

# ***RED LODE***

Terry Fogarty

TERRY FOGARTY was born and raised in the western suburbs of post war Sydney. After marrying Mary Murphy he moved to Newtown in the inner city. With the birth of their daughters, Terry and Mary decided to move to Chatswood on the northern shore of Sydney Harbour where Mary was teaching.

Copyright © 2013 by Terry Fogarty'

The moral rights of the author are asserted.

First published in Australia in 2013

Published by Boake Press. 2013

NationalLibrary of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication entry

Author: Fogarty, Terry, author.

Title: Red Lode : Celebrating personalities from across  
Central

Australia / by Terry Fogarty.

ISBN: 9780992270100 (paperback)

Subjects: Australian poetry--21st century.

Persons--Australia, Central--Poetry.

Anthologies.

Dewey Number: A821.4

# PREFACE

By Terry Fogarty

In May 2013 my wife Mary and I embarked on a 8,500 Road trip to Central Australia.

From Sydney we travelled to Dubbo, Nyngan (to stay in one of our favourite camping grounds on the Bogan River)Cobar, Wilcannia and White Cliffs (which we visited on our last trip to the Centre). We then took the dirt road toMutawintji NP (a location we had been attempting to get to for many years). Then on to Broken Hill (we hadn't been there for over 40 years when we went there on Sydney University Geography Excursions in the late 60s). We enjoyed our visit to the Rail Museum (particularly when we worked out that we must have travelled on the first air-conditioned train in NSW from Cobar to Broken Hill).

From Broken Hill we headed into South Australia and down to Port Augusta. From there it was basically north along the Stuart Highway visiting Woomera, Coober Pedy (the third of the major opal fields we have visited) then across country to Oonadatta (another location we had dreamed of visiting). We then followed the Oonadatta Track to Marla then crossed into the Northern Territory.

We left the Stuart at Erlunda and took the road to Yulara, Uluru (Ayers Rock) and on to the Olgas. We then drove on the loop road by King's Canyon and Hermannsberg (visiting Albert Namajira's house) and then on to Alice Springs.

From Alice we continued north to Tennant Creek passing Barrow Creek (the site of the Peter Falconio murder) and past the Devils Marbles at Wauchope.

Leaving Tennant Creek and travelling east we passed the Barkly Homestead, Camooweal and on to Mt Isa.

From Isa we drove via Boulia (the home of the Min Min Lights) then on to Bedourie (the last main town before Birdsville). I wanted to revisit the Noccundra Waterhole (which we did).so we drove by Windorah then toward Quilpie (turning off on the road to Eromanga. After Nockatunga we went by Thargomindah, Cunnamulla and St George.

As I wanted to 'finish' our trip at Werris Creek we headed to Goondiwindi. We crossed the border into New South Wales at Texas then on to Tenterfield. We then drove via Guyra, Armidale and Tamworth to Werris Creek (to visit the Railway Heritage Centre). Then it was south-east to Sydney and home.



## **Dedication**

To Mary, for agreeing to join me on our 'long journeys' and for saying that she enjoys herself.





## RED LODGE

Heavy hills silently succumb  
Seeking sustenance far below  
Gritting, in the face of time  
Crusting, cracking

A silent sun pauses its ascent  
Watchful of the sands of lime  
Wandering in the face of time  
Slipping peacefully, fitfully

Warm hands cradle the red lode  
Moulding it quickly to dough  
Casting in the face of time  
Laid bare for all to see

**Sydney - 2013**



## ELECTRICAL STOREMAN

*Prior to our trip I had purchased a small TV monitor. It included a DVD player. Mary had taken to watching the series Mad Men on a portable DVD player. I suggested that as my monitor was larger I take the TV. This worked out well for the DVD. We were also able to get some poor TV reception. I decided that it would make sense to purchase an aerial. On the way out of Cobar I noticed an electrical store. The store stocked everything electrical including a great powered TV antennae. For the rest of the trip we enjoyed exceptional reception.*

Dark in his hidden dungeon  
The electrical storeman  
Waits impatiently  
For the fly to disappear

The door chimes  
Light slices the gloom  
Carving hieroglyphics  
On the counter's dust

Abrupt conversation  
Impassive, torturous  
The interloper lisps  
The storeman pounces

***Cobar – 2013***

## HI MATE, G'DAY

*We had lunch at a picnic area near the banks of the Darling River. There was a small group of local Aboriginals also having lunch on the banks of the river. Soon after we arrived they up camped and headed for a small store across the road.*

Wondering in the heat  
Skin as black as  
A red heart pulses  
Sending sparks

Friendly, always  
When with the mob  
Hi mate, G'day  
Walk to the shops

Hi mate' G'day  
A mantra perhaps  
Long from the dreamin  
Of land and life

***Wilcannia – 2013***

## PETROL HEAD

*It seems that there are two classes of Aborigines in Central Australia. The 'have's 'and the 'have not's. On our trip we encountered many Aboriginal people who were likely existing on welfare. In the worst cases of poverty some of these appeared to have resorted to substance abuse to give meaning to the lives. At the other end of the spectrum, were Aborigines often driving 100 Series petrol guzzling Toyota Landcruisers. Presumably, the more affluent of these had shared in Land Council windfalls from resources exploration.*

Oh ! But it's great  
Sitting on the edge  
A chasm, rift by colour

No pink nor mauves  
No yellow now orange  
Just the outside of the spectrum

For one it is a nectar  
Sustenance for living

For the other, poison  
Sustenance for dying

***White Cliffs – 2013***

## RANGING MUTAWINTJI NP

*Mary and I had been trying to get into the Mutawintji National Park for many years. For one reason or another (road closures or long detours) we had never made the Park.*

*On this trip we arrived at the Park late in the afternoon after driving from Nyngan. The public part of the Park contains a quite nice camping area (water, toilet, solar powered electric lights and gas bar-b-ques). There is a small fee (\$10.00) to use the facilities. Unfortunately, I only had \$50 notes. However, we decided to camp anyway.*

*The next morning a Ranger pulled up. The first thing I said was 'do you have change of a fifty dollar note?' He didn't. He was in for a chat. Eventually the talk turned to access to the protected area that contains the bulk of the Aboriginal art. You can only access these areas with an approved Aboriginal tour company. The Ranger spoke quite despairingly of the operators then announced that he was also an Aboriginal.*

Black as an Irishman with freckles

Talk as cheap as the fee

Long enough to distract

Late night, late morning

Chat by the tank

Tanked, tinkered ?

Fingers spread

Puff and feather

Ochre upon the rock

***MUTAWINTJI National Park - 2013***

## GOATS

*It is not uncommon to come across goats in Central Australia.*

Cloven hooves portend  
The coming carcass  
From a rocky journey  
Soon road litter

High above he poses  
Clinging easily to the edge  
Watching vacantly

A kid bleats and bloods  
Dripping droplets  
In the new dawn

***On the road to Broken Hill – 2013***

## LEATHERS

*I had recently started a book binding course. Leather is used in a number of ways in binding books. So, on the trip I was on the lookout for any leather supplier. In Broken Hill there was a shop that sold leather goods. Out the back was a leather craftsman. He gave me some off-cut leather but advised that the best place to get leather was in Botany, Sydney.*

Gurgling and darting  
Lone soldier facing the dawn  
Easing daily into the saddle

Saddler, turning rags into riches  
Straining for perfection  
Tauting and grubbing

Garment leather encasing the words  
Make the word so expensive  
But not the trees

***Broken Hill – 2013***

## A MESS

*Woomera was established as an armed forces facility. Some things have changed over the intervening years.*

What a mess Woomera is  
Grafted to the desert

Many messes  
Yellow cake; not for Christmas  
People messed; by rank and file

A messenger appears  
At midnight – the Oils

Messes cleansed by time

***Woomera – 2013***

## OUT OF WORK (TOSH)

*On our trip we observed many instances where kind action was bestowed by locals on the more needy within their community. Parked next to us in the caravan park was a middle aged guy in a van. He was looking for work. The caravan park owner had some suggestions as to where he might find some work.*

A starry sky, begets  
Thoughts, wandering aimlessly

A starry sky, rotates  
Thoughts, scatter profusely

A starry sky, slides  
Thoughts, tumble incessantly

A starry sky, shadows  
Thoughts, lie patiently

***Coober Pedy – 2013***



## THE POOL

*When travelling in Central Australia you regularly come across traditional Australian innovation. At Coober Pedy it was in the form of a water tank. The owner of the caravan park had cut a door in the side of the tank. Obviously, the tank could not now be used to store water. Instead, the tank was placed over the top of a small swimming pool. The tank provided shade and protection from dust. (Only in Australia?)*

Inside/outside in

Where else?

Double skinned

Glamping the water

Beckoning travellers

To sink into luminescence

Ageing silently, thinking

Turning dust to mud

Where else?

***Coober Pedy – 2013***

## AU PAIRS

*There is a multitude of young tourists in Australia on working holidays. Naturally, many of them head to 'the great outdoors' during their time in Australia.*

Bleached brown by the sun  
They wander  
Back and forward  
Morning and night  
Turning night into day  
Causing dreams to stutter  
In the cold heat of night

***Cooper Pedy – 2013***

## PINK

*The tragic death of Oodnadatta Pink Roadhouse owner Adam Plate at the Targa Adelaide Championship Rally on Friday 24 August 2012 has numbed the outback town of Coober Pedy and local pastoral districts.*

*The many pastoral families and remote town's folk who have known Adam since he arrived at Oodnadatta in 1974 with his then girlfriend Linnie Trevillian, are still coming to grips with the loss of their outback icon.*

Adam and Lynne longed for the time  
To watch dust settle upon itself  
Rumbling silently on the camber

Thrills entice a wandering spirit  
Landing him upon a tree  
Waiting for love to alight

All that remains

Pink ladies in the dust

***Oodnadatta - 2013***

## ABORIGINAL PEPSI MAX DRINKER

*The Oodnadatta(Pink) Roadhouse has a liquor licence. However, there was at least one Aborigine who was not partaking.*

His eyes glaze  
Like topping  
On a doughnut

Watching and waiting  
Waiting and wasting  
Time, from his no sugar hit

People come and go  
Some white, some black  
Some brindled

His colour  
Matches his future

His sustenance  
Matches his life.

***Oodnadatta – 2013***

## ALBERT

Albert Namatjira (1902–1959), was a [Western Aranda](#)-speaking Aboriginal artist and one of Australia's most famous artists, he was one of the pioneers of [contemporary Indigenous Australian art](#).

His [watercolour](#) Australian [outback](#) desert landscapes were of the [Hermannsburg School](#) of Aboriginal art. With their richly detailed watercolour depictions, the predominantly western style departed from the highly symbolic style of traditional Aboriginal art whilst drawing upon personal experience. For his work, he was awarded the [Queen's Coronation Medal](#) in 1953.

Namatjira is also symbolic of the Australian [Indigenous rights](#) movement and the bridging of Australian cultures, being the first [Northern Territory](#) Aboriginal person to be freed from the restrictions of legislation that made Aborigines [wards of the State](#), becoming in 1957 the first Aboriginal person to be granted Australian citizenship<sup>[1]</sup>, as such the first entitled to vote, build a house or buy alcohol. In 1956 his portrait by [William Dargie](#) became the first of an Aboriginal person to win the [Archibald prize](#) and in 1968 he became the first named Aboriginal person to be honoured on an Australian postage stamp.

Trees stand relatively still  
Stillier than birds fluttering  
Easier to paint

A man and his mob  
Tramp the land, clambering  
To find the tree

One looks like another  
Artist and tree, upright  
Painted both

Serene

***Hermannsburg – 2013***

## HEADLINER

*Barrow Creek became famous for being the closest town to the location of where Peter Falconi, a British tourist was murdered by Bradley John Murdoch and where Joanne Lees (Falconi's girlfriend) was abducted in 2001. The actual location of the crime was 13 kilometres to the North of Barrow Creek.*

*On our trip, Mary and I passed by the site as there was nothing in our Lonely Planet guide about the incident.*

The falcon hovers  
X-raying the van  
Watching his namesake

The van lurches  
Splitting the rim  
Grinds to a halt

Time lags day  
Dusk lifts so suddenly  
As light floods

The bullet takes  
Its deadly toll  
Life un-clings

Clamouring for life  
The girl clings to belief  
Survives

***Near Barrow Creek – 2001/13***

## NAKED MAN

*There is little that surprises us these days. But, coming upon a near naked man in the middle of nowhere goes close.*

What the!

Did you see

What I saw

Think logically

What would a naked man

Be doing

Hundreds of miles in the outdoor

Looking for a naked women

Searching for a roo pelt

There is tar

But no feathers

What the!

***Outside Mt Isa – 2013***

## ALL SORTS OF WATER

*There are two camping grounds in Bedourie. One attached to the Roadhouse. The other associated with the small (but effective) Tourist Information Centre. We opted for the Tourist Centre one after being told that we could use the town pool and thermal spa (we have a penchant for hot spas in the desert dating back to the 1970's when many of them were just hot bores). We were also advised that we could camp on a lush portion of green grass set in this desert landscape*

40°C on the inside

30°C in the outside

What do you prefer?

No one size fits all

Brown on the outside

Green on the inside

What do you prefer?

No size fits any

Dry on the inside

Wet on the outside

What do you prefer?

A size for many

Sorry

I forgot the sprinklers

Did you enjoy the spa?

Come again soon.

***Bedourie – 2013***



## GOOD FRIDAY SPA GIRL

*As mentioned, hot spas are particularly attractive places to linger in the desert, particularly at the end of the day.*

Take me to bed, or lie alone  
Whispers the heart of the day  
Upon the scorched earth

Ease the pain, with waters hot  
Gushing from the bowels of hell  
Lushing, laconic swirls

Orbs straining to bust  
Upon an unsuspecting visitor  
Stay awhile in in my lacy net

***Bedourie – 2013***

## FUNNY BUSINESS

*One the most unusual camp grounds we stayed in on this trip was at Eromunga. We had not been through Eromunga on any of our previous trips. The park was quite run down with a number of unwanted 'visitors'. Recently, the petrol company had installed 24 hour automatic bowzers. There was a lot of discussion in the park shop of how the bowzers worked. In responding to concerns of the locals, the petrol company had rostered an attendant on the bowzers during Easter (at least). The young jackeroo trying to call his mum for Easter did not have the correct change for the public phone. The tough looking shop owner allowed him to use the shop's private phone (free of charge).*

How big is a goanna  
That can't hide in a cup?

How small is a scorpion  
That can't ride in a truck

How much fuel can fit in a tank  
How much are you charged  
When it's only a prank.

2m; 4cm; 60l; \$2,000

What about the jackeroo  
Trying to ring his Mum

Easter is for family  
In the desert  
In the sun

***Eromunga – Easter Sunday 2013***

## ANIMALS

*On the road into Nocundra, we were startled by the sight of a kangaroo bounding very fast at right angles to the road. A few seconds later we were again startled by the sight of a pack of dingoes in fast pursuit of the roo. A little further on, we came across a sign with two dead dingoes hanging from it.*

Dignit or indignit

A roo chasing a dingo

Dignit or indignit

A boar chasing a wheel

Dignit or indignit

A sign hung off two dead dogs

***Near Nocundra – 2013***

## MEMORY LANE

*My paternal grandfather, mum and dad and a nephew have all worked for the NSW Government Railways. I worked for NSW Government Transport for a while as a bus conductor and roster clerk.*

*Werris Creek has a specific interest to the Fogarty family. When my father was a Senior Safety Training Officer he used to travel to many remote locations (such as Werris Creek or Goulbourn) to carry out Safety Training. On such instances, the week before he was scheduled into town he used to have his Safety Training Classroom carriage attached to a train and sent to his training location.*

*At the railway heritage centre on the Werris Creek platform and surrounds that have a remembrance path. It is our intent to lay four memorial bricks for those members of our family who worked in the railways.*

The son of a fettler

Followed his steps

Up the line

Landing in the sheds

And yards

Not far away

Later on

Done like a dog

Pledged no beer

Led to life

In the safe lane

At the end of a train

***Werris Creek – 2013***

## THE DEVIL STOLE MY SOUL

*On our travels by car across Australia we take a selection of our favourite Compact Discs. One of these is a country rock album by the Charlie Daniels Band.*

The devil stole my soul  
As it hung on the lace  
To dry

Half-drenched in foam  
From a mouth agape  
Cold night

Listing silently forward  
A dream unfulfilled  
Rich mud

Shunned by the doggerel  
Left out alone  
Toward light

***On the road -2013***

