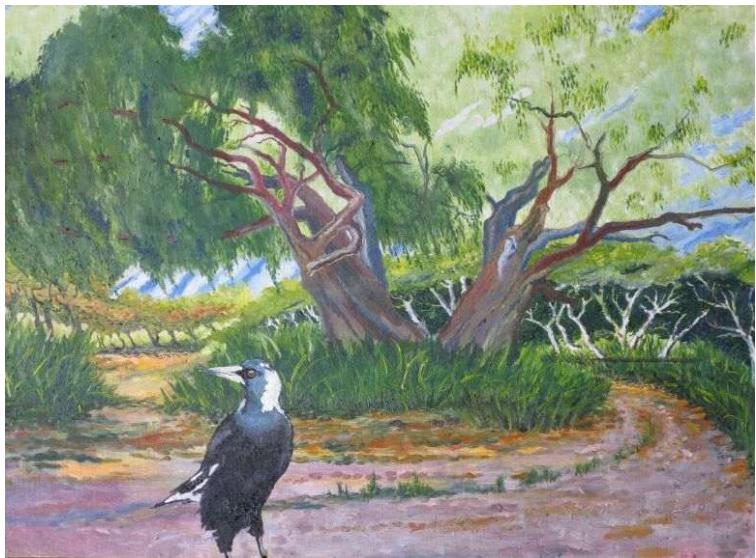
slowly the far bank comes into view.

Energy and air running out.

Mental and physical alarm bells ringing loudly now. Not much further, just a bit more, just a bit more. Keep going.

Stopping is not an option, a preset condition, but, one last push, and his head breaks the surface, to the cheers of his two friends, shoulders above water already, striding through the shallows to the other side.

Skin as blue as the sky. Cold bodies shedding heat, the only motivation now the prospect of warm dry clothes, they confront the task of an honorable retreat.



“What're you lookin at Pal ?”

Torbay Inlet 2012

The Foff Foff

1947. A wooden bungalow on timber stumps in Irishtown, not far from the church. An old farmhouse transported during the early 1900's.

Crickets creak, outside, hedgehogs snuffle, hunting below the hydrangeas and hollyhocks – night noises, drifting river mist.

The moon, between clouds, rides the crocheted curtains up and across the wallpaper, projecting the framework of the casement window.

Slow silver and black roses ride the walls of the room. Occasional sounds of quiet laughter and conviviality drift through

the hallway from the other end of the house.

Mum and Dad entertaining close friends around the kitchen stove. Sleep approaches. The sounds from the other end of the house recede.

Snuggled into the eiderdown duvet, eyes and nose retreat from the deep winter cold. Drowsiness and peace. Later, an owl clutching at the edge of the roof.

A semi-conscious attempt to interpret the sound. The moon, past its apogee now, casting an argent glow onto the far wall of the bedroom. Beside the bedroom door, an ornately carved wardrobe half in light. On top of the wardrobe, between the battered suitcases and the wall, a sharp beam of light, shining.

A crystalline glint emanating from within the deep shadow. Sleepily refocusing, splitting the reflection into shards as if through tears.

Fear, colder than July, hovering. Then. The noise. FOFF foff, FOFF foff. – FOFF foff, FOFF foff. From on top of the wardrobe. From near the small shaft of light, which has resolved now into the shape of an eye. An animal eye, a demonic beastly animal eye, menacing. The hovering fear resolves also, into terror.

The sound, rythmic, urgent, insistent, tearing at the borders of panic – FOFF foff, FOFF foff.... – Breathing stops.

Hearing sharpens – FOFF FOFF, FOFF FOFF....

The five year old has never experienced

anything like this and panic takes hold. Leaping from the sanctuary of the bedclothes the terrified child collides with the edge of the wardrobe and with a resounding thump sprawls back onto the floor, winded.

A very short time later, Mum arrives, picks up the trembling little boy into a soothing embrace and throws the fox fur stole from the floor, where it has fallen, back to its precarious perch atop the wardrobe, between the suitcases and the wall. Its eyes sparkle now, in the full light... Years later, after much experimentation the sound is found to be remarkably similar to the heartbeat one hears when one's ear is pressed onto a down pillow. Foff Foff Foff Foff...



“Torbay Storm”

Great place to camp back then. Every
now and again a storm would come in
Torbay inlet 2012

Peters Song

Nineteen Fifty Early,
Below the extinct volcano, Karioi, Raglan
harbour, with its black sand beaches and
mudflats, often had a dark and brooding
aspect. It was, particularly in winter, a
moody place. In the early days the local
population of Maori were badly dealt
with, and became severely socially
depressed. More often than not, as a
result, the demeanour of the Maori was
that of smouldering aggression. They
were down, but not out.

Peter, my next older brother, was around
ten or eleven, in the early fifties, and
was, or had been, asthmatic. His health

was pretty flaky. He needed sheltering a bit, Mum providing the environment and Dad helping him make the choice. Influences which he carried into later life. He never ever became streetwise, to my knowledge. His naivety was a hallmark of innocence, and a lesson to us all, but, at that time, I was totally oblivious to the fact that He and I lived in different worlds.

Dad liked to go fishing, from time to time, with a couple of mates, over on the West coast at the little seaside town of Raglan.

The trip from Hamilton, only fifty kilometres, was daunting, back then. The terror of traversing that mountainous stretch of gravelled track still haunts my memory. Switchback

turns, bottomless gullies, I remember peering out of the car window onto the top of tree ferns hundreds of feet below. No safety railing, no kerbing, nothing between you and the stuff of nightmares. It was a huge relief to arrive there intact, which, in spite of the apparent hazards, we always did.

Our destination, Raglan harbour, was a favorite fishing place for many in the Waikato, in the early fifties. Its Maori name, Whaingaroa, 'The long pursuit', describing the interminable journey of the people who arrived in the area on the canoe Tainui, was a fair description also for latter day journeys by gravel road. Getting there, for us, was a travel experience enhanced by the technology of the day, in the form of Dads 39 Ford

Mercury. Transverse springing, (no independent suspension), shock absorbers if you were lucky. Steering if you were lucky. Seatbelts no such thing. Rock and Roll. For an hour and a half.

The fishing to be had was remarkable. Pink snapper, Gurnard, Hapuka, Yellowfin Tuna, and the giant Packhorse crayfish from the deep water, Flounder and Mullet in the shallows, all in abundance, and many other species. Tons of shellfish, Greenlip mussels, Pipis, Cockles, more than you could poke a stick at, all for the taking. We were always assured of a good feed after a day at Raglan, our Mum and the other mums on the beach teaching us kids to swim and other beach type stuff, while Dad and his cobbers went out with the

fishing gear. This is the nineteen fifties, right ? We all went fishing together once, but thats another story.....

Towards the end of the day, about three or four in the afternoon, the men would return with the catch, and a bellyfull of beer, the Mums psyching everyone up for the journey home. Good times for some, I guess, but the complaints department was an academic concept in those days.

Not uncommon, in the fifties, to drive from pub to pub, after a day out. The trip Home on this particular day, was one such. Even so, there were only two pubs on the way, one in Raglan town and one other, a place called Whatawhata, not far from Hamilton. A quiet little spot this, frequented mostly by residents from

around the local Marae and a few passers by.

At the age we were then, birthdays were an eternity apart, so it was, in proportion, a small eternity, waiting for Dad outside a pub, and time would, naturally, stretch. As soon as the words "I spy" were heard, we knew. Boredom followed very quickly. Mum must have had the patience of Job.

While we waited outside the Whatawhata pub, a few local blokes were drifting in and out, mostly Maori men from the nearby freezing works, to catch the last moments of what was referred to as the six o'clock swill.

Six o'clock approached and boredom

joins up with its cousin frustration. Mums patience is taxed to the point of exquisite discomfort.

The big hand on twelve and the little hand on six, and the public bar door opens, Dad not in sight, but a group of Maori men appear, they drift into the carpark, on their way home to a reluctant meal at the end of another workday.

No-one (or very few) at that time escaped the socially reinforced mythology regarding our relationship with the Maori. I used the words "socially reinforced mythology" but really "propaganda" would do. As a conquered nation, they had to be kept in their place.

Strangely, no-one told them. They told

us, instead. There was hardly any contact between us and them. Particularly in the major towns. So, misinformation being the order of the day, a construct was adopted in lieu of the truth. Inevitably this arrangement was almost totally negative. I remember my time at school included no contact with these people at all. There were none there.

And so, these savages from beyond the pale represented a huge potential if unknown danger.

To a small pakeha child this is a nightmare of truly scary proportions.

These guys were all HUGE, dressed in the traditional black singlet and coveralls, grimy from the days work. Their collective countenances form a

dark cloud as they assemble not far from us.

Dad is still nowhere to be seen.

Fear is beginning to dig a hole around us. Silence in the car. The group shuffle nearer. Hair stands up on the back of my neck. The group are moving closer, shadowy faces turning toward us. Small sounds of gravel crunching under workboots on the carpark. A hand reaches out, menacingly beckoning in our direction. They move closer still. Heart pounding, I realise with horror that the car windows are down. The summer heat forgotten, now replaced by a dread chill . Closer... Closer...

Malevolent Silence. I have forgotten my Mother and my Brother.I have forgotten my name.

I am paralyzed with fear and have

stopped breathing.

From beside me, somewhere in that
black hole of fear, a tiny voice.

Musical, heavenly, like no other I have
heard.....

Peter. My Brother. Singing.....

The meaning of the words is irrelevant.
The voice, gathering in strength and
confidence, is the voice of an angel.

E hine e
Hoki mai ra
Ka mate ahau
i te aroha e

Suddenly the tiny voice is joined by a
choir of a dozen grownup voices, lilting
and tremulous, powerful and joyous, as

the Maori workers take up Peters song.

Occasionally, for some, maybe only once in a lifetime, an event occurs that remains, forever, an epiphany.

I learned a lot about my Brother that day, and the Maori.

Though this song is a love song from around 1914 it is in my mind a strong metaphor for the transition from old polynesian culture to Pakeha contact. I think it also speaks to the loss of heritage experienced by us all in the antipodes.

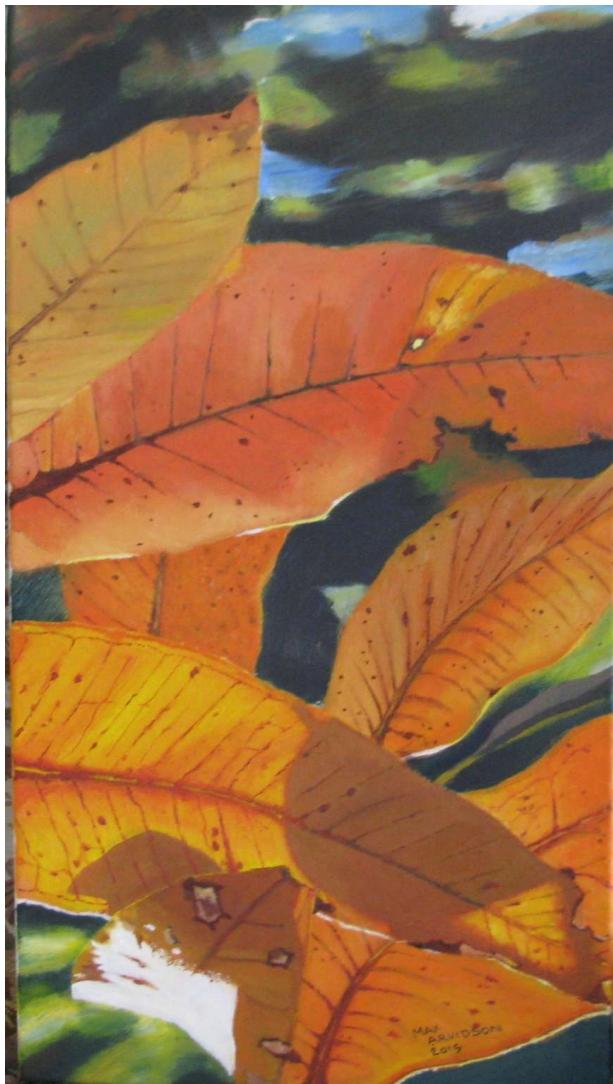
The verse is from Po Kare and translates ;

oh girl

return to me

I could die

of love for you



"Jarrah" Glowing leaves exhibition 2014

Cricket

South of the Equator, Small town Cricket is probably the most entertaining of all the forms of the game, I mean, its not commercial, its fun. Seriously.

Practice the other night, not all the guys turned up. Some had other stuff on. Even during the session someone left to pick up the kids, and came back. The business of being there is appreciated by all.

The group work together, in a tribal kind of way, not biologically engineered like ants, or bees, but linked by a more self motivated awareness. The joyful paradox of teamwork. Just ask an ant or a bee.

Its possible to wax lyrical about stuff like the village green, the thwack of Leather

on Willow, shouts of 'Catch' 'Owzat' 'Comeonump'. But everybody knows all that. Its already in the blood. Waxing lyrical would be superfluous, just window dressing, besides, there is more to it, where we work and play, in the South.

There is undeniably an ambience, apparent at this level of the game, and in this locale, that overshadows the mere emotional. Its foundation is more metaphysical, transcendental, if you like. But no way is it a religious experience. Not that its a dirty word, but Religion is too bureaucratised to be fun. There are too many Transportees involved for it to be religious, too many wild cards, and the weather is too changeable, in the South, where we work and play.

Just being a spectator doesn't really tell it all either.

Neither could you know the game by just being an umpire, or just being a coach, a captain, a bowler, batsman, fielder or wicketkeeper.

Being engaged in the game involves a range of dynamics the existence of which probably never penetrates the awareness of most individuals. And why should it ? Too much awareness would be a distraction, and anyway, is first gear aware of its role in the gear box ? (Come on second gear, its your turn !)

Having said that, an "educated" player or audience , is a good thing, without which the game would be poorer.

Hardly anything more integral than the Spectators Catch, or the Umpires Badly

Judged Dismissal, unless its a Thirsty Cricketer confronting the drinks trolley. So, cohesion is the thing, and our communities are nothing, if not cohesive. Which, let there be no doubt, reaffirms the self esteem of watchers here, who consider themselves the most "educated" in the world. Certainly in the South.

Technology has improved the game, some think, but the only mechanistic artifice allowed near the game, in these parts, is a lawnmower, under the strict control of at least one human. Other attempts to introduce the use of robots, computers, speed cameras, practice devices etc are looked upon with disdain, not to mention suspicion, and are seen for what they are, somebody

elses game.

Of course a bat and ball are mandatory, as is certain body armour and protective headgear, which may be willow or leather or kevlar.

This is a human game played by people who are mostly exemplary humans, with rare exceptions, and those who on occasion get through the guard, rapidly expose their alienness, and are usually given five minutes to either convert, or dismiss themselves. Sometimes this is too long, though I did see a scorer with a calculator, once, who was tolerated, but then scoring is a minor facet of the game, in the South.

If you can get your head around the concept of a multiverse, (nothing too complicated, parallel realities, yeah ?)

then you are on your way to a feel for this game. In other words, Getting the Real Feel, or, the Essence. You can get it now, as the bard was heard to say. Its not neccessary to go overboard, so just go far enough.

Now that you are astride the proposition that there might be more than one event occurring in this Cricket timespace, let me point out that in fact there are many games happening at once. To suggest a few, the Mums game (thats my boy out there, I do his laundry you know), the Home team game (we wont be beaten on our own ground), the Opposition game (lets show 'em boys) the Star Performers game, (we wouldnt have won without my fifty), the Umpires game, (no bad calls on my watch) etc, etc, etc.

How do you feel now ? Thats the spirit !

After all, you're not alone, your mates are with you !

At least that's how it seems, where we happily confront all our possible futures, in the South.

Further, consider the exhilaration of being able to partake of this bath of adrenalin, an especial paradox, when at times everyone involved seems to be a close relly of the bionic man. We don't need TV for the slow motion replay. I once watched a game in my hometown where the outfield had to be repeatedly mown during the afternoon in order to find the ball.

There is something awe inspiring in giving witness, in whatever capacity, to events of this nature, and to cricket in particular, and it supercedes voyeurism

by far. A fully trained spectator (with tantric breathing and certain other meditative practices) can actually extend the voyeuristic aspect to a significant level of participation.

Sublimated testosterone has its own astringency Im sure you are aware. Cricket supplies this particular tension in abundance, notwithstanding the odd shirtfront that happens from time to time. This is the stuff of pure entertainment. Soak it up while you are still among the living – go on, make the Gods jealous. As we inadvertently do, while we work and play, in the South !

On yet another plane, we can see how this game extends its appeal, to all and sundry. From the sadist who locks his pet dog in the car to the old lady who

hooks the exuberant fan in front with her brolly handle.

There is a sense of community ownership that pervades the cricket scene like no other game, extending even across state borders and overseas, and resides in the hearts and minds of a greater cross section of humankind than any other game I can think of. Especially soccer. Especially AFL. Especially Rugby Union. In this country we have "The Prime Ministers Eleven" . For Gods sake, what more proof is required, than when a Polly gives unqualified support ? Any other game has to produce an amazing WIN to be worth a photo opportunity. Something for everybody ? Not necessarily, but closer than most, especially in the South.

So we come to the Nub. Age. Ever tried gymnastics in a suit of Ned Kelly gear ? Anyone over fifty should try it, just to get the perspective.

Unlike most sports, which are obvious in their demands physical, cricket is deceptively difficult to play - strenuouswise I mean. I nearly gave it a go the other week but stopped just short of making an idiot of myself by pretending to be at practice to see one of the guys.

Here I am, still just on the light side of seventy summers, and having had the energy to build a house for myself and my wonderful partner, I reckoned I might have the ability to try my arm at the cricket. Oh well, back to the rocking chair. (I never was a team player anyway) ___

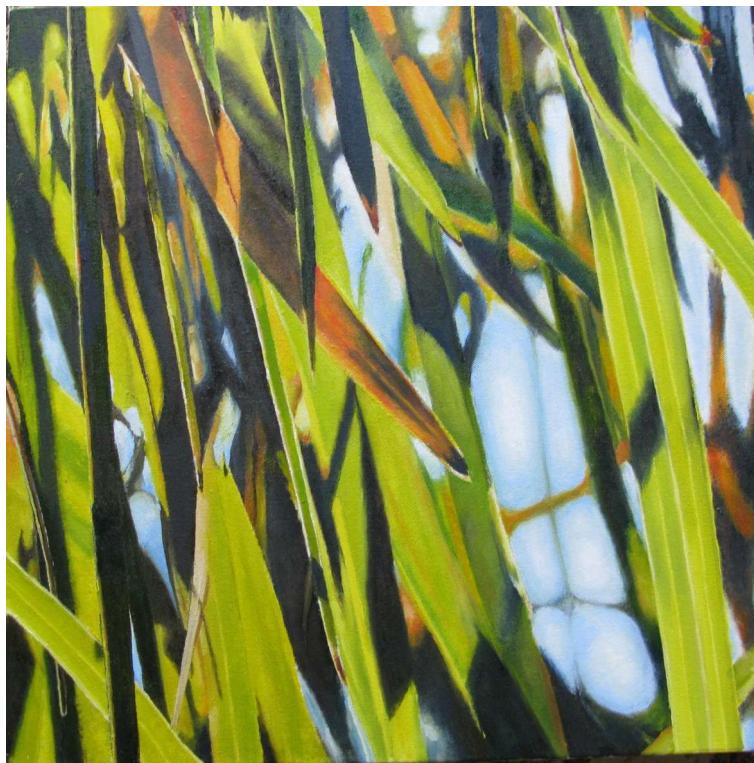
Regrets are thin on the ground, in my experience, and have limited currency, so there you go.

I didnt ever play Cricket and I never went to Vietnam. There have been plenty of other opportunities, mostly taken, and, to my boundless gratitude, I remain, albeit by accident of birth, a native of the South.



I always wanted to be an owl. Now, I don't give a hoot





Dasypogon Hookeri “Pineapple bush”
Glowing leaves exhibition 2014

Ten near deaths

Been meaning to do this for quite a while now. Better get it done. So, left school as soon as I could, packed my swag and set off out into the big wide world.

Started on an apprenticeship as a Boilermaker, in fact. Industry in those days had few safety concerns and the exposure for a fifteen year old was immediate and constant.

Part of the business of working for a construction company was being able to make oneself useful in as many ways as possible.

This meant taking a fair share of the onsite work, involving the assembly of prefabricated steel frameworks for a

variety of industrial applications and commercial buildings.

(1) An introduction – to the likelihood of an early death – Te Kuiti, a small town in New Zealand.

The hazardous nature of this work became apparent when I was instructed to join a team of riggers, erecting the various parts of an extension to a cement processing plant.

This structure was a steel skeleton over thirty metres high. The flush of pride at having been chosen, quickly subsided into terror. No safety harnesses or cages.

Ladders and good balance were the order of the day, and the ability to climb like a monkey a distinct advantage. Very soon it became evident that the

youngest on the team was the most dispensable.

Overcoming a natural fear of heights is still a work in progress, but the development of a strong grip was almost instantaneous.

My job to edge hand over hand, spreadeagled horizontally, between two slender steel beams almost too far apart, and with one hand undo the steel wire strop and release the tower crane hook in readiness for the next lift.

Looking down from this height onto vertical steel reinforcing bars thirty metres below brings to mind now an image of shishkebab sticks...

But, I survived !

(2) First brush with mortality – A factory building in Hamilton, NZ.

While not a high building, the peak of the roof frame of this building at about 10 metres from the concrete slab below still constitutes a reasonable menace.

This structure was a basic portal frame, which is usually prefabricated in three parts – a leg each side comprising a wall column bolted down to a concrete footing and at the top,

a rafter starter leg, somewhat like the letter "Y" but with only one sloping bit. The other part, the main rafter, a boomerang shape, like the caret character "^" fitting up to the starter leg positioned at opposite sides of the building.

The rigger, in this case, me, sits on top of the sloping starter leg while the middle rafter boomerang section, this one weighing in at about two tons, is

gently lowered into place and then bolted together with up to maybe fifteen bolts.

Gently did not occur on this occasion however, and two tons of steel drop between my knees.

The portal column takes on the persona of a bucking bronco and one loses the skin off ones hands and legs obeying the demands of gravity all the way to the floor....

But, I survived !

(3) Second brush with mortality – The same factory as (2) above.

All the portals are now erected and pinned together with several rows of roof support members called purlins.

These purlins, unlike your standard light gauge material are substantial heavy

duty material, each one weighing around a hundred and fifty kilos and about eight metres long.

A rigger at each end, sitting astride the portal rafter receives an end and subsequently bolts this to the portal rafter. A shout of "duck" is heard, so one "ducks" and eight metres of purlin briefly occupies the space that ones head did just before the "duck". At speed, one descends from the structure to exchange a few words with the crane operator,

who claims a faulty slewing mechanism is at fault, but who is subsequently found to have been secretly imbibing of the alcohol and who was subsequently and swiftly reinserted into the ranks of the unemployed....

But I survived !

(4) Third – NZ again – Kinleith Paper Mills maintenance shutdown period.

A vast industrial complex, all sorts of maintenance and additions were brought into operation during what would be the Christmas holidays. Inside one of the boiler rooms, on my way from one task to another, three workmen struggle to drag a scaffold across a section of concrete floor. Invited to participate, I deposit my tools to one side and take up a position on the fourth leg of the frame, which is three lifts high or about six metres. Taking up the weight we slowly edge the scaffold towards its destination when a shout goes up.

Too late ! A plank, of stout hardwood, unloosed from its perch between a

mezzanine floor and the top of the frame becomes vertical and strikes me on the back of the head and slides merrily down my spine.

Picking me up off the floor and giving my back a brusque rub, my workmate reflects on the possibly untidy outcome should the plank have fallen two inches further north than it did.

"Thanks mate" he says, "you're welcome, I says"....

But I survived !

(5) Nearly out of sight – Kinleith again.

"Cut that valve off" comes the instruction. So lighting up the trusty Oxy axe I duly flame cut through the eight centimetre pipe just above the aforementioned valve.

No big deal. Except the pipe (which it

transpired had not been emptied) evacuates itself into my face. A part of the wood fibre bleaching process, caustic liquor is most unpleasant when distributed over the face.

My cutting goggles undoubtedly saved my eyes but my complexion was horrid for weeks after. The fortuitous proximity of a fresh water tap also came in handy....

But, I survived !

(6) Mortality again – Kinleith again.

Having just been three days inside a large rotating kiln (on my own) it was with some relief that I gathered my gear to exit at the lower end of this cavernous device.

The money was huge, danger penalty, confined space penalty, etc. So, good

fun really. Moving my equipment past the oven at the bottom end of the kiln I once again don the cutting goggles in response to a request – " while you've got the cutting gear here, mate ?" Sure enough, amiable lad that I am, I find myself doing a five minute job that almost punches my ticket.

The heat from the cutter evaporates some unburnt lime at the back of the oven and finds its way into my lungs. Like a punch in the stomach. Nothing. Lights in my vision begin to recede.

Quick thinking, my workmate takes the cutting torch from my hand, turns off the acetylene, extinguishing the flame, and holding the cutting tip to my mouth turns the oxygen up.

Worried looks all round

But I survived !

(7) Fired - O'Malley St Osborne Park,
Perth.

A muffled shout from the workshop. I can hear through the wall of my thinly clad drafting office. Someone else shouts "Get it outside, quick !" My shop foreman.

A laborer has broken the guage on a large acetylene bottle. Kevin, the foreman issued the instruction to alleviate the possibility of the thing igniting inside the works. Good thinking. I open the door and go over to where the gas bottle has been stranded, acetylene gas escaping expensively into the atmosphere.

Now holding my breath in a large bubble of gas,I attempt to key the valve off. Bad thinking. In my hurry I fumble

the key which hangs from a chain around the bottle neck. Also fixed to the chain is a flint lighter.

Lighter strikes bottle. Gas ignites. The view from inside a ball of burning gas is not appealing, and Max loses eyebrows, some moustache and beard and front of hair. Max smells.

He then completes the task before the guage melts, and the whole bottle goes up....

But I survived !

(8) Fired again – Koondoola shopping centre, Perth.

The rigger reports in that a component part of the framework for the tavern is misaligned. He ropes it roughly in position and knocks off to retire to his office at the Balga pub.

It is nearly mid day. One of my hats being site supervision, I call in to the site on the way home. (A not inconsiderable detour.) From the ground I can see what needs to be done, and having the ubiquitous Oxy cutter on my ute I decide to apply the required remedy which involves a small but precise cut on the edge of a steel bracket. So, gear out of the ute, a short trek across the sandy jobsite and up the scaffolding.

Perched with one foot on the scaffold and one just under the offending piece, I begin the surgery. Cutting, cutting, cutting, and then "Bang", the heat from the cut has melted the dreaded nylon rope and hundreds of kilos of building make straight (vertically down) towards my waiting size eleven. Fortune would have it and a protruding bolt head

catches the full weight.

I make a note to remind my rigger not to ever use nylon rope again....

Another escape !

(9) Make haste slowly – Quadriplegic Centre, Shenton Park, Perth.

Another ill fitting part, this time a large steel truss, spanning some fifteen metres across a concrete slab strewn with broken brick packs and various pieces of equipment and rubble. Untidy.

The rigger has once again called it quits for the day and seized the rare (daily) opportunity to partake of a refreshing beverage at his alternative hostelry, having been banned for fighting a barmaid at the other one.

Up a convenient ladder I go, to stand on top of a brick wall only three metres

high, on which rests the offending truss. The large hexagon bar I happened to have at the time served as an effective lever with which to relocate the offending part. All my weight goes onto the lever. Unfortunately the lever decides to go AWOL and springs free. My one hundred and three kilos of inertia immediately converts into energy and the truss, triumphant, gleefully watches me describe a perfect somersault before body slamming the awaiting world.

Curiously and severely winded, I remove the piece of engineering chalk that I had between my teeth for the whole trip and begin the interminable climb back to my feet.

Surrounded by nurses wielding bandages and a wheelchair I survey the damage. A

large piece of skin hanging from the inner face of my arm reminds me of my attempt to grab the top of the brick wall whilst in mid flight.

A small amount of blood to be seen but the bruise was magnificent and a focal point of derision for weeks....

But, I survived.

(10) Last but not least - Canning highway near Fremantle.

A chemist shop in a small shopping precinct decides to widen the entry door. A steel beam has to be lifted into position by hand. Two workman lift the beam slowly up a stepladder at each end, a bit at a time.

It becomes apparent that the final lift is too heavy and so I am called upon for assistance. Dashing up the ladder my

skull is informed of the existence of an advertising sign painted on, of all things, a piece of metal.

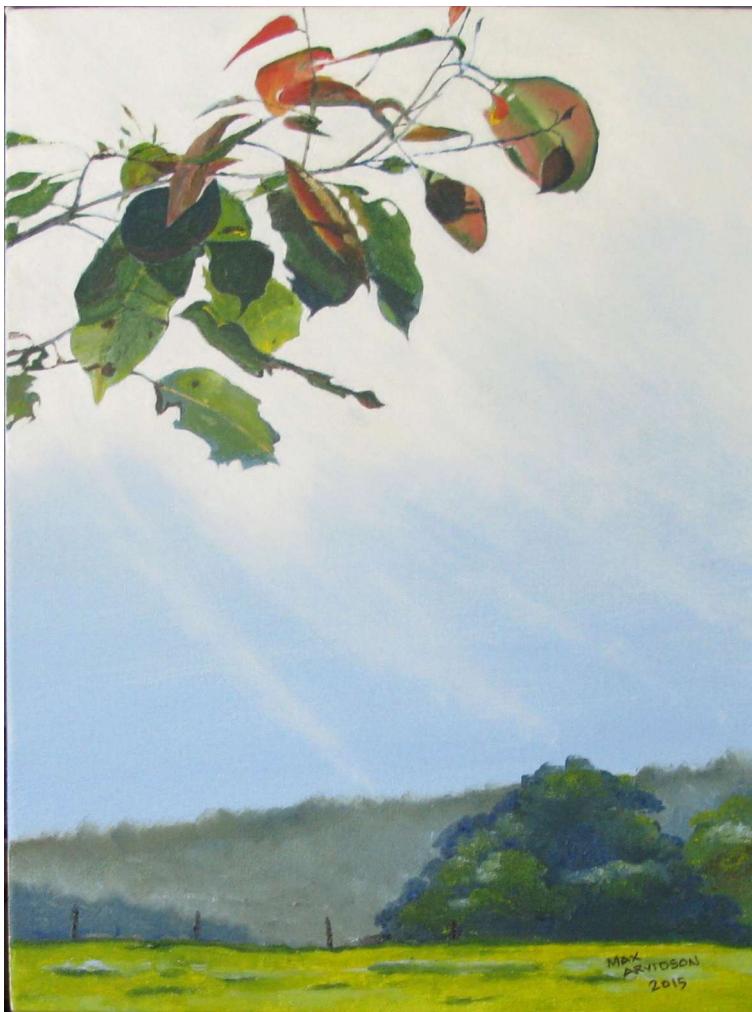
Quite thin, but the corner was quite sharp. Dashing back down the ladder I mutter something probably quite rude, and shake my dazed head, covering a great portion of the pharmacy display with a great portion of bright red fluid. Which refused to stop apportioning. Still dazed I retire to the nearby Fremantle hospital.

Some time later with six stitches holding my brain in, I note that the corner of the sign is badly bent over....

But I survived.

These adventures all occurred a long time ago, over a span of thirty years. Having decided on a fairly drastic change

of career, for health reasons,
I retired into the honorable pursuit of
the perfectly cooked fish and chip, an
occupation and practice of which tided
me over for another twenty three years.
Of course there is more to my life than
this, these are just some of the jolly bits.
I recently had my eighty second birthday
– But I survived....and quite well,
thankyou.



“Marri and Paddock” Glowing leaves
exhibition 2014

Gra has gone

A Eulogy for Graham

The Gra that we knew leaves a legacy.

The message of his departing is not news, He prepared us well.

But,

His passing, long awaited, informs our grief, in many ways, of course.

So,

Our friendship and love and admiration of this man binds us.

Although

No metaphor will describe the connection,

No aphorism will chart the strength,

His love for us and ours for him, are the measure of

this connection and of this strength

Therefore,
Will He remain in our hearts, a treasure,
a beacon, and a safe harbour.

We will be forever mindful of
this Architect of goodwill and respect
among us
who set a standard of mutual regard,
rare and fine,
in this land,
in this time,
on this earth,
enduring through
this sorrowful parting.....



“Holly Banksia” Glowing leaves
exhibition 2014

How it works

Wednesday November 6. Out of bed at 5:00am. Breakfast and cup of tea before 6. Strict fasting instructions prior to a surgical procedure scheduled for 1pm in Bunbury. Plenty of time for a browse over the emails in my inbox and a search of the latest news.

USA votes is the majority headline. Oh yes Trump. Not enough votes counted yet, but a plethora of speculation. More and yet more speculation. Enough. Shower with preop gel, and dress for the day.

Into the ute and on our way at 11am, plenty of time to negotiate timber

trucks, work vehicles and roadworks.

The Bunbury ring road invites yet more confusion, but we arrive a half hour early.

USA votes well under way now, but nowhere near a result. More speculation and heaps of errant nonsense and outright guesswork.

Logged in at the surgery reception. Wait. Probably 20 people waiting, so there is not enough room in the actual waiting room. We perch on semi hostile seating in the hospital corridor, dodging tea ladies with their trollies and a floor polisher pushed by a zombie doing laps of 3 kilometers one polisher width at a time. Room now, in the waiting room, yes a TV, but with no sound.

USA votes proceeding apace. Donald 24.
Kamala 19.

Wont be long now, chirps the receptionist, Just fill out this form and we'll get you on your way. Exquisite torture endured as the aroma of food wafts through the waiting room as another tea lady shunts her way to back of beyond.

USA votes continue. Donald 123, Kamala 97. Looks like a Trump breakout. Something must be wrong. More speculation.

Into the surgery at 10 to 3. Awake in recovery at 3:20. Crikey that was quick ! Wonder if they actually did anything. No pain, no discomfort. Wait. Food trolley

whizzes by does a U-turn, comes back.
Would you like a sandwich and a cuppa ?
Its now 4pm. I could eat the crutch out
of a low flying duck, but I settle for a
sandwich.

USA votes. Donald lurching even further
ahead. Commentators beginning to
digest their early comments.

Sandwich and cuppa swiftly consumed.
Be with you in a minute chirps the male
nurse. I have seen this guy at work and I
believe him.

However, a combination of day surgery
and ER puts paid to any smooth
conclusion to the visit, so more wait. The
place is a tumultuous maelstrom of
groaning sobbing occasional screeching
patients, attended by dozens of nursing

staff, doctors, tea ladies and various other hangers on. A lot like watching a greek cooking fish and chips, I think to myself.

USA votes. Commentators sweating now and some even contemplating suicide.
Trump. Kamala who ?

Left the surgery at 6pm. Drive home into the sun through the roadwork maze, and into kangaroo o'clock. Arsehole driver up my tailgate tempting fate drives me madder than I was before.

Home at 7:30, a longish day, as we say.
USA votes. Trump happy.



“Alexandra Bridge after the rain”

Alexandra bridge 2024

Satriani

We moved along highways paved with black stuff in a silent carriage filled with flickering lights and a communication device statically garbling at frightening speeds and surrounded by other carriages destinations unknown and under their own will charging straight at us sometimes and sometimes alongside and overtaking ours, or falling back.

And a communication device statically garbling. In a language something like english. Randomly darting about the way schools of fish and flocks of birds do in that organic or artificially intelligenced manner.

But Human.

We arrive and walk to the end of a queue of citizens just like us, now on foot. The entryway to the concert consuming eager patrons as fast as their ticketecs could be electronically greeted is strangely welcoming, being what is called these days retro. High and painted green with deco. New, in my memory, which admittedly is also retro.

So, in good order and primed with a nice wine over dinner, before, we settle into a burbulous comfort zone faux plush atmospherically relaxed.

Nice chairs. Comfortable old chairs.
Please to be seated chairs.

The stage is set with the tools of the performers. Guitars and drums potent, but patient.

A microphone hovering nearby secretly
communicates its crafted
understatements to the waiting
equipment and is loaded and ready.

Have you ever experienced a lighting
strike two and a half hours long ? Ever
been in a rockslide on the top of a
mountain ? Ever been tied to a velvet
railwayline ?

Ever been immersed in honey to the
point of drowning ?

Apprehension vanishes as you become
aware you have survived the first strike.
You realise that the Gods playing with
this lighting have consummate control
and no damage will happen. The
lightning with its millions of megawatts
and heritages is a vehicle, upon which is

conveyed and deliverenced the most practised and polished musics.

This is a Bard who does not use words.

This is the man on the ceiling of the Sistine chapel whose hand delivers to us melodies that are hooked into the universe.

This is Joe Satriani. Guitarist.



If it aint broke, don't fix it....





" Barrabup Pool"

2024

Having been through a series of expositions regarding my own human frailty and after this offering (below) and my sincere confession having been repudiated, my marriage of forty years completely disintegrated.

Sadly some few years after our divorce, her misdiagnosed health brought about an untimely conclusion of her life. I believe to this day that reconciliation was possible, and secretly it has been revealed to me, so did sheWe both made mistakes.

What am I

What am I,
You ask.

I am the mood of the light streaming
through the trees while it rains.

The deep shadow under the waterfall
and the lace of white water over the
rocks.

The tiny fern covered in dew under the
forest canopy and I am the treetops.
The colours in the massive trunks, newly
wet in the storm.

Lichen on granite and moss on banks,
bright fungi in damp places.

The wind and the drifting rain, the mist
on the hills and the sparkle on the
waters of the stream.

Frost on the edges of the redgum leaves
and bracken fronds.

Scent of pines, eucalyptus and sheoak,
and the rustle of the reeds.

The crunch of gravel underfoot and the
feel of wet grass.

Snow on distant mountain and the
mirror lake.

The colour of autumn and the vigour of
spring.

The joy of summer and the winter angst.

Cloud and sky, stars and moon.

Between the past and the future,

I am

And more

And less

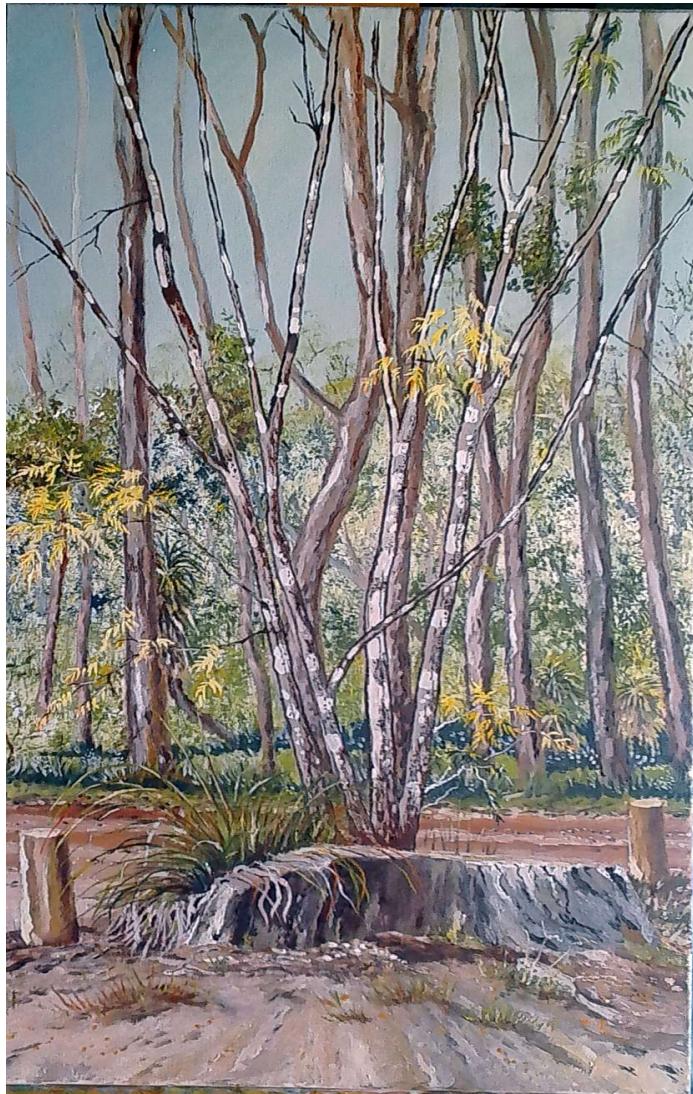
And I am your Love,

I say.



She who larfs last, larfs larfs and larfs.





“Old and New” 2023

Canebrake campsite

City to surf.

St Georges terrace.

Pulse rate slightly high.

The starting gun.

Twelve kilometers to come.

Other runners sprint past me.

The hill towards Parliament house
looms.

The front runners are well ahead, but are
beginning to slow now.

I have already fallen back to the rear
quarter of the 10,000 or so people.

Perhaps I am the slowest of all, but my
goal is to make the distance in good
order.

I will not allow any thought of failure to persuade my plan,

My level of fitness is good and I am confidently striding out at an even pace.

My strategy, developed during my training runs is to finish as I begin, not fast, but measured.

Past Kings park now.

Nearly to Subiaco.

The middle of the bunch.

Breathing relaxed.

Mind still.

Moving easily forward.

Pad pad pad pad.

Perry lakes is my next target, and my training runs of twenty kilometres are paying off.

The next stage I have set myself is the

hill between Perry lakes and the beach.
A large number of front runners are now
exhausted and have fallen behind. But
this is not a race, and I have no thought
of "winning" as such. Just make the
distance.

The last leg.

Comfortably gliding downhill.

Pad pad pad pad.

Distance runners thoughts.

In the zone they say.

I finish with breath left and am not
unduly stressed physically.

I am happy with my time of one hour
and ten minutes,

The runner who came in at thirty eight
minutes is eating a banana and
wholemeal sandwich. He has an

accomplished look, but is unbelievably humble. I have forgotten his name.

I do remember a fellow by the name of Joe Record, an english runner, who ran from Perth to Albany.

I left them to it.



The year is 1951.

Number 39 Cook street, Hamilton East. It had been raining and the humidity was in the high nineties.

It was as if you could see the grass growing.

The park across the road where the cricketers played their English games was always beckoning, and the shade

thrown by the oaks on its perimeter was always inviting during the summer, in spite of the challenge to bare feet in the form of fallen acorns.

Winter in Hamilton East seemed to be just as intense, along cook street between number 39 and down toward the river end, at the Royal Hotel intersection with Grey street.

Feet still bare, the sensation of cold seemed offset by the premonition of a following fine day, the moisture having been taken out of the air, and solidified on the grass.

This was when the oaks were bare of leaves and it hurt to breathe in.

The almost daily trek down that road to the shops in Grey street have left a print in my mind like a black and white movie, with the only sound being that of the

english blackbirds foraging among
the dead leaves.

This is 1951.





“Down by the River”
Canebrake campsite 2023

Girl and Boy

The Girl, about thirteen years old, was dressed in white denim jeans, a summery floral top and a white denim jacket.

The Boy had on blue denim jeans and a creamy coloured short sleeved shirt.

Seated on a touring coach, they were on their way to an afternoons fun at a geothermal hot springs swimming pool. Separately.

They had never met. Each was with a different small group of friends.

Her jet black hair framed her bright friendly face in a plain bob. Intense eyes. She turned momentarily. Their eyes met.

Their souls met.

Such intense eyes. Those intense hazel eyes.

He fell.

"Can I sit with you ?"

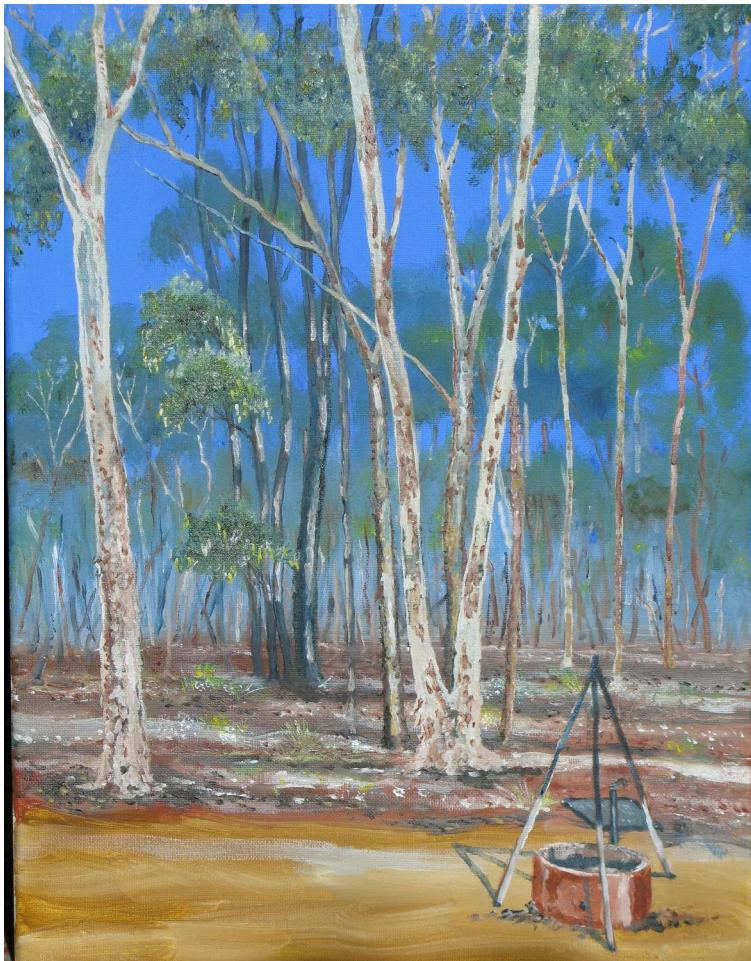
"Oh, yes, do....."

She fell.

It lasted for four years, until the little bird in her flew away, and took away both their hearts.

Her short life, ended by her own hand, burned out, gone, leaving more than memories....

After 70 years, he still has the image of those beautiful eyes, stronger than a memory. A part of him. The longest bus ride ever.....



“Gnarla Mia” Dryandra campsite

2019

Henry's' Dilemma

Henry was aware that his mind was a blank. He decided, cautiously, to make some marks on it, anyway.

He felt strongly the urge to confide or at least communicate his current state, but was aware at least that there was probably no real reason to do so.

He remembers being under water one time, not deep but the duration was as much as he could physically tolerate, until impending panic drove him back to the surface. Being still alive was an affirmation that his survival instincts at least were still effective to some degree. The business of being underwater was a mixture of peer pressure and self imposition.

To this day Henry can not remember why.

The correlation, for Henry is as follows ;
The stifling sensation of claustrophobia,
and being subject to misgivings about
being in that situation ie under water,
amount to an admission of negativity.

Negative firstly due to Henry's feeling of
being powerless and totally at the mercy
of unknown forces.

Instead of enjoying the weightless
sensation of being underwater and being
an observer of all the wonders
surrounding him, all of his focus was
purely on survival.

Upon analysing this situation Henry
attempts to apply some degree of

rationality to his position. Firstly he remembers the process of extracting himself from a possible watery grave, or the prospect of being eaten by a shark , and realises that in fact he actually survived, and that his terror was largely due to his overworking imagination. He was an excellent swimmer, as was his diving partner, and would no doubt have received assistance should it have been required.

And so in the cold light of day, why the sweat ?

For Henry the feeling being out of control in that situation was due to him making a decision that he normally would not have proceeded with on his own. His chief regret was that he had given over his own sense of responsibility to another, his diving

partner.

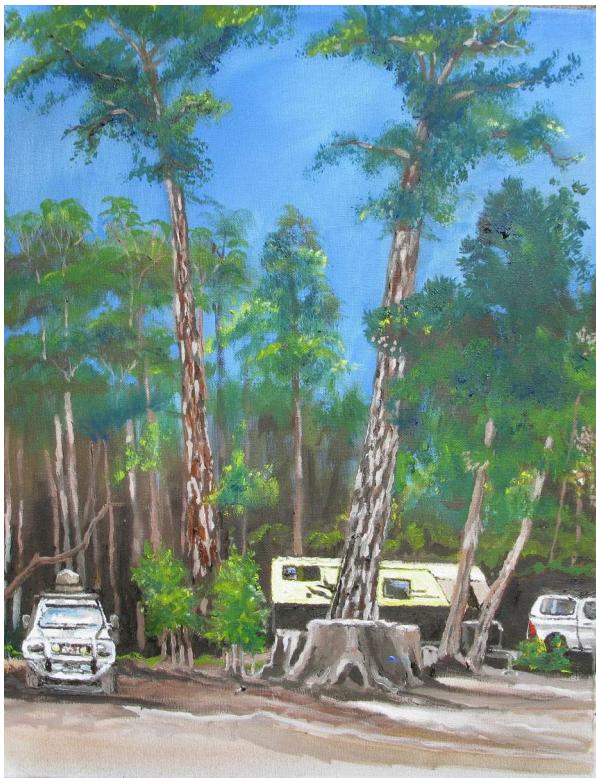
Another aspect Henry eventually grasped was that on another day, at another time and in different company, none of this might have happened, and he decided to store the experience for future reference and to hold his own council on all matters pertaining and impinging on his wellbeing.

The parallel to his current state may well be due to lack of sleep and a curious and unaccustomed lack of confidence in his own ability. Poor ole Henry.



Don't tie your shoelaces in a revolving door





“The old Arboretum”

Pemberton 2019

This poem is about Archie. Archie is a young grey nomad about 30 years my junior, one of a group of people I met at a caravan camping sundowner, rather a rigorous one in terms of fine whiskey, stories told, and good company.

During the course of the evening, I became aware, or rather, was told, that Archie had less time to live than me. Not only paintings happen at campsites.

The poem is, unusually structured for me but hopefully helps to convey my feelings and observations of that event. Composed of nine stanzas of three lines each, my idea was to create a sense of movement. An ascension perhaps, to a peak, and then descending to a

conclusion, or resolution.

The first line of each stanza is a label which defines the subject of the following lines. This happened pretty much by accident, but helped me to assemble my memories of a fairly traumatic revelation, mixed up with a great deal of conviviality. Two opposites. So the first and second parts of this piece are arranged with labels in ascending and descending order. Or from left to right, or from in to out.

A nearly Friend

Discovery

A nearly friend of very short acquaintance
But of deep significance

Nuance

Fire warms and burns

Whiskey is a lubricant and an abrasive

Shock

The soul that preempts loss

The body that falls from a great height

Transcendence

The distance between life and death
measured in grief

The awareness of affinity

Affinity

A gentle hand enters the water with no
resistance

Cold water repels even the gentle hand
unless the hand perseveres

Transcendence

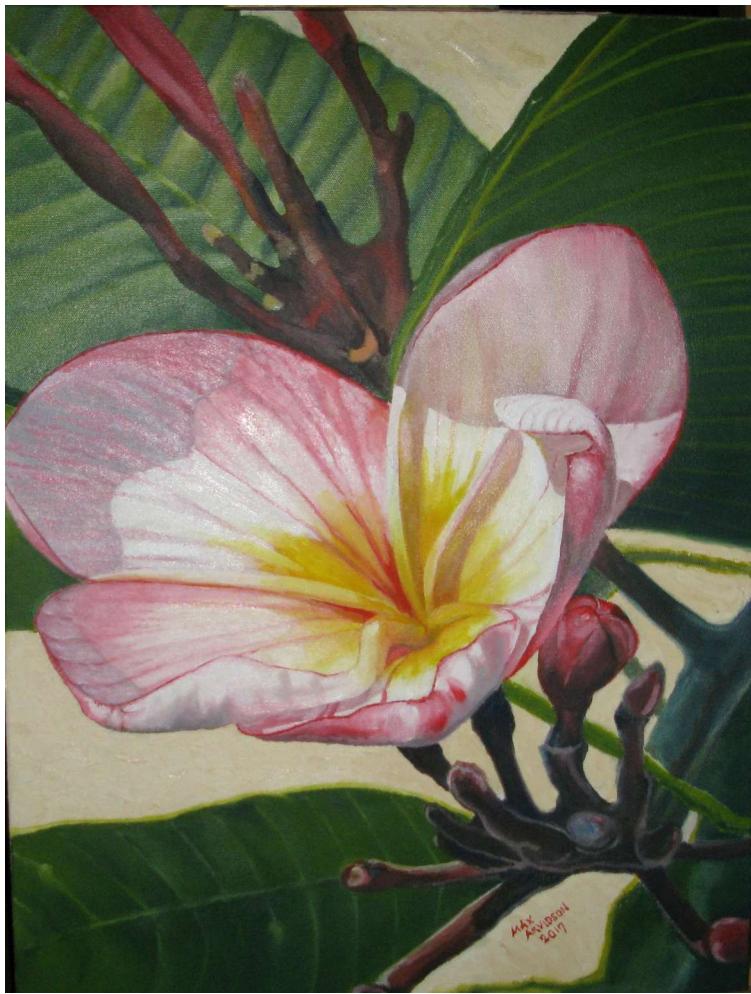
Impending mortality exists
And is a thing that can be shared

Shock
The sharing is like cold water
Not easy

Nuance
The purity of cold water is understated
The purity of cold water is understood

Discovery
We got on fine
And then parted company
A nearly friend and me





“Frangipani” 2017

Self explanatory I think but written in the voice of a street urchin or even Huckleberry Himself.

Because they called me Huckleberry Finn, and also occasionally Tojo, after the Japanese Emperor of the time, who was also a stubborn little prick. In hindsight I see I must have been a bit of a handful and so got passed around, but I loved them all.

All me Mums – Auntie Joan, Auntie Nell, Mum, Nanna, have died.

All Me Mums

They maynter knowed they ad me,
a blow in bleedin son....

But all me Mums are goin,
now
One be bleedin one....

I claimed em for me own,
an wore their earts unstrung....
an all the time I loved em,
now
lookit they bleedin done....



“ Up by Tank Seven”
Looking toward Pemberton
2015

Eventually the forces of nature are impossible to deny. Encroaching senility, perhaps, loss of libido maybe ?

But definitely a diminution of sheer physical ability. A few other things come to mind, alacrity, balance, speed, the ability to stop, or to negotiate stairs for example.

Even crossing the road can become a challenge in this world of ever increasing pace and volume.....

And so it comes to pass that the facts of life impinge upon our collected and remembered abilities. Especially, after a certain age, when memory no longer serves us as well as we expect.

Not just the cerebral kind, but also the

physical kind.

The reduction of muscle memory is a burden we all eventually get to enjoy, and let it be a reminder to you that the only way to jog it is to jog it. I seldom use bad language to emphasize a point, but I am enjoined to utter , Exercise, friends, exercise.

So, having been incapacitated by a fairly recent hip replacement operation I am given a foretaste of one of my possible futures.

The sound of my mobile phone taunts me with the message that it is probably more mobile than me. Having left this dreadful device in another room, I am confronted with several choices. Ignore

the damned thing and make a return call, or test my limited abilities.

Being me, I choose the latter, resulting in one of my better go fast slowly races since I ran in the last Olympic 100 metre hurdles.

But I jest. What follows is what in fact happened.....

Barnies race

My Brother calls me on the phone

5g

The voice which must be obeyed
spake

and my mobile is far away

4g

My good leg complains about
the slothful hip replacement
and the aluminium support crutch
trying to keep up at

3g

I gather the voices message
and reply at the blinding pace
of my telling bone,

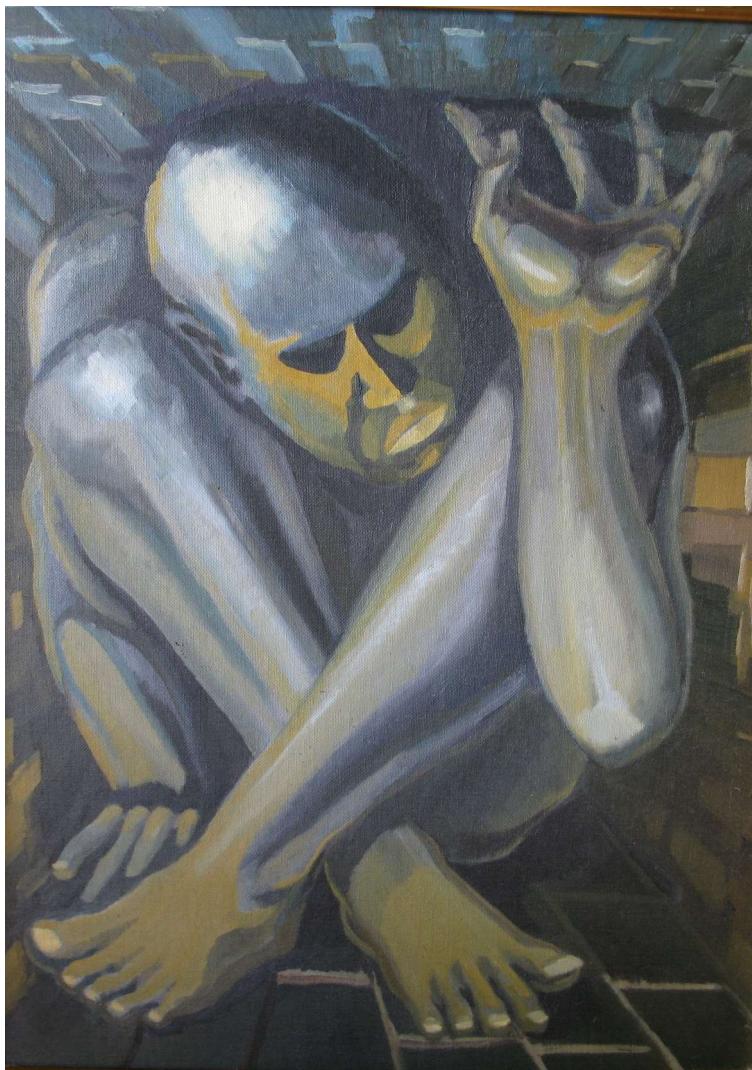
2g

It is too early in my recovery
and my efforts in perambulation are

1g

Sigh

g



“Aspirin Time in the Pit”

2015

(Funf Minuten vor mitternacht) . Five minutes before midnight; As Adolf told us, the scariest time of all.....

Good morning

Last Night
the universe crashed
without a sound
apart from the frown of
an owl
sitting in judgment
over a late mouse.

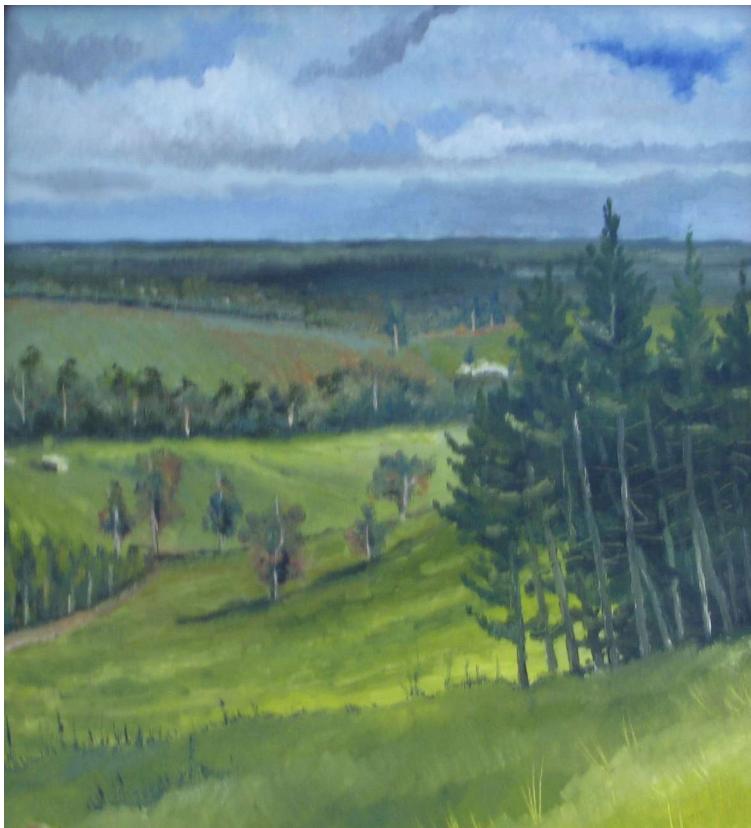
After some hours of
the great wheel's lightshow
the milky way drifted by
seen by few

and heard
by so very few

As Dawn's turn approaches
over the edge of that swamp where
dinosaurs used to have lunch
distant birdsong reminds me
to look up

I no longer fear
or feel trapped by little cairns
of mouse bones

and I feel the owls menace
recede before the joy
of another day with my love



“East Nannup Road”
A view from Ponderosa road across
Lindsay farm 2020

This could be a sad case of anthropomorphism, or just what it is, a threnody.

I still wonder at the experience of sharing life with another intelligent being who was not human. But that is what it was. I saved her life once (she had run into a swamp and was drowning and I risked my own life getting her out) and she was grateful for ever, saving my sanity many times over. My closest friend the german shepherd "Tammie".

Ancient Future

In anticipation of sadness
I witness the spirit leaving her
and I grieve.

Witnessing transcended, the shape
of the grief becomes,
like a comforting memory,
a brother to her,
and my wolf howl keeps her company
as her journey begins again.

Come to your Ancient Future my dog
I will wait for you.



“Bereavement” 2020

Be Reasonable

(Or shoot from the lip ?)

Do you ever
make an
Observation through a jaundiced eye ?
Or reflect without compassion ?
Perhaps you resile and ambivelate ?

The unconsidered engagement
may well be inappropriate
inadvisable or possibly inhumane
with likely repercussions
and unexpected responsibilities
vast and heavy

In spite of this
better able and from the heart
and uncensored (I reckon)
than blind or mute

Be prepared
with your defence
or your reason
is all



Destinations : The closer you get, the
further it is





“Apocalypse”

2024

Jaffa the dog was one of a litter of 5. Born into the world of Nannup at an early age, she soon adopted a new set of parents. Myself.

Her Mothers career of sheep rustling came to an abrupt end when her owners were given an opportunity to apply remedial education in the form of a capital sentence. Her licentiousness licence was completely revoked and she ceased her wanton activities forthwith. Harsh, but totally effective, the leaving behind a litter barely weaned a sad corollary.

So, at the time being enamored with the saga of Ned Kelly and his gang, and seeing some sort of parallel, not to mention the strong evidence for being a blood relation of NK, I decided that

adoption was a good thing to do.

In any case the adoption was quickly approved and Jaffa the dog joined my pack.

Having had a lifelong association with the canine section of this planets occupancy, it seemed the right thing to do, and quickly we developed a good working rapport. Very important to establish an hierarchy early on, I made my declaration as pack leader, and thankfully was accepted, albeit under duress. This Jaffa dog was a very strong character, but notwithstanding that attribute, or possibly because she allowed me to take up the role.

Now. Dave dog was one of Jaffas brothers who survived their introduction to life as we know it, and remained with his mothers owners. The day to day

maintenance of Dave dog was sadly left to that families children, who, typically, lost interest of the real needs of their inherited responsibility, and sadly, to Dave dogs demise. Neglect I have to say. Dogs are not toys, and deserve better, but that's the way things go, unfortunately for some.

In the following poem, which is about Dave dog, It should be noted that he was Jaffa the dog's brother, and the reference to Bob is included due to his being a recent addition to the Dave/Jaffa pack as a kind of Grandfather in law. As a pommy but human person he was also aware of the impending situation.....

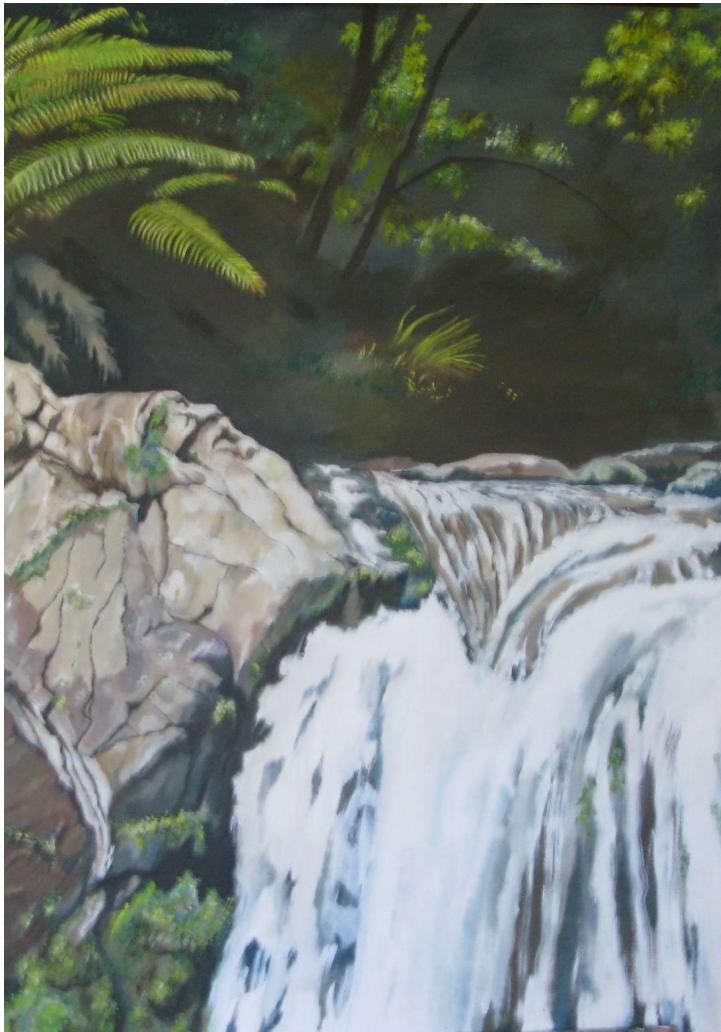
Dave dog

Dave Dog 'as died an gorn.
Some of us will weep an mourn.
Bob. His sister Jaffa who was there
when e was born.

Dave Dog was only knowed by few.
But them as did has got the clue.
A good old Nannup mix up brew,
Dave the Dog was all true blue.

'E was the kind that made yer glad,
If yer didnt pat 'im 'e made yer.
If yer didnt larf 'e made yer.
An now 'es made yer sad.

Last Choosday afternoon e went,
Dave Dog cashed in 'is chips,
Didnt you see 'im jump the moon
during the eclipse ?



“Waiau Creek” NZ

2019

Two weeks after a hip replacement, my second within a twelve month period, disaster struck; bending to put on my socks, I slipped on the edge of my bed, and was rewarded with a terrible and painful dislocation.

Impossible to describe the pain, and the subsequent discomfort, but, needless to say, a trip to Bunbury hospital was the order of the day. down the stairs, the complaining limb having been forced into a parallel position to fit the stretcher, and into the back of the ambulance, and we set off. The road between Nannup and Bunbury has three mllion four hundred and seventy two thousand and six bumps. Every one a delight.

The attending surgeon took great care explaining the procedure to me, but nothing could have prepared me for what was to follow.

Do you recall the Disney film "Fantasia" ? Carefully drawn by hand, thousands of images beautifully rendered on celluloid, months of work, to produce one of the wonders of the cinematic age. One segment of the film was dedicated to Alice in Wonderland, and in particular to the party at which the queen of hearts demands everyone engage in a card game. At some point the cards come to life and begin flying about. This amazing scene appeared in my head whilst under the anaesthetic obviously, in hindsight, heavily psychotropic.

The suggestion of being transported back to Nannup was instantly refuted, and so my recovery began with an overnight stay in a dungeon somewhere in the bowels of the hospital.

My everloving carer and partner arrived early the next morning to return me to the welcoming embrace of my own home. A great night out !

Anaesthesia

A universe bound by a flowing skein of tiles

Constantly changing size smaller larger
faster slower

Occasional sounds
External detached
under water

The tiles are beige coloured bound
together by a darker net
or separated

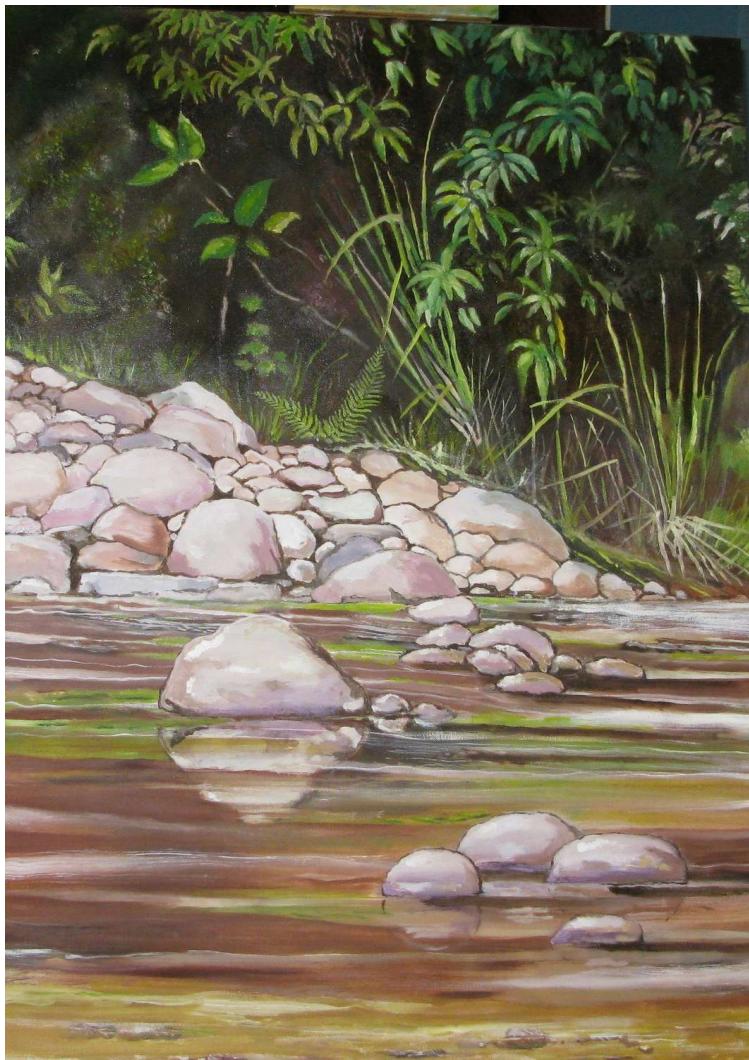
The flow is liquid changing direction and
speed
possessed by an alien intelligence
I suspect

I recall the shadow of an echo of a
memory
of an erstwhile reality
no longer possible to validate or relate
to but just back there
which beckons

The tiled universe disintegrates
momentarily
and I witness you sitting beside me

fragments of comfort speed by
but now etched into the glaze
Your face
The sound of your voice
The sound of mine

Overwhelmingly tired
but the pain gone
I only want to be
where
I can hear the sound of your voice.....



“Te Mata Creek” NZ

2019

Every now and again the muse deserts
me and I get distracted

ANZAC day doldrums ?

Looking at beautiful paintings today
inspires me somewhat less
than a week ago

The Mojo giveth
or taketh away
or just vanisheth for a while

I have plenty to do
lots
I havent done but I reckon I will

Not for the first time
I feel ten thousand
years old my new hip aches

And when another ten winters pass
I shouldnt
be surprised if it still ached

Speaking of old age Richo said
"for those of us in Gods waiting room"
Foolish really we always were

But not too far out of context
Richo (the leftie) has been known
to be right

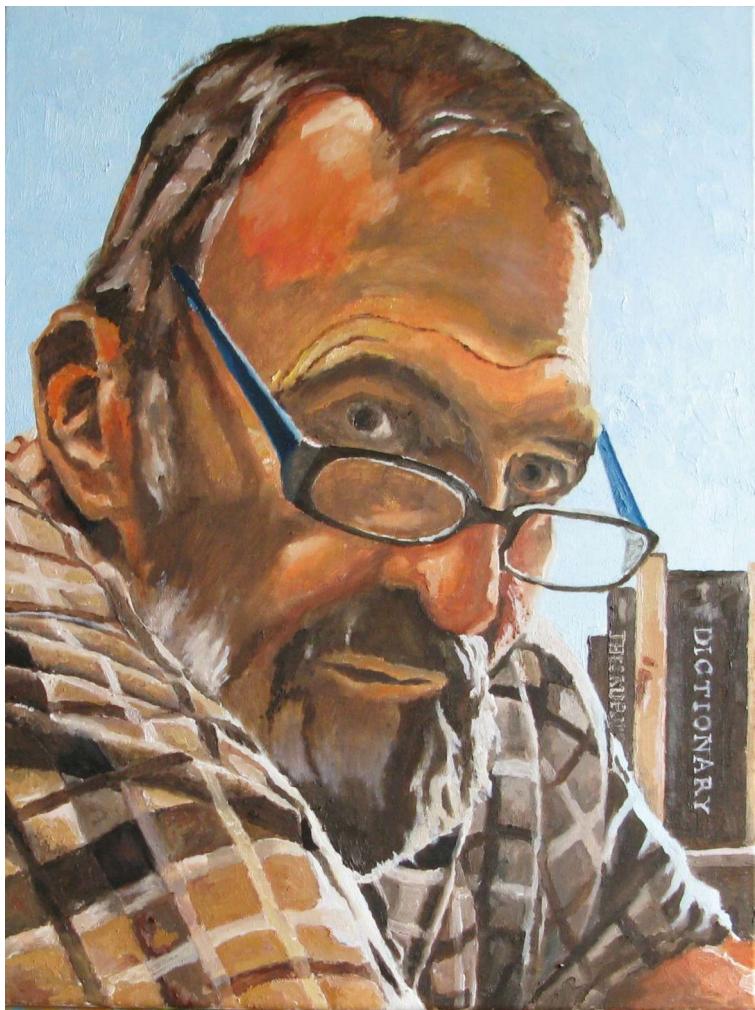


“Whangamata Beach” NZ

2019

This painting was in the in basket for a long time. The character of the man demanded to be recorded in some way. As a close friend of 25 years or so I had threatened to create an image of him that his family and friends would relate to. Getting this image was not easy as he was always reclusive and socially reticent. Painting Bob Clarke (posthumously) was an intense and rewarding exercise due to our longstanding mateship.

Bob Clarke (deceased) was an avid and self educated reader. His ability to communicate was amazing in spite of his apparent shyness.



His penetrating and often ascerbic wit often served as a filter to his actual aesthetic and characterful representations. His ability as an artist and sculptor was rarely acknowledged outside of his immediate circle due to his refusal to exhibit. One of his few well known pieces remains as an entry statement to the small country town of Nannup where he spent his later years. After a long illness Bob Clarke died peacefully at home in 2015. Those he left behind have are realising still the legacy of his wisdoms and compassions for his fellow man.

Like Milligan he did tell us he was unwell.

A eulogy for Robert

You had to be there really,
To hear Bob speak.

His way was a conversation
His meanings crafted
on purpose
taking time to be born.

He offered us galaxies of words
and images
Stopes of fabulous wealth
from the veins of his heritage
for those who cared to mine it.

Bob was an artist.
You had to be there really and see
The drawings
The sculptures
The carvings

You had to be there really and listen to
The stories
The anecdotes
The wit
Uniquely from Bob.

You had to be there really
to catch
his light.

Bright diamonds
these memories
of Bob
that are held in the wake
of his loves
and his friends.



“Campsite Six” Parry Beach WA

2019

Family; one of my anchors, and one of my most rewarding life experiences.

Back in the day (here we go, I hear say) family structure was we are told somewhat more hierarchical than in recent times. Evolutionary forces move us along but we should not forget the past, for it is a container of who we were and a foundation of who we are, and informs how our values are shaped and maintained. And so, unashamedly I record with this biase viewpoint and tell of my relationship with my son

Fishing with Dad

father person remembers, wistfully the patrilineal aspect – but also of course remembers

the grannies mums aunties sister
daughters nieces et al
who were tolerant of this point of view
and as far as I know
may well have been its inspiration

so
the boy and I went fishing
grew up as the fourth iteration
or continuance
as I have seen it
in my time

his great Grandfather Knut Otto who
sailed the seas and built bridges
his grandfather Roy Edison who shaped
steel with his hands
and me who has also built things
my son who has travelled the world and

become thirsty for knowledge
and his son Roy who just begins

is another traveller
along the journey
imagining creating building
the boy I went fishing with
I hope the women are proud



The hurrier I go the behinder I get...





“Parry Inlet” WA

2024

I think I get it....

As corks we are
upon vast oceans
oceans with no names

at the whim of wavelets and currents
across rivers of blood and brine
in survival machines clad with our very
own DNA
as coracles made of time we are

driven by engines of dreams and
memories we are
an assemblage of numbers greater
even than mandelbrot ever thought

whose names are unpronounceable
and whose effects are very like the
gravity making patterns of galaxies and
years

at the whim of wavelets and currents and
lightnings we are
and celtic music (which has been there
all along)
we dance with all these native rhythms
to get a sense of it



“Campsite Somewhere” WA
2019

Immortality is rarely expressed as a question. One of the reasons for this is I think due to a wide acceptance of the general use of the word.

God is immortal. End of story.

The ancient Greeks of course had their "Immortals" as a part of their Pantheon .

The Norsemen had their Ice Giants and Thor and Loki

The American Indians also had theirs contained in a wonderful mythology, as do the Polynesians and of course almost every separate race on this planet.

In this little piece I attempt to express my take on the word as a proposal or a proposition in an allusion to continuity,

pushing back against the finality of our own frailty and replacing it with the notion of "never ending story".

It is possible of course that this is wishful thinking, that we should keep breathing forever or fear of the fact that one day we shall stop.

As there is more to life than either of those things, I am trying to establish that it is also likely that there is more to be found, in what we commonly refer to as an afterlife.

Difficult to define that, of course, however "He led a full life, and we will all remember him" or " A wonderful Legacy " spring to mind notwithstanding "Residues of Ghosts" that haunts the

cave of my personal intuition and enhances the proposition that what we do is as important as who we think we are..

Just Be

This Ireland where one of my spirits bides

is the same Ireland
of thirty three thousand years

and this Sweden of my other
aged more recently
hot blooded and well wintered too

both fuel my fire
and amuse my arts
and are thusly the spring of my being

the sense of ownership or possession
and of being read or being followed
is insufficient measure

of those quantum
surges and roils which dance
within my selves

for as time loses relevance
passing me by
the creative engines I bear

are served yet by lively forces
and seem immutable and myriad
so I'm thinking I'll just be awhiles



“ Piha” NZ 2019

Called Piha by the people who were there first, the name describes the shapes of the ocean waves that are diverted by the prow of a canoe.

Not far from Auckland New Zealands largest city, only 40 km from CBD to beach, the nominal distance tells nothing of the actual journey.

Setting off from the heart of this bustling and overpopulated place, the compass is set to a location to the West but also somewhat Southerly towards the black sands of the Tasman coast, just north of the entry to Aucklands Western harbour.

In stark contrast to most of the major highways this close to the city, this road, was of course during my childhood just an unsealed gravel track. This passage

almost immediately ascends into a hilly locality named "the Waitakere" and is comprised mainly, like most of New Zealand, vertical scenery. While not extremely high, these hills are extremely rugged, and so the road is extremely tortuous. A typically three dimensional experience, the journey is fraught with the accompanying terror – the lack of road markings safety railing or any of the modern accoutrements that we take for granted today.

Even though the distance was not long, the duration due to the terrain was very long, especially for a small child. shock absorbers had not been invented yet, and this adds to the myriad discomforts available.

The penultimate kilometre of the journey was a stretch of road winding down a

steep hillside to the beach. Piha, the rock shaped like a lion was visible projecting from the shallows in the center of a long bay. About 200 metres high, it was an imposing sight, even from a kilometer vertically above. Finger prints were embeded in seating at the rear of dads car.

Ariving at beach level was a huge relief, and the views absolutely stunning. The west coasts balck sands have a curious appeal, shot through with an iridescent lightning blue.

But then the weather. At any point of time the Tasman turns into a raging beast, huge waves crash onto the beach, and surge up the inlet at the Southern end of the bay, climbing metres up the verticle sides of the overhanging cliffs. Some people appear to be fishing there,

the distance rendering them as tiny figures barely visible through the sea spray. at the end of the inlet a rocky promontory is joined to the mainland by a 30 metre high saddle, over which the Tasman hurls itself in apparent rage. Altogether a frightening place indeed.

Lion Rock

The Tasman was always at its angriest
at windy Piha
giant rocks giant waves giant sky

hurling lightning bolts at little children
and thunder too

dark and angry gods lived here
alive in the blue black

haematite sand

lurking

and throwing nightmares
down the cliffs
where I had horrible dreams of falling

I tried to pacify it
with some success
but when I was little
that bloody rock was a thousand miles
high



“Jean” of Parry beach WA

2019

With much trepidation Ignatius became aware that although he could hit a golf ball further than anyone else, he could not always find it. Dealing with this awkward perception became for him an all consuming obsession.

This preoccupation annoyed God somewhat as Ignatius up until now had been shouldering a large part of the normal administrative duties that were actually a part of the creators purview.
God Adapted.

It was well within the creators capacity to institute dependency, a momentary oversight which gave an awful lot of power to certain earthly institutions. Government. The church. And so on.

The dependency became so pernicious that at least on earth some of the old wisdoms of humanity such as independence fell into decay. This suited Ignatius in fact and other lawyers, who immediately assumed the mantle of "Always being right" and so began the decline and fall from the golden age of "Sorting it out for yourself".

As time passed this did not however suit everyone and slowly but surely a resistance began to build. Hence the Reformation. To the great consternation of the wielders of power, people began to rediscover the ability to think.

Even Ignatius who to his credit discovered that "Being wrong" was a bit

like losing a golf ball and henceforth occasionally was able to admit that golf wasn't everything, and considered taking up archery

Mum said "I told you so".

Mothers & Jesuits

There isn't necessarily a reason for everything, as long as you have faith....

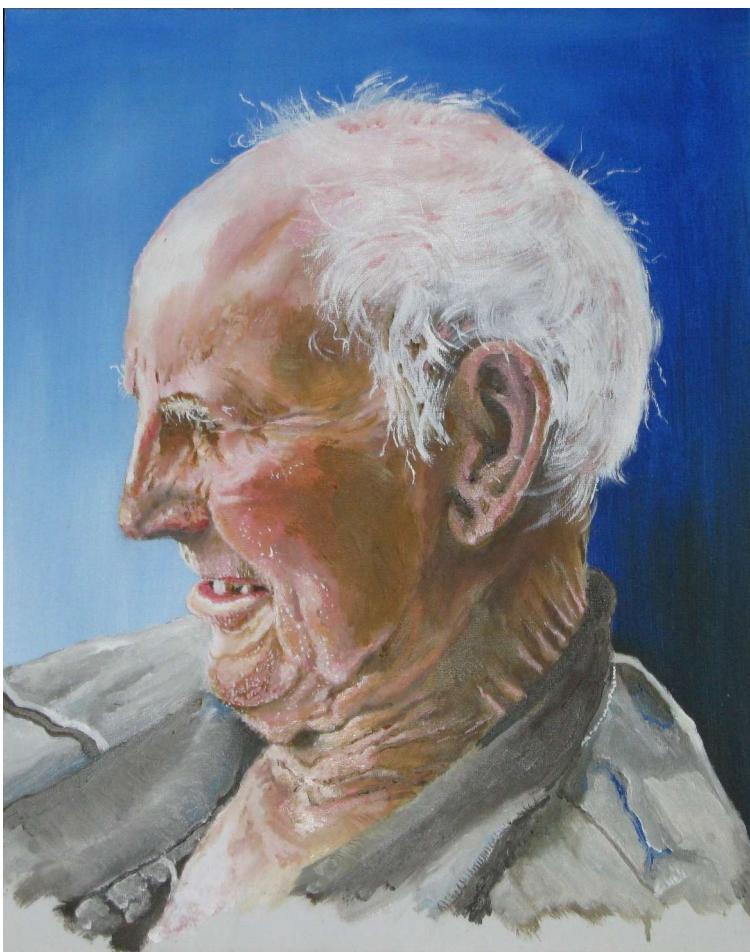
Give me a child
for seven seasons
and I will give him the perfect golfing
swing.

Quoth Ignatius Loyola
(Gods Pro) as he sends his drive
(a slight draw) 340 light years
down the galaxy
at the same time
adjusting his soutane.

Is a galaxy that long?
And why do mothers and Jesuits
find themselves in one mind ?

I blame golf
Having donated body and soul
to the fairways and roughs
for over forty years
I blame golf

what the hell ?
I blame golf for everything
Far too egalitarian
handicaps, ladies day and so on
sorry mum



“Sam” of Parry beach WA

2019

A song for Chloe.

A future memory, a real quick scene,
right there, up on the screen.

All now in real time, how its always
been. Now there's a scary, wild thought;
something untamed, something
unnamed....something untaught,
Life.....

And here's yet another;

Mary, a mother ??

Joseph, a father ??

He just planted the seed.

And loved her, it wasn't just need !

Wise people call that knowledge
of the biblical kind

But wait, now there's more.

An Angel.... Oh God we've been here

before .

Like, this is the sparkangel
that goes off in the dark ?

Life.....

Happening things ;

Sunshine on wet road lights up the day
A polka dot brolly comes out to play
shoes making bright splashes dance
Rainbows on raindrops, as if by chance
a smile.....

With its cute little nose and ten little
toes....

That first kick, That first breath, That
new life.....

Crazy right ? Nah, just wild.

None of this belongs to us,
yet all of it, ours. A baby is coming.

“Shirl” of Parry beach WA

2019

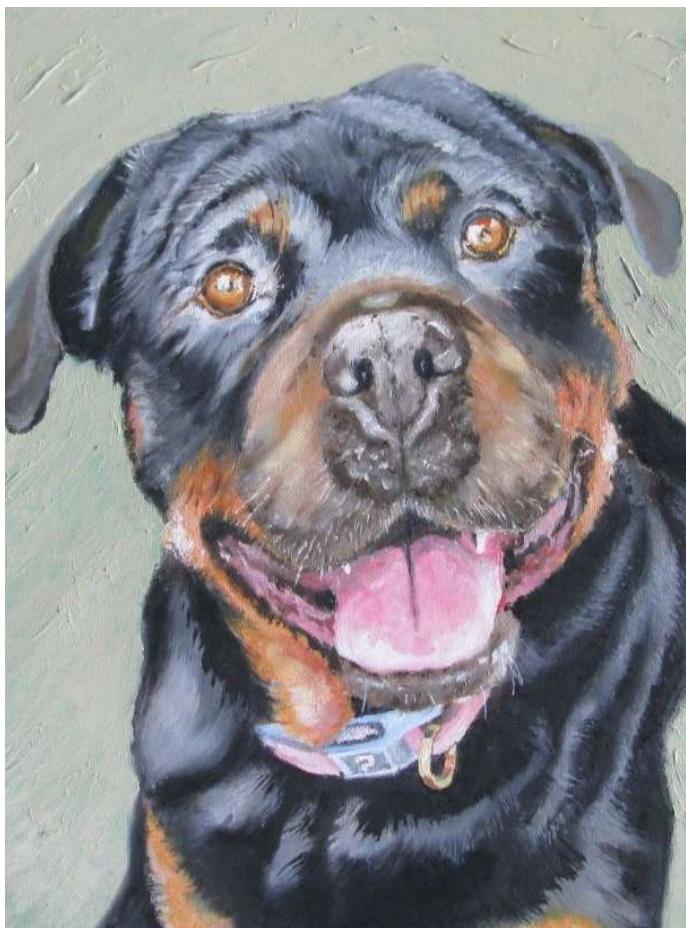


I am made of

Churchbells hold the days together for
some
others held captive by the city
and human made things
live on TV

The trees and rocks
hills and mountains
valleys and plains
lakes rivers and streams
waterfalls rills and spills
storms rains mists and fogs
even the snow
and the critters they sustain
all were our ancestors

So it brings me joy and comfort
to be filled by the music
the language
and the poetry of the land
knowing that
these things add to mine



“Karma”

2024

Landscapes

My paintbrush speeds
but the days
are not stilled
The bush
knowing
Touches my senses

Briefly
The hunger subsides
In places of power



“Alvey the Dog”

2015

Incentive

with no incentive
to be deep or meaningful
the need to be heard

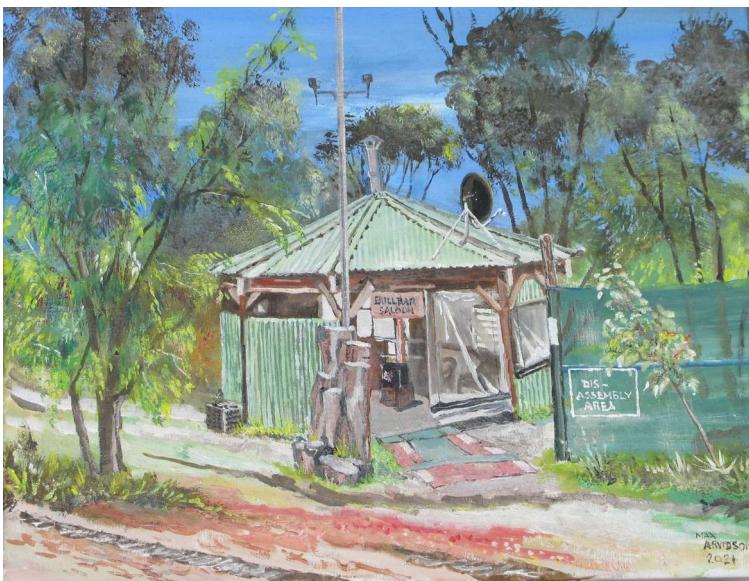
quietly or out loud
persists
recidivist wise

or by determination
called by some
cussedness or plain orneryness

in any event
speaking plainly usually of course
will be more prosaic than poesy

and is therefore
more easily
misconstrued

than
poetry
I reckon



"Syds Camp" 2021

Affinity

The room is comfortable.

The air is quiet.

The season is breathing out.

The Woman is still, relaxed.

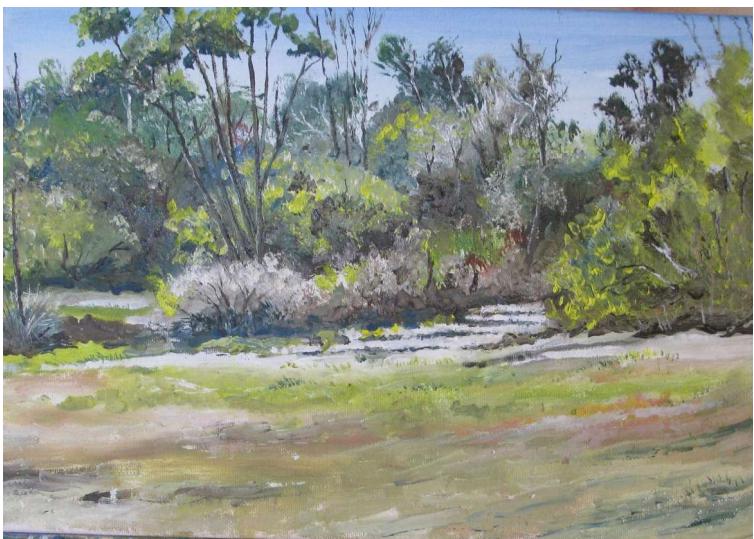
Her aura melds

and now it is the same as the room.

The book She holds beckons.

I stand beside Her, with a cup of tea.

Its not the first time.



“Down the Track” 2021

Sudden Winter

A metaphor for ageing.

Roiling clouds soften
the jagged peaks
granite and cotton wool

Fluted streams of mist
coat the frozen river
and steal from the silence

reverberations dance
anonymously
beneath the snow

my senses sharpen
as the cold air
becomes brittle on my face

and the sudden winter
once more brings its challenge
of survival and hope

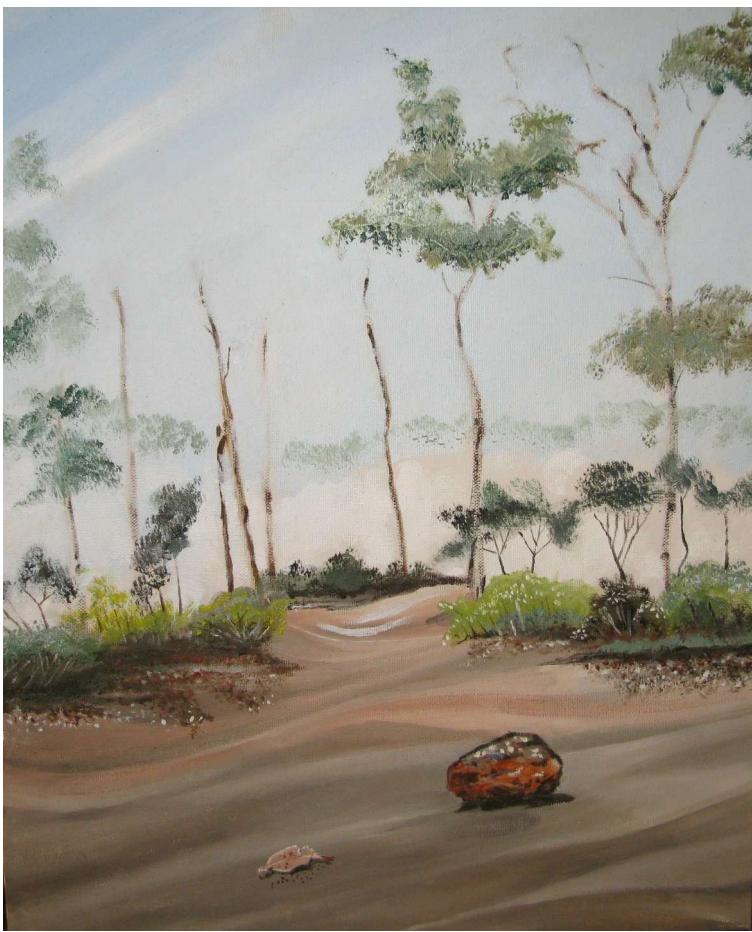


The Celts words

Nevertheless do they give us galaxies of
words

Stones of fabulous wealth
in the veins of their brogue
for those who wish to mine it

What jealous God is this
god of Babel
attempting obfuscation
of such a kind ?



The Vet

The soldier returned from
the third world

finds some peace in the quiet
of the river mist

the souls he sent to the spirit world
in battle hunt him daily

pale sky

mist

sand

gravel

rock

leaf

are a balm to his hurts
as he softly weeps
for what he has become

Vietnamese blender

going round.

Apocalypse Now
brought you the Sound,
The whacking beat, distant, wap wap
wap
The TV news
showed you around,
The smacking of feet, nearby, flap flap
flap
no way – to tell
no time – to yell
how much it hurt
getting struck was hell

landmine splintered shin
bamboo sliver – all the way in

no way – to tell
after – the shock
the difference

You – Your mate – Family and Friends
You – Your mate – Family and Friends

going round – going round – going
round – going round.



"Maggie" 2019

watching for orchids

If I could speak to my younger self I
would say
one day you will find
more years behind you
than there are ahead

subjectivity will assert itself
as objectivity wanders
and its directives
lose their weight

do not regret the energies
you harnessed
in your early years
among the people around you

but rejoice in the acceptance
and yes the tolerance

of your existence
by other humans in the room

especially the ones who
nursed you
when your mistakes
made them sorrowful and sad

because now is the time
as your invincibility narrows
to a point
not too far distant

too take the walk trail
behind the cemetary
and walk it slowly
and observe with every step

the earth decorating
the seasons with small flowers

and be glad to accept
that most powerful reward

that comes with this
minor indulgence

I call
watching for orchids



Gods waiting room

We are all in Gods waiting room

Quoth Richo the laborite

friend of all the world

and gentle man

I hope his corner of the room

has some comfortable parameter

and may he get to heaven the day before

the devil knows He's gone

My corner has been co-habituated

by a demon the size of a bedroom

who moans and wails

and flails the living air

Like a manaiacle creature of the deep

its arms encircle me as it shrieks
its commands to the aether
whipping the daylights out of the
daylight

photons claw their way through me
in their attempt to escape this deadly
flogging
and their attenuated passage wreaks it's
particular havoc in their wake

all in a good cause I am assured by
the high priests who contain this beast
and direct its activities with matriculated
and infinite nonchalance

I have to tell you Richo
the howling of this beast
is impressing me with it haunting
melodies and I think I will survive



“Towerinning” a meteor crater WA

2017

From KeriKeri an echo. My reaction to a mate's reminiscence regarding memories of his mother. A communication with his sister who lives in beautiful KeriKeri, New Zealand.

Sprung from the same wyrd
into the heart of things
the visitor who is not a visitor
but is a part of us
comes with flowers

and then
our greeting seems a memory also
and, remembering how,
we put away our tears
awhile
and fly again



On a drive from Hometown Nannup to a holiday destination at Parry Beach on the south coast. Some of the most beautiful country on this planet.

Old Growth Human

The way to a campsite

on the South coast

The road takes us through heaven

on the way to another heaven

I drive toward a tree

and it is wider than my ute

I know I am in the Shannon

and my soul breathes deeply

involuntarily

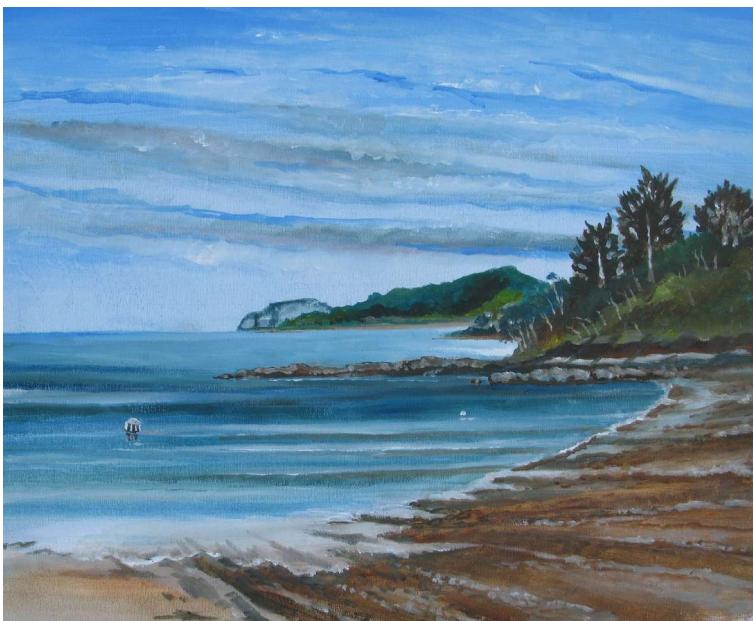
My heart is stronger

and it is good to be alive

There are no political statements

no tv presenters no greenies no

rednecks
nothing unnecessary that is younger
than 200 years
other than the road
Just the trees and my girlfriend and me
and I love it



“Long Bay” Coromandel NZ

2009

A holiday in New Zealand –

November 2009

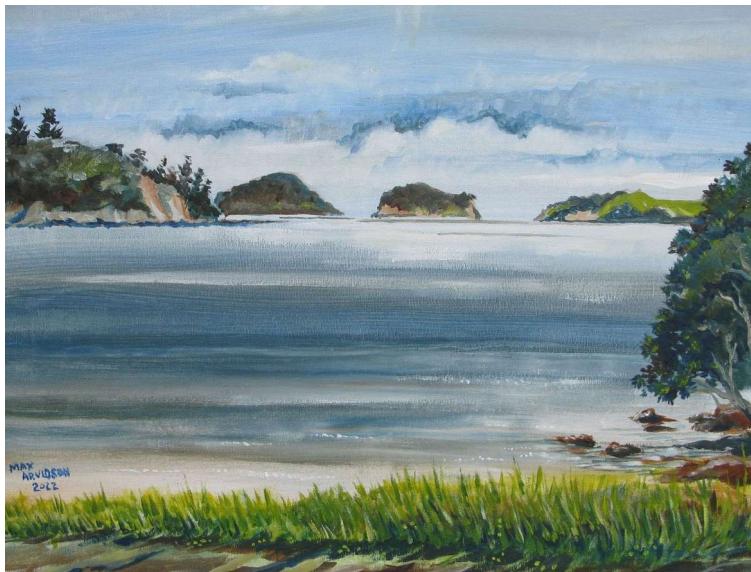
Some Haiku

Cool gully breezes
Ao Te Aroa spring
summer looms again.

Sea breeze, Kanuka
Te Mata flax blossoming
the poi dancers sway.

Rediscovered coast,
Bellbird, Tui, Kingfisher;
Sentinels of soul.

Bellbird greening sky,
Shot silk lightning the Tui.
The Kanuka white.



"More Long Bay" Coromandel NZ

2009

Back in the day to become a parent was the normal if not the expected thing to do.

Even during WW2 when resources were few and energies were directed at to simple survival

my own parents and those of my contemporaries set what appeared to me to be a pretty amazing precedent.

Perhaps the mantra "Keep calm and carry on" had something to do with it.

I had a wonderful time "growing up".

Good use was made of the abundant wilderness

areas of the time. I was known as "Huckleberry Finn" due to full on engagement with my natural surroundings.

Being born in a small town and into a caring enclave was also a huge bonus. Outside of school the most influential directives I recall were "Dont go near the river" and "dont be home late".

Of course these parameters were fully tested. The "Dont be home late" one attracted the most severe reactions and some good old fashioned re-education processes were invoked.

Mostly successfully. I admit to being fastidiously punctual after surviving a particularly harrowing administration of justice. Being late was more concerning than drowning apparently.

An effect of this personal freedom was the shape it gave to my attitude towards being educated, or in other words going to school. Being held captive in a creche

for ten years really went against the grain.

But overall I think I managed to live through these various attempts of indoctrination and force fed data for which I had no use. My real education began I believe when I started my apprenticeship at work. My real education began and continues to this day.

So the poem speaks to my personal freedom and my desire to impart that opportunity to my own children and for them to theirs.

Our Children

We are adorned by these little folk
closer to angels than beings

from other planets
that we called children

At once we fall in love with them
(or fear for them so much)
and herd them
As though our lives depend upon it

into the corrals of Our learned wisdom
our loftiest imperative
seems to be
to fit them to our cloth

When all they need
they bring with them
only wanting to recall
the ability to fly.



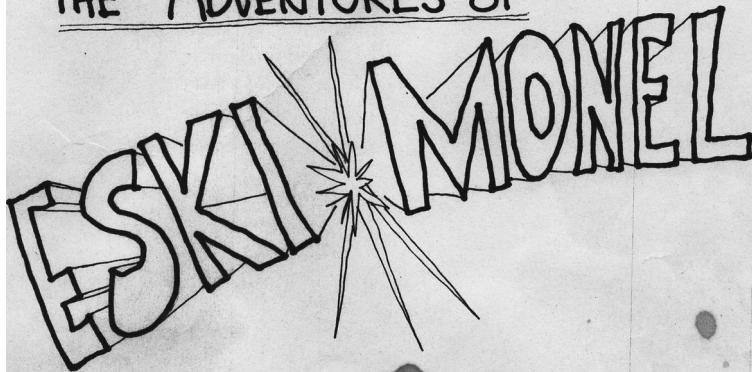
Grandies “Roy and Louise”

2013

Hash house harriers

Fifteen years every monday at five PM,
an hours run 10k or so and then back to
the bucket for the slops. A group of
drinkers with a running problem

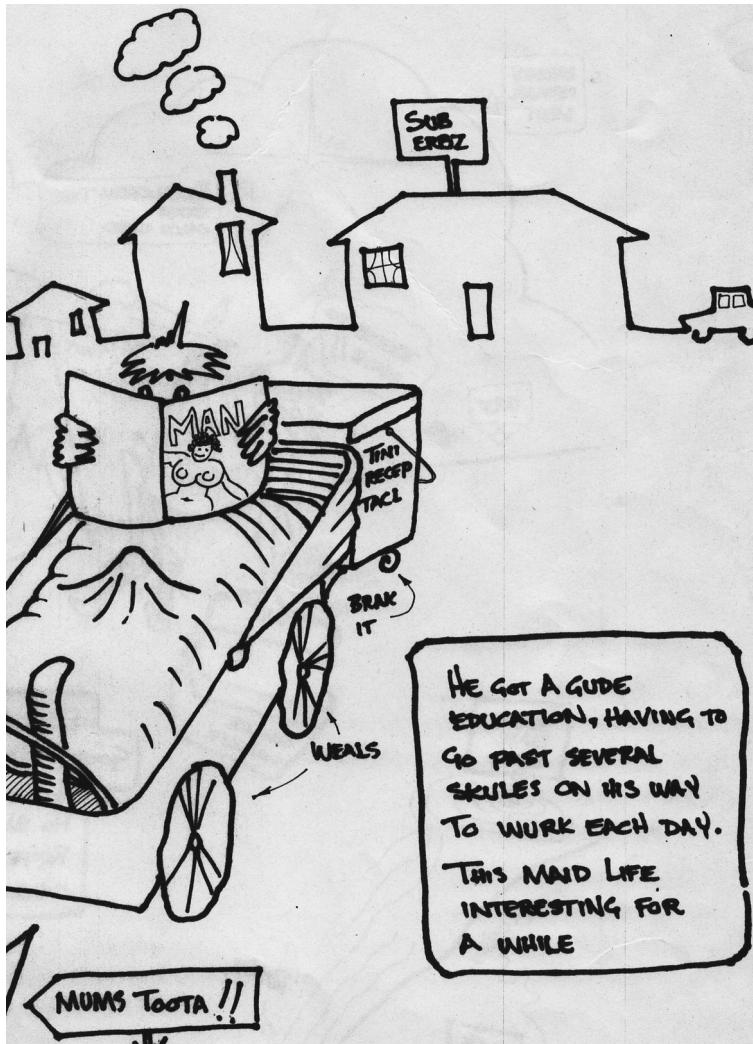
THE ADVENTURES OF

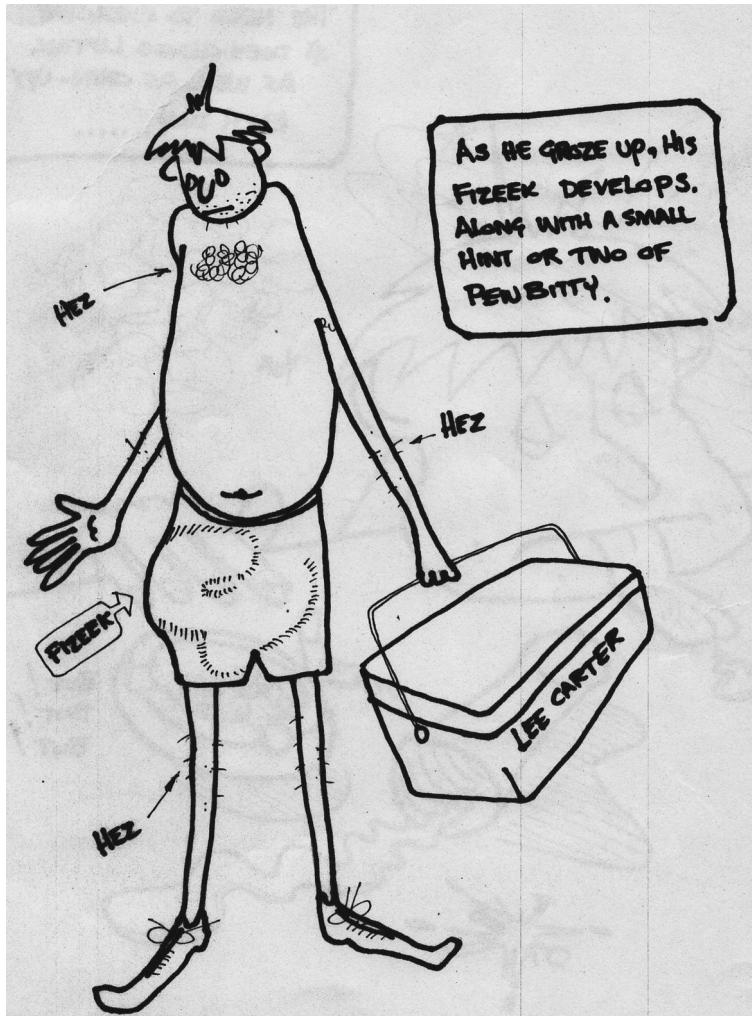


Vol. 1. N° 1. "BORN UNDER A LUCKIES TAR."
(Possibly THE ONLY Hash Comic)

Revision
1918.

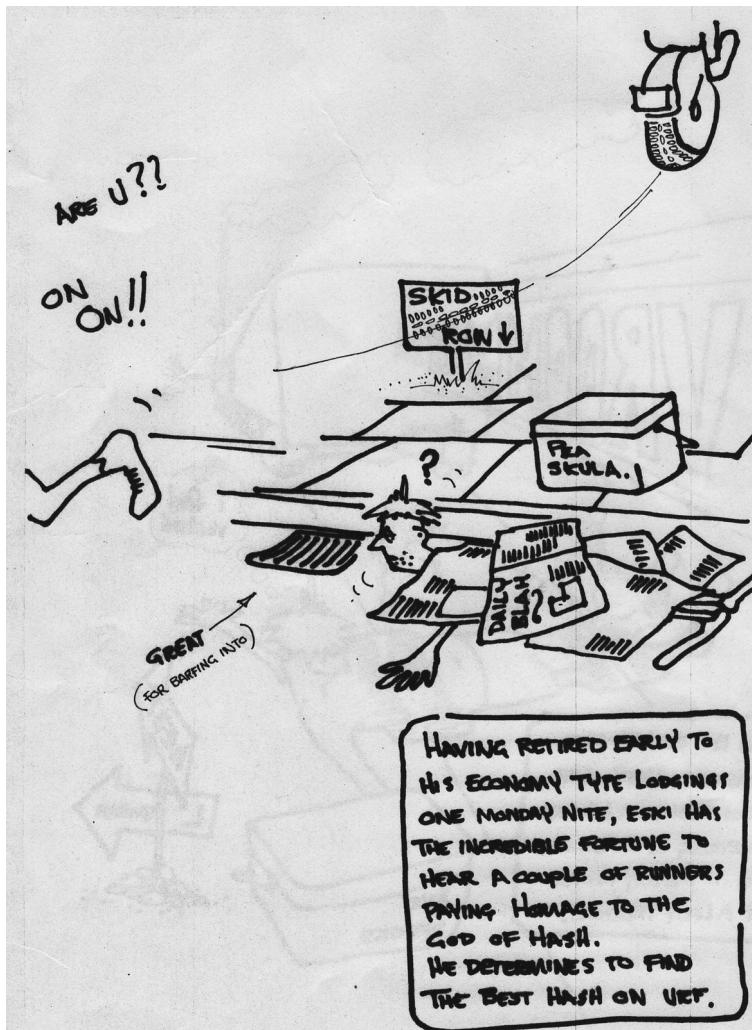


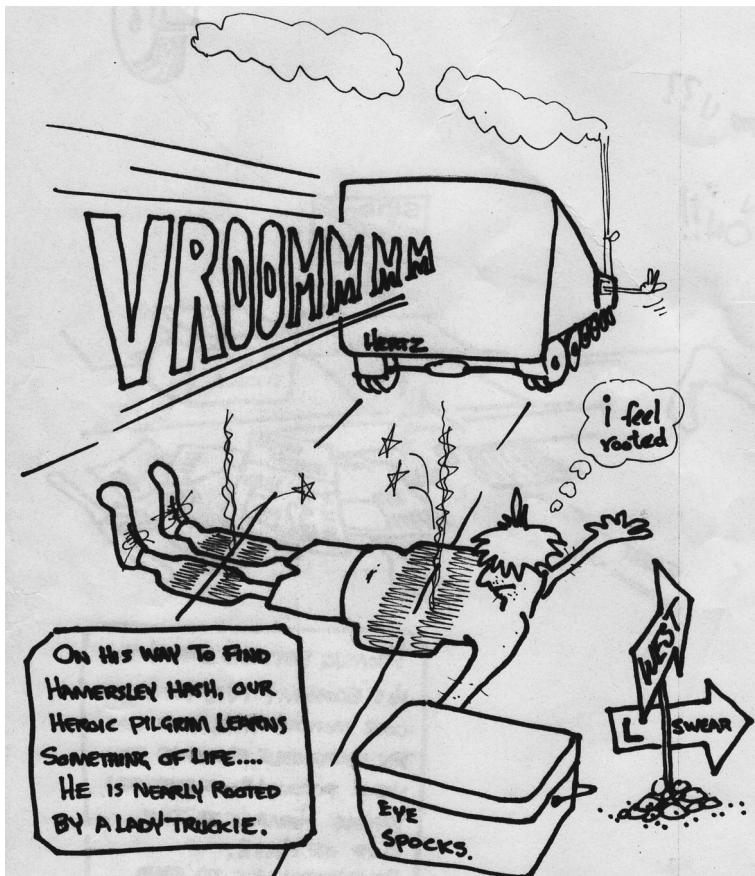


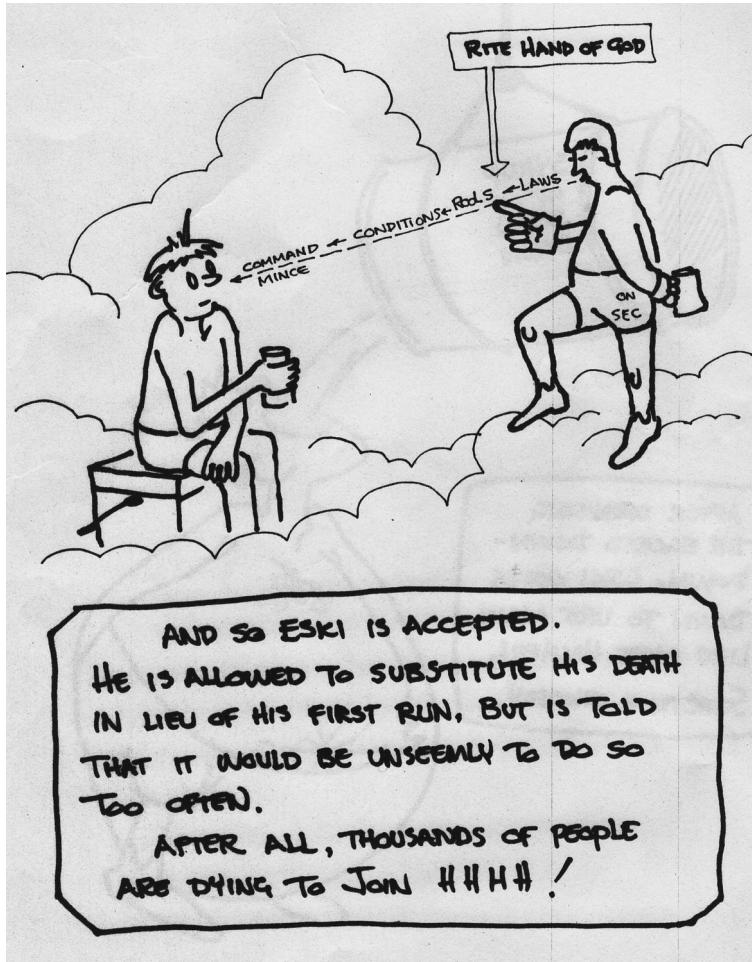


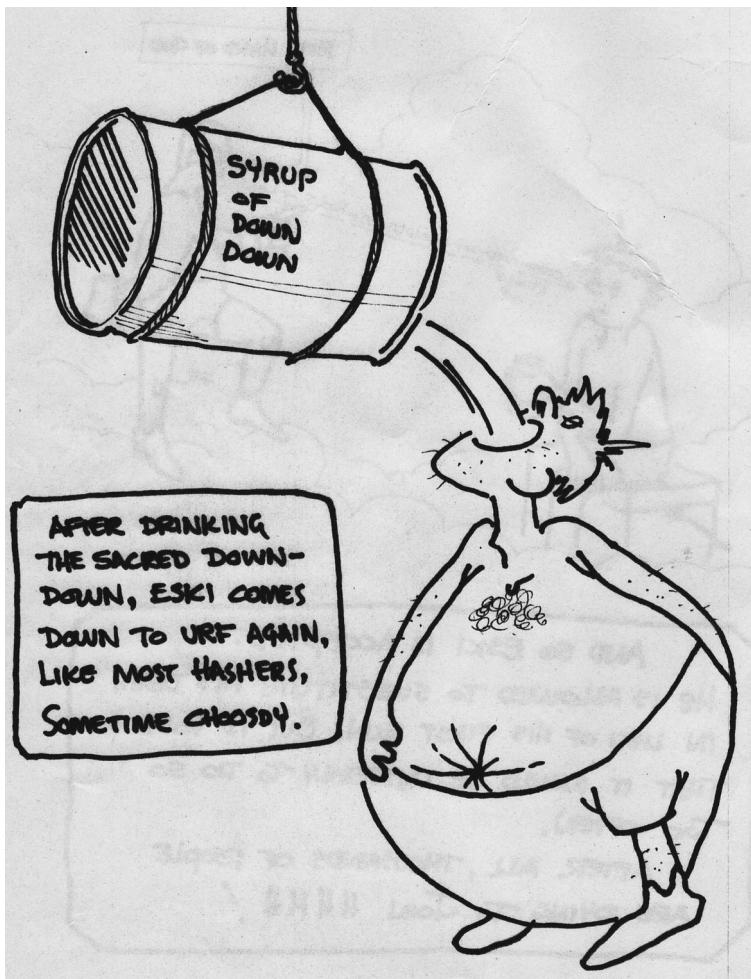


BUT!
BUT!
BUT!









JUST IN PASSING, THE OBSERVANT READER
WILL HAVE OBSERVED SEVRIL INTRISTING POYNS.....

- (a) HOW DID ESKI GET HOLD OF A HASH CALENDAR?
- (b) HOW COME HE HAS NO NIPPLES?
- (c) WHY DIDNT HE DIE UNDER THE TRUCK?
- (d) HOW COME I AM STILL READING THIS JUNK?

IT WILL BE SEEN ALSO THAT THE STORY
SO FAR HAS CLOSE PARALLEL WITH SEVERAL
MAJOR CULTURAL INFLUENCES, NAMELY THE
JUDEO-CHRISTIAN SAGA, & SUPERMAN COMICS.
WITH NOTICE OF SUCH IMPORTENTIOUS
PHILOSOPHICAL ESOTERICA, CAN WE PERHAPS
LOOK FORWARD TO MORE OF THIS RATHER
INEPT & GENERALLY PISSNITTED CHRONICLE?.....
OR W. ILLINE BEES PARED?.....



My mother dropped me when I was only
6 months old. Its OK, I landed on my
head.

