Poetry Series

John A'Hern
- poems -

Publication Date:
2019

Publisher:
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
A Bus Stop

Bus stops the places of dreams,
For some, nightmares it seems.
Some have seats others do not,
Weather inclement is it a plot?

The gathering of the human souls
Some want to be there others not so.
Characters abound in this scenario,
Ghouls and goblins join occasionally,
Play to the audience bow when finished.

Off to work or out for a day
The people that gather cause dismay.
As darkness sets in the scene turns grim,
Collars turned up, had enough of sin.

Tutting and talking under breath, considered ok,
Eyes are darting left and right,
Some of these characters can cause fright,
Centre stage playing the fool.

A glance a look is it cool?
Eye contact avoided at all costs,
The end of a day in a local forest,
Brave face and attitude practised.

Keep these fools at arm's length,
Deep breaths are taken, brave face showing.
Individual places are there for the holding,
Then the bus turns up late.

Lots of shouting bundled with hate,
All aboard, seats plentiful.
Driver looks in mirror shows disgust,
Where did you all come from?

The journey calls for trust,
Dropping off at chosen stops,
All the passengers thankful for their safety
Tomorrow arrives, practise to survive
Same old, same old just arrive.

John A'Hern
A Shake Of The Hand

Feelings flow when hands touch, 
attraction felt, love or friendship. 
Sometimes distraction, used when speaking, 
hidden from view, what is this action?

A Mothers call, hold my hand 
is it protection? Or keeping control. 
A Fathers hand ruffles your hair 
showing his love and care.

A shake of a hand when saying hello 
another shake when saying cheerio. 
A girlfriend a boyfriend? 
When do you know?

Walking along, hands never letting go 
feelings increase as time unfolds. 
A wedding arrives, greetings galore 
shaking hands with some you do not know.

The first born, trace face and nose, 
fingers an extension of hands well known. 
Despite your age hands still hold on 
fingers entwine, grip not letting go.

Holding the hands of a loved one 
a two-handed grip, neither letting go, 
the grip then triggers thoughts 
both understand the hidden content.

John A'Hern
Afraid Of Darkness

Innocent candle flame invokes memories,
Childhood in a home not suitable.
Candles handed out for bedtime
Precious items giving comfort,
A yellow flickering flame
Lighting the way.

Treat it with respect
Extinguish when ready for sleep,
Two candles a week are the rations.
House so large dark and creepy,
Seemed alive when night time settled,
Voices heard when the wind played tricks.

Creaks and groans getting louder
Trees joined in the game,
Swaying as they fended off the wind.
Childhood and afraid of darkness
An imagination the child could not handle
Shadows on walls added to it all.

Bedclothes pulled over head listening to the sounds
Peered from under bedclothes,
Candle flame burning yellow comforting
Occasional flicker as a breeze appeared from nowhere.
Bedroom door creaked open
Mother's head appeared briefly.

Mother unaware her child so afraid
Wanted to shout out to her,
Sleep called out its name
The candle still did flame,
Left to burn until no wax is left
Tomorrows darkness will bring challenges.

John A'Hern
Age Comes On A Visit

Age prompts us, pay attention,
Time sliding by there before us
Family tree a good idea.
Photos documents try to avoid them
The Internet helps make the search easier.

Sites aplenty offering help
Always a brick wall before the end,
When it is interesting, excitement swells
Names elude you testing patience.

Mother Father without a hitch,
Grandparents and Great-grandparents
All of them join the queue.
Tree starts growing day by day
Losing interest on some days.

Facebook raises some intervention
Friend requests there for choosing,
Comments sometimes raise people's ire
Others tag along without question,
The tree now grows several branches.

Then it all unravels,
Hey you! YES, YOU!
Get back on your branch!
Stop confusing me!
Check the names once again.

Then the branches start to bow
Who are you, explain yourself?
Next-door neighbours do not count,
Time to reflect all the effort
Sorry Uncle I appear to have left you out.

Dreams take over and early mornings
Floating past the leaves are falling,
Awaken shouting but at who?
Family tree puts it branches around you
Sleep and sanity are now surrounding.

John A'Hern
Age Shall Not Weary Them

My last foray into this arena
Had me living memories not wished to share,
Here I go again, another visit
Into the elderly homes, we wish not.
A sunny day another gathering
Nurses working to make things happen,
Residents in wheelchairs still smiling
Others unsure of the happening.
A talk by an ancient born 1917
Good strong voice begging to be heard,
Wartime memories clear as a bell
From death to imprisonment
All so clear as he tells.
I look around the room,
Half the listeners into their snooze.
On and on goes the story
Death and glory hand in hand,
How can you tell such a sad command?
Bravery such as only you can know.
I leave as before, memories flooding,
A place such as this even exists,
If there is a being ruling the happenings
Make me safe and send me happiness.

John A'Hern
Another Farewell

Ramblings, after visit to those I know
Family time, secrets unfold
Meet the last in the Family line
Brother's and Sister's all farewelld
Gone into the unknown
Age has slowed body movements
Thinking process, slower but wiser
Comments, after digesting questions
Oh, so sharp with answers
Eyes are not their sparkling selves
They still see as once before
A smile, when recognition happens
Hands still soft and warm when held
Hold them, feel peace and solitude
A squeeze to let one know of love
Conversations of time gone by
Questions answered without any doubt
Sadness fills the air if allowed
Thoughts of will we see each other again?
Kiss the cheek, kiss the lips, kiss their hands
They understand your feelings
A wave, a goodbye that struggles to flow
Always think about tomorrow's
Otherwise, into the pit of sorrows.

John A'Hern
Answer The Phone

Police box standing, blue and proud
The doctor sometimes taking residence.
Telephone boxes get next mention,
A box with such appeal inside.
Enter police box reporting motorbike accident
All so quiet except for paper rustling,
Pencil in hand all so studious
Questions asked answers following.
Shake of a hand and smile offered
Pass on message to your father,
Say hi to Dad; tell him Bert asked after him
See him tonight at pigeon fanciers meeting.
Speak to Father, pass on message
Father smiles and ruffles your hair
Smiles and laughter fill the air.
Telephone box a different matter
So tall and proud, red the chosen colour.
Walking by these boxes of communication
Why is the telephone always ringing?
No one in sight to answer the call
On this day the call will be answered.
Hello, the word that always answers
Pick up phone, several who is this moments
Name is offered then silence
Followed by recognition of caller's name.
Niceties exchanged before favour asked
Needs to talk to the girlfriend.
I answer with she is not here
Disbelief that she is not to be found,
Look around she must be near.
Sure enough, group of girls chatting away,
Call her name the group turn around,
A group of looks that can alarm you.
One comes forward gives the look,
Who are you loud and clear?
The explanation makes her come nearer.
What do you want the next question,
Boyfriend on phone needing to talk
The look she gives filled with anger.
Tell my boyfriend no phones for me
Get here now face to face, or turn me free.
A go between you have become
Stuck between two maybe friends,
Pass on message to distraught boyfriend,
Seems to not believe the message passing.
Have to go, your parting message
Just one mention before I go.
I do believe that you, my friend are in trouble
CLICK

John A'Hern
Apprentice Master

That time of the year once again
Thoughts, memories flooding in.
Trying to make sense of these moments,
No one is exempt from emotion
Parent flash ignored for the present.
Back to apprenticeship days
Young and eager to learn
The result was a trade.
Important to your father,
Mother adoring watching from afar.
Duties include making tea in billy cans,
Making sure each brew was as ordered,
Setting out the meals for trades persons
An apprentice master watching over,
Sometimes angry, other times gentle.
Mistakes are made and rectified
Guidance comes in strange ways,
Words were spoken, not appreciated,
Now in later life, understood.
At the time, resisted the teachings,
Now could hug the person that taught.
There were times when interest dwindled
Prodding and encouragement make us listen.
Now in later years wish for revisit,
Meet and shake their hand?
No, would hug and kiss their cheek.
Helped make us what we are today,
Not only a trades person,
But a Mother, or Father
Just doing the best we can,
All started by filling billycans.

John A'Hern
Arrivals And Departures

Arrivals and departures, both feelings shared
Happiness sadness who knows who cares?
Arrive into the world guided by parents
School then joins this guiding madness

Junior school a place to bond friendships
Teachers all friendly, bullies by the score
Confrontation happens head is sore
Black eyes by the dozen, who is keeping score?

Senior school arrives, guidance turns serious
Planning for life after school lessons happens
When leaving this World did you look back?
What happened to the straight and narrow path?

Find a job career path forgotten
Anything will do just let it happen
Arrival in a work and friendship environment
Same as school just more adult

Climb the ladder of success
Snakes and ladders a game to impress?
This arrival in work for a living is such a mess
Departing thoughts, you can only guess

Who to listen to who to follow
Where are the teachers we all used to know?
Thoughts about a golden rule
Departure will happen then all will end

John A'Hern
**Australian By Choice**

Australia known by several names  
The Lucky Country is its fame  
Great southern Land is sung about in a song  
Immigrants through the ages, different lands.

Reasons differ from Country to Country  
Escaping poverty sometimes persecution.  
Sail the seven seas to arrive here,  
Fly the skies the arrival is quicker.

The English language not always spoken  
Fitting in can be quite a problem  
Beware the tall poppy syndrome.  
What is an Australian? often asked  
Indigenous answer not always accepted.

Hard working Shopkeepers  
Corner shops open all hours.  
Different accents every day  
Comes the day to join this Nation.  
Everybody turn up at the celebration  
Time to become an Australian citizen.

Backyard BBQs with burnt sausages  
Well-done steak on paper plates to try your patience,  
All on offer with a glass of wine or beer,  
Australian slang used quite often.

Wear the iconic Akubra hat to protect from sun,  
OZ Beaches are visited watching the surfing Oceans  
Watch the waves and pay attention  
Flags in the sand not there for fun.

Lifesavers sound a little drastic,  
you will find out if unwary  
These men and women are something special.  
Children growing up and leaving home  
Sad to see but regular visits happen.
Soon they arrive with children in tow
Becoming a Grandparent such an honour.
Time to travel for these Grey Nomads
Around Australia keeping the nation going.

John A'Hern
Belonging

Roll up, roll up, tickets are free
the circus is in town that is plain to see.
The ringmasters shout the invites loud and proud
beware the tickets, read small print not so sound.
Tickets to hell and heaven your choice
Politics, sport, all played and rejoiced.
Stairways up and stairways down
Take your pick, free for now.
Turmoil surrounds the human flood
Are they friends or are they foes?
Not much time for too and fro,
the human flood is constantly changing.
We put our faith in voted in governments
you had your choice, a tick in this space.
Now people gather unsure of choice
did I vote for that?
Apparently not.
Now thoughts turn to something more serious
A game of sport between two nations.
Born in one adopted by the other,
Heart torn in half laughing at the banter.
Time now visits this sporting parade,
Off to bed in one, unless staying up
Daytime hours in other easy enough.
Know both anthems that are a breeze
Cry during both it is not easy.
It is only a game, the cry is heard,
Not for those who really care.

John A'Hern
Birth Of The First One

Danger always standing close
No control over either fate
Pain involved, sometimes late.
Joy tinged with sadness
Is it one or the other?
Tears of joy flow
Quiet words are spoken.
Care is given freely
Holding hands gently.
Tracing shapes with fingers
Likeness being questioned.
Love deeper than first known,
Help at hand if needed,
Sounds are never queried.
Joyous celebrations follow
Follow what is the question.
Then again let us not question
Instead, let us marvel
At the days unveiling.
Another one has joined us
Names will follow older one.

John A'Hern
Memories dance across our minds
Jolting us into times gone by.
Day to day memories surround,
Family, closely followed by places you visit,
Always with our forever friend.

Stand and look at scenery that astounds,
Other memories jump the queue,
Land of your birth waiting to welcome you.
Waiting for your announced return,
Returning for a visit long overdue.
Journey long and arduous,
Arrival brings a smile to our faces.

Bridge in view that will bring tears,
Views beyond, always near.
Onward, onward, get there faster,
Arrival at birthplace causes laughter.
Families, friends all waiting eagerly,
Visits, meal times all sorted early.

Where to start a joyful pleasure,
Visit haunts that were treasures.
Breathe the air, so happy to be here,
Now time to start that fateful journey.
Where you started life as a child,
Does the old home still exist?
Sometimes waiting for your return,
Other times, lots of doom and gloom.
Stand there looking at concrete and brick ruins,

Memory banks take over a slideshow starts,
You just sit back and enjoy.
Voices laughter fills the void;
Faces appear clear as day.
If only you could touch and have your say,

Time to turn and walk away.
Sadness presses itself upon you,
Bump into long lost friends, hugs, and kisses
Hold on tight to your forever friend,
Leaving this place, your heart it aches.
Back to where your future called,
Another bridge clearly seen from the air.
Your other country wants its say.

John A'Hern
Cafe Of Dreams

Memories, where and why
Do we grab them as they pass us by?
Once again, a word a scene
Sparks the trail of memories once seen.
Teenagers meet at their favourite café
The owners treat them as if Family.
They sometimes speak Italian language
The welcome you do not understand,
Kisses on both cheeks smiles in return.
Our favourite booth a place of stories,
Our daily trials or doom of schooling.
Favourite drinks a cup of oxo,
Pepper added do not grimace.
Laughing at words so seemingly harmless
No one challenged as they tell their stories,
Bonded by some mysterious feelings.
Now in later life considered an adult,
Looking back, evenings with another Mother.
A neighbourhood sometimes evil,
Better to keep us in sight and safe.
The street corner where this world once existed,
No café now just houses and traffic.
The very spot it is for sure,
I hear and see friendly faces,
I smile hoping there is no one close by.
Daydream mode is a very close friend,
All stops, a signal, it is the end.
Walk away spring in my step,
Tomorrows forever will be kept.

John A'Hern
Celebration Of 50 Years

A teenage boy leads the life of James Dean
Considered by his peers a loner indeed.
A girl appeared and looked his way
A smile was flashed he had never seen,
The boy was now aged seventeen.

No hesitation from the girl,
She crossed a road and said hello.
Happiness surrounded her very presence
Exchange of names and other pleasures,
Fell in love with his newfound treasure.

She held his hand, made him feel special,
From that day on, never seen one without the other.
Never hugged as a child, she fixed his aspirations,
Lost in a World no one else could enter.

So, in love, as they walked and talked,
Rides on his motorbike, arms locked around her love.
Being together, like finding treasure
Her kisses giving him such pleasure.

In her World, she protected from stone throwing,
As time passed, their love kept growing.
Marriage called, they nodded in unison,
Her guidance continued through thick and thin
Always an answer supplied with a grin.

Her eyes would melt the heart of a God
Her voice sounded like liquid gold,
If he fell, she would pick him up,
Thinking of others before herself.

Children presented to the marriage
Oh so proud of her family.
Did her best to provide and nurture
Not always right, but at least she answered.

Giving advice but always listening,
Decisions made not always to her liking.
She would then follow one-step behind,
Quickly by his side, if doubt came for a ride.

Now later in life with lots of memories,
Old one's new ones sometimes too many.
The children now grown the visits grow fewer
Her mood never changes always a pleasure.

As proud as always, she protects her clan,
Love can sometimes seem quite baffling,
However, to her love is adoring.
The mould was broken after her creation,
She will never be lost, just gone missing.

The roundabout of life is still turning.
The task is to hang on never give in to yearnings.
Your future and past haunt your dreams
Brush them away they are not what they seem.

John A'Hern
Chair Dancer

Invisibility a wonderful thing
Move amongst the crowd
Body is lost in dance moves
All on your own chair dancer of old
Smile and nod, smiles returned
A skill inherited from whom?
Eyes flash you look away?
Shy? do not really care
All on your own despite the crowd
The one you will love hides
Where are you my trusted friend?
A touch a bow can you really see me?
A shrug of the shoulders
A feeling like no other
Falling in love, maybe
Swirl and turn it is a game
Eyes watch your every move
Lost in an image, do I know you
Dancing stops you turn away
A silent signal transferred
Imagination joins the scene
Silent Signals sent out
Image of Bodies touching
Feel as if you want to pass out
Walk away from your partner the chair

John A'Hern
Chair Dancing Memories Re-Surface

A TV show brought back the spark
Dancing showing its finest arts
Bodies swaying, feet moving
Beat that introduces rhythm
Memories start to unfold
A chair dancer of old
My friends poked fun in a friendly way
He is gone into his world of sway
A chair for protection from outside sources
No girls approached this strange boy
The Saturday dance we all attended
Me there because of peer pressure
On my own my moves were smooth
If others involved I would lose
Aware of a presence standing before me
My chair is there it will protect
A girl with eyes so dark and wary
She swayed to the beat, arms inviting
I stopped for a moment, time for deciding
She moved the chair my heart missed a beat
My friends all quiet enjoying this treat
Applause from friends as we joined hands
Dancing as one my shyness was gone
Her eyes never ever left mine
The dance it finished she bowed and held me
This girl and myself have traveled together
Some fifty years together, still memories remain
The night a girl taught me how to dance.

John A'Hern
House surrounded by stonewalls
Cast Iron Gate guarding it all,
Entrance steps lay before you
Quite challenging, do not enter slowly.

Darkness makes them quite forbidding
Do not walk them, run like the wind,
Front door reached, always locked
Mother keeps key in her apron pocket.

The challenge of the doors starts today
Open each one and peek inside,
Some accessed for the first time.
Kitchen and a large front room,

Front room empty and uninviting
Stand at the bottom of a spiral staircase
Pass on by, it can wait until tomorrow.
Past a door that seems to invite

Shake your head, not ready for this fight,
Door after door stands there waiting.
Backyard and gardens beckoning,
Playing area until Mother asks for quiet.

Then a scullery for doing chores
Small rooms used in days of old,
Rows of bells and hooks hang from ceilings.
One for storing the other for attention

Discovered switches that needed testing
Bells were rung as each was pressed,
Servants and maids once answered their calling
Another day beckons the upstairs challenge.

Bedroom after bedroom all quite boring,
worn out from the door adventure
Tomorrow arrives, you stand before the cellar door
What is housed here never known?
Hand on latch makes loud clanking noise
Afraid of the dark yet it draws you in,
Hands unable to be seen in front
Coldness sets off imagination.

Unknown weight upon your person
Turning to leave this dark cellar
Stumbling up steps showing fear.

Never look back, always remembered,
Closed the door never to re-enter.
Would you return there?
You do but it no longer exists.

John A'Hern
Chance Encounter

Walking the amazing coastline,
Cup of coffee in the local Café
Sitting, observing people passing.
Checking on dress sense today,
Shoes, where did they purchase them?

Spotted a homeless person,
Shabbily dressed and looking unkempt
He appeared increasingly in the landscape
Popping up in unusual places, staring at others faces.

Realised BBQ area was his hideout
Sleeping bag, plastic bags neatly stacked,
He lay asleep on the grass.
Voices woke him from his slumber,
Gave a glance, no words spoken.

He walked the village streets
Locals giving him a wide berth,
Clothing improving, new shoes on his feet,
The gossip tree said elderly people made him welcome.

Winter set in, he lived in the cold of the BBQ areas,
Spoke of his life when sitting in comfortable home,
The conversation always finished with such a shame.
One cold winters evening near Village shop
Aware of homeless person sitting near,
Huddled, sheltering from the cold wind on a street corner.

Decided to approach him, enough of wondering,
Checked on what money I could give him.
When approaching, he stood as if frightened,
Standing close enough to touch each other,
Could see the weariness on his face.

Eyes met in silence, trying to understand what it was I wanted,
Asked quite bluntly what and why,
No answers forthcoming just a shake of his head,
His eyes showed such torment, emotions coming to the surface,
Never or ever again seen such pain behind a gaze.

Reached to place money in a tattered trouser pocket
Reached to shake a hand,
His grip was quite strong as we exchanged this greeting
For an instant, a wry smile crossed his face.

Realised that he was much younger than at first thought
His face showed his daily survival,
He spoke a thank you as goodbye was spoken,
Walked away with his eyes following.

The memories of meeting with this homeless soul
Went on and on and even visited dreams.
Not seen since this meeting,
Moved on looking for somewhere else safe to stay.
Positive thoughts of what he was doing,
Better than imagining, what life was dealing him?

John A'Hern
Change Of Status

Status in life changes day by day
Promotion, it seems may come your way
Grandchildren, visit always a pleasure
Older versions, still a treasure.
Interaction, sometimes a challenge,
English language, need a translator.
Your name, uttered by a Teenager,
The sound of your name sounds so strange,
Name through life, used when in strife,
feeling such joy, thinking how nice.

John A'Hern
Childhood Memories

Teenage dreams of going places
Pocket money few and far traces.
A job delivering morning papers
The newspaper and magazine shop a browsing caper.

Early morning start at 4.30 for some quite a chore
Mornings were always darkness, that was for sure.
The child enjoyed the quiet of the walk to the paper shop
Smells in newspaper shop, memories he would not swap.

Bag of newspapers upon shoulder
Placing newspapers into the letterbox holder.
No morning news TV, the newspaper was the form of knowledge,
Back at the shop at 6.30am and return bag for storage.

Payday each Friday morning made it all worthwhile
Always share earnings with Mother, the rest your own to spend.
Spent on food, biscuits and cakes
Digestive biscuits washed down with fresh milk.

This readied for the day at School, which always lay there beckoning,
The walk to School filled with daydreams of what the day may bring.
Double session of Arithmetic, better to run away
School day started at 9 am after busy morning fray.

A challenge as tired eyes would start to close
Eyes must have closed surely, they have dozed.
Rows of seats were very important as you found out in later life
Smart ones were down the front with the rest behind.

Teachers passing on knowledge using skills
Scribbling with chalk on the monster blackboard.
Was it for the Teacher's benefit to show all how to do it?
A hand-held bell would ring a signal the end of today's lessons.

The Teachers breathed a sigh of relief as the classrooms emptied
Back home and off to bed early another morning awaits at 4.30.
Memories of Teachers are still fresh within each one's head
Their surnames along with nicknames too many here to mention.
Called aside on day of leaving, Teachers did their best to explain,
Never spoken as one on one Teacher and pupil.
Remember them all with good thoughts,
Now a question always pondered
Later in life ideas have changed
The child or the Teachers who failed to explain?

John A'Hern
Choices

What is a thought?
Discussed many times before,
Thoughts trigger actions or dreams,
Brave or careful the choices are ours it seems.

Parents always drift past in these scenes
"Did you think, before you did that"
No, answered, would not make sense,
Answer yes, punishment still pursues.

Interruption of thoughts changed the scene
Thought can sometimes be seen.
Body language not what it seems to be,
Eyes can lead one to the truth.

Thoughts, being used against you?
Judgement because of an opinion,
A view that you are not trustworthy,
Feelings hurt because of beliefs.

Wise one's have said it all before
Listen to advice before you go.
Thinking too quickly can lead to grief,
Leave this circle of so called friends.

Are your thoughts leading to this?
Or is it just another thought in your head?
Judgement made, just walk away,
Mixed emotions, the substance of the day.

John A'Hern
Clothes Of Invisibility

All through life, has this bothered you?
Always there but somehow never seen,
Maybe shyness contributed to this condition
Maybe it is just the situation.
When trouble beckoned, invisibility would help you through
However, there are occasions when it offends that is true.

Standing in queues patiently waiting
Overlooked again due to casual stance
Always wondering will you ever get a chance
Make your own chances inner voice commands.
Now in adulthood, the problem persists
Believing certain clothes of invisibility do indeed exist.

Invisible clothing on today as you go about your way
Standing at the bar of local pub waiting, waiting, waiting.
Speak up an inner voice calls out,
You whisper excuses and tell it to be quiet.
For a person that does not suffer fools easily
You let yourself down with this excuse of invisibility.

Speak up, speak up, the voice continues
I will, I will shout out silently.
Your turn it comes, now you speak too softly,
Then the possibility of I am sorry your accent threw me.
Many a time you have walked away
Come back, come back, you hear them say,
You have now entered your invisible World with no way out.

On occasions when returning to The Land of our Father's
The welcomes are many without any accent problems.
Waiting at the bar of yet another Pub, what would you like?
A voice brings you back to Earth.
A pint of best bitter quietly said, coming right up without any delay
Invisibility is gone today, Hooray for manners inner voice says.

John A'Hern
Concentrate

Check on daily tasks for today
Coast all clear moves into man cave,
Look around and check surroundings
Take deep breaths and sit at desk
Mind goes blank at your first request.
Stare through window that is a living canvas
Watching birds go through their actions,
Parrots land and squabble over tree positions.
Realise that your eyes have taken control
Snap out of a daydream and follow word flow.
Voices approaching, Wife has girlfriend visitors
Close the door before they see you.
Switch on computer it will not join you today
Refuses to boot much to your dismay,
Boot being the word you think of at that moment
The computer that is, as far as you can boot it.
Technology is a wonderful thing, switch it off then on again
Whirr, clunk, it spins into action
Words now flow, bringing satisfaction,
For several minutes, you are lost in Poetry land.
Satisfied with your efforts today
Walk out of office and into the fray,
Sit with wife's friends enjoying a coffee,
I always have a smile on my face these days.

John A'Hern
Daily Routine?

Start our days with a shower
Brush our teeth as we ponder,
Dress to suit the day ahead,
Work, retirement, down the shed.

Breakfast with coffee or tea
Time permitting wait and see.
Traffic jams await the unwary
Parking can also be a bit scary.

Public transport unfortunate choice,
Bring us into contact with the public,
People sneezing, people coughing
Mobile phones ringing often.

Talking loudly, private conversation
Broadcast to whoever wants to listen,
Where are you? The favourite question
On the bus, the favourite answer.

Wait a moment! FALSE START!
The kids! Back to the beginning of the day.
Are you up yet? Comes the familiar call,
Time for School! Time for School!

Three children rush into kitchen
Mother stands to direct traffic,
Reminds you of cafeteria queuing,
Front door jammed with children, still chewing.

Off you go, re-join the zombies
Into office ready for what, who knows,
Passageway meetings precede the gatherings,
Dreaded silence as Manager Talks.

Everyone look down no eye contact,
Then there come familiar soundings,
I hear you and will take it onboard.
Translated, this means boring
In addition, creates yawning.

Stirred from daydreams your name is mentioned
Just catch the end of conversation,
On my desk by 4.30 this evening.
What needs to be on whose desk this evening?

Mission accomplished and on desk by 4.30,
That is that you have done your duty.
Join the throng homeward bound,
Everybody is quiet including phones.

Travel back to our homes
Through front door to friendly people,
Cup of tea, your kingdom for a cup of tea,
Now this feels just like Heaven.

John A'Hern
Darkness

This evening did not go to well
Do not go out when darkness swells,
Jokes made about afraid of the dark
Us oldies are a grumpy lot.

Pizza was the final suggestion
Set out into the local congestion.
Darkness sets in the first problem,
Pizza shop packed as usual.

Full of young people getting their fix
Better than sitting and smoking marijuana sticks.
Order placed thank goodness for that
Waiting now for name to be drawn from the hat.

Unknown to me, wife was worried
Where is my man it has been an hour?
Order served with an apology
Heading home no time for phoning.

Evening traffic heavier than usual,
Long weekend everyone is going
Going where does not matter
Let us out of here no time for chatter.

Driving home with no problems
Tailgating happens do not panic,
Drivers changing lanes like a film sequence
Trying to pass with no patience.

Eventually, passes then cuts me off
Survival skills needed or not?
Road rage now has taken over
Slows me down to 50 klms an hour.

I pretend to not be paying attention
They hold up fingers am I supposed to count them?
If only they knew a golden oldie sat behind the wheel
Would drive away and get on with their weekend.
Make it home to concerned wife
Heart is beating quicker than before in my life,
Everything explained like dealing with my Mother
Pizza opened as well as the beer.

All now calm in oldie land
Ghouls and goblins showing their hand,
Now we laugh at my antics
Fed and watered all that matters.

John A'Hern
Delete, End Of The Week

Memory overload your head it aches
One day you become aware of things they say
Stop and think of all gone astray
How much memory can you hold?
Days and weeks and years can unfold
Trying to make sense of all you hold
Your memory banks in overload
Family and friends all in the queue
Sorting good from bad is your choice
Do not let emotions over rule sensibility
Cast them out think only what is needed
What is needed? such a hard question
Thinking leads into the too hard basket
Like a computer send to recycle casket
Thoughts are thoughts yours to sort out
Reams of paper sit upon your desk
Yours to sort or lament
Close your eyes drift off to sleep
Tomorrow brings for some to weep

John A'Hern
Do I Know You?

Did I not meet you just the other day?
What is your name?
Age you say,
I feel I have known you many times before.

Are you my friend?
On the other hand, are you my foe?
Make up your mind
Time travels too quickly.

What is that you tell me?
Age is just a number, now you have me laughing,
Go to sleep but do not slumber
Wake each morning age allowing.

Move around and inhale life
Waking is natural
If you want to wake,
Time is the enemy.

Is that your message?
Hang on a minute
Minutes to spare,
Rush to the answer.

I do not really care,
You will not hold my hand
In addition, guide me away
Away from what? I hear you say.

I now know where I met you before,
Before what is your question I know.
Birthdays celebrated with family
Each one getting us closer to oblivion.

Lies, lies, you guide me not
Age does not weary it is just a plot.
Weariness and getting older
Take a number and hold it closer.
I love all around me
It gives me pleasure,
More than you, my constant reminder,
Time if allowed for reminiscing.

Tomorrow comes another day
Time to go each has their say.
Darkness descends, do our eyes close?
The thoughts and the actions are yours, I suppose.

John A'Hern
Dreams Or Nightmares

Reams and reams of dreams
Throughout life, uncountable visits,
Know the difference, dream or nightmare
Not always sure of the division.

Woken from one of these visitations,
Screams dying off into the distance,
Nightmares of the soaking wet variety
Someone, something debt collecting.

Laying waiting for recollection
Mind it clears, thanks are given,
Drop back into the black inferno
This nightmare has episodes.

Imagination running riot
Hear cavalry bugle,
Out of control, they are coming to help me,
Wake once again, someone, something, touched me.

Out of bed enough of this sequence
Cups of coffee may protect me,
Afraid of falling back to sleep
Question asked, may I have a peep?

John A'Hern
Drifting By

The year's drift by, our eyes look around
Scenes placed in the memories space.
Childhood remembered, love, and understanding
Teenage years looking back with regret,
Become an Adult, considered as grown up.

As a child, the happenings reside
Are taught and passed, if room inside.
As you go about your days
These memories will stay with you
Until the day you die.

Teenage years are development years
For your adult life, ahead.
Troubled times raise their heads
Sometimes blocking paths intended
Decisions made, not wisely.

Education needs to be expressed,
Make time, no going back.
Career choices made,
Finding love and friendship
Yours for the asking.

If in doubt, do not pout
Turn the pages and reread.
Onward with this newly found inspiration
The book of life is yours for any explanations,
Meanwhile, hidden sands of time trickle by.

The horrors of older age come to pay a visit,
No warning hence, they jump the fence.
They do not know when to leave,
They walk with you, their shadow cast.

John A'Hern
Evening Stroll

An evening stroll, off we go
Streets and lanes, forgotten byways.
Smile on our face, we know this place
Different views as a child
Head now up looking around.
As a child, we ran, no time for now
People's faces, recognition,
Other times frowns and grimaces.
Smile your way, a nod of the head,
Some return, others look as if dead.
Smiles returned, silent hello
On we go enjoying our stroll.
Eyes meet eyes, do I know you?
On we go, backward glances
We once were friends, have you forgotten?
Looks to kill, you dare to stare,
Just making sure they were there.
Resist the laugh aloud routine
A mad person loose call the constabulary.
Enough for today, call a truce,
Faces seen haunt my dreams.

John A'Hern
Eyes

Inbuilt cameras, eyes
believe what we see.
Alternatively, sleight of hand
messages relayed to master command,
Computer brain deciphers, and?
Confusing messages, code breakdown,
decisions needed, time running out,
lives each day, plotted out.
Who or what to believe,
answers, reactions, same each day,
religions, racism, blind our say.
Human tides flow across the land,
seen before, ancient times,
obstacles cast aside
Oceans parted, do we believe?
Judgement methods, pondered upon,
directionless, leaderless, stumble on.
Messages now reach the heart,
feelings confused, should we take part.
Lemming action taking front stage,
common sense being waived.
Leaders needed, words flow,
education gone for a stroll.
This is where ranting stops,
add your own, you do not need props,
Good or bad, when will it stop?

John A'Hern
Eyes Revisited

Eyes, the window into one's soul
Looks of amazement
Looks that could kill
Looks that thrill
Looks of interest
Looks of love
Flashes of eyelids, designed to entice
Looks of happiness
Looks of sorrow
Someone please help me?
I am lost in my thoughts
Looks that enclose me
Looks that seem to know you
Looks that warm you
Enough of my thought machine
I consider the eyes of my true love
Adventures etched for me to read
Colour important? Not for me
Lost in the moment
Enough from me.

John A'Hern
Familiar Street

A familiar street waits to greet,
Scenery not changed, the same terraced houses
Front doors reaching out to welcome you.
First home together, dreams fulfilled,
Walking the street as if in a trance.

All houses appeared unchanged
Your heart skips a beat
Almost tripping over your feet.
Standing outside a home full of memories
Frozen in time, slow reactions.

Thoughts unexplained, race through your mind
Nothing has changed, the same colours greet,
Paint colours as in times of old.
Knock the door, an inner voice says
What can they say, words feared, go away?

Door knocker gleaming, brass cleaned daily,
Feel as a stranger, as the knock echoes loudly.
Felt the need to run, glued to the spot
This is not fun, run away not an option,
The door opens, a familiar face greets you.

Silence as your voice fails to work,
A smile and greeting, hello I feel I know you.
Explanations given, welcomed quite proudly,
Come inside, eyes studied the scenes,
Voices and laughter echo inside you.

Conversation of times gone by,
Cups of tea and homemade cakes.
No children to see, all flown the coop,
Sadness is shown as talk of them flows
Smile and agree with all that is said.

Saying goodbyes, sadness in their eyes,
Say a silent goodbye to the house.
If walls could speak what words would be heard
Laughter and love in bucket loads for sure.
Leave the scene, will you see the home again?
Only time and life span can tell.

John A'Hern
Age prompts us, pay attention
Time sliding by, intervention.
Family tree a good idea
Photos documents always near,
The Internet helps make search easier.
Sites aplenty offering help
Always a brick wall before the end,
When it is interesting excitement swells.
Names elude you testing patience,
Mother Father without a hitch,
Grandparent's Great-grandparents
All join the queue.
The tree starts growing helped by you,
Losing interest on some days.
Facebook raises some intervention,
Friend requests, their suggestions.
Comments sometimes raise people's ire,
Others tag along without question.
The tree now grows several branches,
Then it all unravels.
Hey you! YES, YOU!
Get back on your branch
Stop confusing putting into a trance.
Check the names once again
Then the branches start to bow.
Who are you, explain yourself?
Next-door neighbours do not count,
Time to reflect there is no doubt.
Sorry Uncle I appear to have left you out!
Dreams take over and early mornings
Floating past autumn leaves are falling.
Awaken shouting but at who,
Family tree puts it branches around you
Sleep and sanity are now surrounding.

John A'Hern
Farewell

Regular visits to the land of my birth
Mother was failing
Decisions to be made.
Sometimes alert other times not,
Dementia taking its toll
Is it a plot?

Removed from the house she loved
Into a place that is not such.
Who are you on certain days?
Other times so bright so gay
Spending time, sometimes pray.

Living far away not helping matters,
A private home for last years
Matron helpful as Mam slipped away.
Messages sent come back to Wales
Given a minute be there post haste.

Arrived to find nothing organised
Brother and Sister waiting for a sign.
Arrange the flowers message intact
Saying just" Mam" and that is a fact.

Eulogy needed or a Priest
Confusion as to last requests,
Decided to go with Family suggestions.
Was Mam Catholic the main question?
Questions, answers thick and fast.

Visit to the chapel of rest
Mam lay there in her Sunday best,
First time seeing someone at rest.
Undertaker such a sad name
Showing compassion in all the explaining.

Family handling the occasion?
Heads nodded in unison.
Eldest writes a eulogy
Reading daily until he sheds no tears
Ready for the task before him.

Family gathers for the occasion
Some seen for the first time, now much older.
All in control until the hearse appears
Tears now shed for what it contains,
Two Sons called to follow the coffin
Borne aloft by unknown people.

Coffin Placed out front on show
Eulogy read, frequent emotional pauses,
Eldest Son recalling memories,
Mam would have trembled at the explaining
She was always a private person.

All well until the final farewell
Nothing prepares for this final wave
Turning to the coffin and saying goodbye Mam.
Family dispersed once again
Back to their own lives
Most Never seen or heard from again.

John A'Hern
Fathers Advice

I hear my Father's voice,
Shouting through the usual noise.
"Use your common sense" said daily,
He was trying to keep me steady.

There is no doubt we hear our Parents words,
Later in life, some are no longer absurd.
"Thick as two short planks" a favourite,
Its meaning lost in the World of translations.

Gatherings of late set me thinking,
Common sense causing sinking.
Brain in gear before you speak,
Or you may not communicate.

A babble of voices, who is listening?
Like a roundabout causing spinning.
Conversation can be fun,
If seen as a fool, others may run.

Hear the echoes of voices in times gone by,
Smile to yourself as you work advice out.
Nod your head in agreement,
Shake your head when negative needed.

My thoughts on common sense now ends,
Hopefully yours when needed will commence.
Education is a necessity,
Common sense comes naturally?

John A'Hern
My fear of darkness lives within me
It visits often and always frightens
The visits started during childhood
I dealt with them as best I could
The home I lived in mostly candle power
Shadows on walls my imagination running riot
Into bed pulled covers over my head
Safe and sound except for night time sounds
Darkness called its friend the wind
Rattles and scraping sounds to astound
I held on tight until sleep freed me
Now an adult darkness stalks nightly
Always feelings of someone behind me
No more covers over my head
I lay and imagine all kinds of dread
The trigger for this fear of darkness
Is in my imagination since a child
I try so hard, but darkness defeats me
I return to childhood night time memories.

John A'Hern
Find A Job

The first day of realisation
School days have come to completion,
Lay in bed, confusing thoughts in my head,
No Mothers call to arouse me

Breakfast on table waiting for me
The toast tasted like nectar,
No more eating on the run,
Those days are gone, what challenges now?

Father acknowledges your presence,
Mother comments about sitting around.
Then the words that have stayed in my head
A job needs to be found.

I joined friends with the same intent
Off into this unknown World.
Factories and Banks were politely asked,
Career path? we had no idea.

Day after day reporting back
My mother listened intently.
Father popped in, now and then
Still no advice, apparently.

All worn out from the interview trail
I trudged my way back home.
Passing by an engineering place
Stopped by a friendly bloke,
Come in Son, a career awaits.

Was this a trick? Am I awake?
Walked through a door, welcomes galore
My working life had arrived.
There I stayed for 20 years
Because of a friendly bloke.

John A'Hern
Footprints

Visiting a beach, full of childhood memories,
Laughing, running, until exhausted,
Tide was out a funny expression.
Saw a vision of father digging for bait,
Pitchfork in hand studying sand and mud,
Chose a patch of sand, is there something special?
All looked the same to a child playing.
Seagulls, circling screeching, calls repeating.
Shoes removed as well as socks,
Rolled up trousers what a sight,
Laughed inwardly as to what I must look like.
Aware of footprints leading into the distance,
Remembered the game of measuring sizes,
Who was it that walked before us?
Checked length of stride, sometimes jumping,
A strange sight for anyone watching
A grown adult acting like a child.
My feet fitted into footprints before me,
The stride was perfect, felt so comfortable.
Stopped for a rest, looking skyward
So many seagulls whirling circling.
Turned to see the trail of footprints,
None behind me none in front,
Sat on the sand puzzlement indeed.
Stood to walk back from where I came,
No footprints appeared in the sand.
A person walking towards me,
I tried to dodge they passed right through me.

John A'Hern
Friend

The empty chair? No not really,
See beyond the empty space.
All activities, as if he were there,
He was there, children see him.
A friend, with a booming voice,
Silver hair with beard to match.
To know as a friend, what a wonderful choice,
A loss to his lover, a long adoring Wife.
We as friends say, 'Know how you feel'
No, we do not; this is just how we see.
He looked and he laughed at all around him,
Did anyone feel he was surrounding them?
Always set a place, make him welcome.
I hear his laugh again, as we left his country,
Welcomed into family homes as if we were family.
All for now hope to see you again, face to face.

John A'Hern
Geography Jones

He sought dreams to become a teacher,
Sometimes his days and plans are torn to pieces
Onward to a school of not his choosing.
Teenage boys waited for their teacher
Introduced himself as laughter erupted.

Stood and approached his challengers,
Passing through rows of small desks
The back row was his final calling
He was now among his ongoing problems.
Softly spoken he choose his words wisely,
All now quiet within this schoolroom.

His subject today about foreign countries,
The mysteries of the giant blackboard came into play
He occasionally turned to see the looks of dismay,
All locked in a time warp of this working-class area
The look on pupils' faces was priceless.

Describe a country and its people?
An audible groan had him smiling within.
Pencil sharpener having a workout,
Lead giving up under pressure.

Two hours up, sighs filled the room,
A bell signalled the end of this day of gloom,
Classroom emptied in a flash.
Some papers without a name caused a sigh
The descriptions showing their World had them captured.

Such sadness, reading of dreams never to be realised
A troubled night's sleep beckoned.
Entering the classroom next day, all unusually quiet.
He sat at his island, looking at unsure faces,
Realising, the enemy in the back row was sitting listening,

His quiet voice never rubbishing stories
The dreams of his imaginary enemies were a joy to read,
High expectations, silently he wished them well.
Today he left for home with a wry smile on his lips,
The term rolling by, all left the scene with twinkles in their eye.

The teacher went to a sporting event
Familiar names there before him,
The names of two back row boys, living their dreams.
Local pub after the game he stood at the bar in silence,
A tap on his shoulder by strangers.

Hello Geography Jones, thank you for all your efforts,
Your teaching methods soothed anger within us.
The teacher reached to shake their hands
A shake of their heads as they hugged him.
The teachers' soul was on high as he realised
He also had reached his dreams plateau.

John A'Hern
Grandparents, A Forgotten Link

Grandparents a forgotten link
Not always there when you could not think
A teenager without Grandparents down in the dumps
There through childhood, when you had the grumps
Always listened, sometimes the wrong answer
Then words that make us afraid
Past on, what does it mean? Please explain?
Explanations were given, sometimes the wrong reasons
Family goes quiet children and women wait
Males of the family attend a wake
More explanations, words just words
Empty chairs wait with no one there
The listener, the answer or advice givers gone
A father acknowledges your presence
Answers to questions do not come easily
Teenagers do not understand this interaction
Fathers the bastion, Mothers the carers
Each has their own command
Later in life you relive these moments
Looking for someone to speak gently
Just being understood is all we ask
Teachers, mentors, where are you?
It is too late to ask you?
Questions are your own, answers are known

John A'Hern
Grumpy

My grumpy old man side is visiting again
Moaning and groaning, the usual things
Why is this? Why is that?
Questions, questions, flowing fast
Youngsters these days, need you ask?
Standing on street corners, smoking fags
Mumble and grumble as you pass
Make way for oldies, shouted
Laughs and comments handed out
Stop and look at noise machine
All goes quiet at the scene
Mexican standoff taking place
Walking stick waved in anger
Youngies amazed at oldies stance
Soothing words from youngies encampment
All going well until term old fella
Imaginary smoke rises from ears
A tap on my shoulder, the cavalry has arrived
My darling finished shopping, rescues me
Hold my hand, walk away
Grumpy old man not always nice to see
Another day, another coffee
Look around, breath the air
Peace today, grumpy has exited stage right.

John A'Hern
Gypsy Curse

The day a gypsy visited,
As clear as memories can be
Wooden pegs exchanged for silver
So hard to come by it seemed.
Children watching from a distance
The gypsy appeared as a witch
Distance kept, so afraid
The air filled with mystery.
The Mother, staunch in her belief
Religious by her choice,
Found the silver to cross the palm
Placate the unknown events.
This day like no other, anger about to unfold
The air filled suddenly with curses,
Back and forth, curses went, Father had appeared.
Mother crying, gypsy-cursing family to hell,
Father returning words fast as fast could be.
Gypsy gone, wooden pegs strewn,
Palm crossed with silver.
Everyone left to lament these memories
Believing through the centuries.
Mother cried for days,
Father explained to children
As best, as best could be.
Your choice? This chapter is closed.

John A'Hern
Help

The resident doctor, first name seldom used,
Long forgotten in a place that threatened to consume.
Packed bags and on their way,
Nurses remember the Doctor's frays.

Today finds them walking corridors, chatting away,
Medication to be dispensed as they plan their day.
Lighting needing updating, light the way,
Life of sorts starts to stir, bringing the building to life.

Music playing, hymns sound so dreary
Raise their eyes in hopeless feelings.
Curtains are thrown open, some left closed,
Coping with the day's challenges lay ahead.

Most residents start the day on their own
That is how they stay, lonely and bored.
Usual staff meetings, decisions made
All of them know that they will never be completed.

A communal room, sparsely populated
Sitting in armchairs staring into space,
A conversation between some residents
Discuss the gossip and nasty others.

Blame the younger generation
Nodding heads all in agreement.
Watching TV, plenty of chuckling,
Occasional shout as feelings are let out.

What were once proud potted plants
Shrivel and die for lack of care.
Cups of tea and tasteless sandwiches
Pass the time between tasteless dinners.

Gossiping continues hour after hour
No one safe from this group of Women.
Reading books long forgotten,
Shelves full of boring sex and violence.
Evening arrives without invitation,
Slowly, everyone returns to own rooms.
Another day survived sleep is calling,
Peace disturbed by someone shouting.

Shawls and bedclothes pulled tighter over their heads,
Hoping and praying the din will be suppressed.
Windows and doors are locked tightly
Keep them in or keep others out, the question.

Tomorrow arrives, complaints start to surface
Those that dare to live on, compassion is shown.
Everything discussed at morning staff meeting,
They all feel as helpless as the residents,
Who do they tell other than them themselves?

John A'Hern
Help Is At Hand

A Sunday morning the sun is out
Smiling faces no time for pouts
Breakfast at a beach side café
Food and good company mix pleasantly

Find a bench to sit and watch the ocean
Storms at sea causing commotion
Waves thunder towards the shore
Mother Nature loves to roar

Surfers ply their skills a joy to behold
Families at the water's edge
A woman with a baby in her arms falls
Life savers quick to react and hold

Conversation that seems quite worrying
Her husband is missing he was standing here
My wife comments that she can see a hand
I turn to look at where my wife is pointing

An arm a hand trapped between the waves
In an instant the arm disappears
It reappears further from the shore
Lifeguards rushing into the wave storm

They themselves disappear below the waves
What was two becomes three as they reappear
They carry a weary man to safety
He sits upon the shoreline wearily

His friends arrive and help him to his feet
They walk away their families to joyfully meet
The lifeguards stand quietly contemplating
The saving of a soul from Mother nature.

John A'Hern
Holding Hands

Hands so often misunderstood
Sign language used not always for good
Waved around in angry mode
Waved in hello greetings
Caressing your lover each day
A caress today may wander away
A visit to see those still loved
Stand and watch and pray to above
They are sitting, staring into space
Hands clasped tightly below their waist
Stand in front to block the view
Looking at me, who are you?
Sit alongside holding hands
Smooth them hold them
Tightly as you once could
Caress and trace, memories flood
Silent signal that you are understood
Faraway eyes blink away tears
Are you home today? the question feared
Head turns, eyes meet in recognising glance
Head looks down, hands grip tighter
Do not let go, contact of a fighter
A smile best sign one can know
Feelings from wherever they flow
The heart is bursting with recognition feelings
Stand to leave a happy and sad scene
Panic as hand grips tightly, not letting go
Familiar carers, softly spoken, intervene
Matron so pleased by the scenes
Leaving the scene, zombie state for days and days
A promised return several times
Meanwhile just pray

John A'Hern
Holiday Needed?

Three days maybe enough
Before home beckons, come back.
Car is full of this and that,
Kitchen sink would not fit,
Suitcase size, choice tends to calm.

Driving through countryside
Maybe hug the coastal roads.
Find somewhere to hang your hats
Settle in hotel, motel, or apartment,
Enjoying company of others.

Sipping wine or drinking beer
Or indeed a cup of tea,
A conclusion is reached
What would you be doing differently?
Back at home base.

This Question often asked,
Nothing differently apparently, always answered.
Have you reached grey nomad status?
You must be driving a large Winnebago,
On the back the family car.

Hardier tow a caravan,
Keeping the country going,
The battle cry of grey nomads,
Meanwhile, in your car, wishing.

John A'Hern
Homeless?

Homeless is such a sad word
Other descriptions just deepen the wound
Media reports sadness then moves on
Temporary solutions missing the throng
Human beings lost their way
Help is needed that prevent their straying
Have you seen and walked to the side?
Crossed a road averting eyes?
No words no actions you cast aside
Stop a while it will open your eyes
Sadness in the air suffocating their stare
Sit and think about careing
Do not cross the road to avoid
Eye to eye stop and chat awhile
The night brings demons into troubled lives
Where to sleep when bones are frozen to the core
Give to charities or send money overseas
The people that need it are in front of us it seems
Success rate of returning to the fold
Move them on to where? who knows?
Blankets and sleeping bags under the stars
A roof over their head, memories of times before
We shake our heads in disbelief
Battle lines drawn we all should weep.

John A'Hern
I Was Here

Exploring for childhood places
Dreams created for all locations
Running, running, always running
Strolling today, admiring surroundings
Sounds of birds, the occasional seagull
Straying from their familiar sea shore
Today they explore looking for food
Grass and gorse, nothing more
Fences now stand where none stood before
Keep out signs in most places
A greeting shout from passing ramblers
Sounds of their voices drift in the distance
Onward I stroll in familiar surroundings
Places where dens were built
Pacts were made then broken
Promises of never leaving home
Initials rubbed on secret rocks
Still exist from decades ago
Sorrow visits for several minutes
Then a smile as initials recognised
Time to sit and gaze at the bay
Rows of houses all known in their day
Multi storey blocks of flats
Spoil the landscape of long ago
Pathways leading here and there
Signposts followed will lead you where?
I leave you now as I did once before
Heart it aches as I walk alone.

John A'Hern
Illness Comes Knocking At Your Door

Illness comes a knocking on your door
Answer knocking or not sure
Open door just a crack
Just be careful of the smack.

Breathe the air germs are in
Some run for a glass of gin
Whisky choice of the hardy
Lemon and honey only for foolhardy.

Too late, too late they are in
Feeling faint, headaches are raging
Take to your bed, fever calling
Throat tightens, loss of voice.

Angel needed you take your choice
Groans and moans fill the air
Sleep does not come to the party
Lack of sleep joins the queue.

Tossing, turning, fighting with pillow
Help me, help me, silent voices
Ceiling vision through eyes unable to close
Hallucinations provide a sigh.

Daytime dawns, you want to die
Feel your head for signs of melting
Old wives tales of a cure for evil
Roll around your head in danger of bursting.

Nights and days roll into one
Survival skills all called upon
Knocks on your door from friends come calling
Go away, go away, shouted from the bedroom
Fall asleep from sheer exhaustion.

John A'Hern
Imagination?

A photo hangs upon a wall,
always there and seen by all.
Familiar surroundings and memories,
Grandparents home always a welcome.
If you look closely, there is you and I,
what was the occasion?
Study faces old and young
all of them looking so welcoming.
Grandparents sitting there, so proud
their children grew up that used to surround.
Where are they now? You ask yourself
all corners of World, some nearby.
Do they visit? I hear you say
only when they want to play.
Study of photo lingers on
smiles seem to turn to frowns.
Blink your eyes in disbelief
characters more lifelike than seems.
Imagination running wild
gaze is fixed despite my tries.
Voices seem to hang in the air
cannot make sense of anything there.
Just a photo look away,
I try again as they watch and stare.
Close my eyes and fall to the ground
fainting spell has me bound.
Awaken sitting among my friends,
apparently, I had a fall, the photo is not there at all.

John A'Hern
Inherit From Father

Explanation of all that has gone before
A character my dad few words just eyes
I always imagined looking up
Now in later life, I realise that I was the taller
How the bloody hell did that happen
Please excuse the blasphemy
A cook of renown due to seafaring days
Curries the favourite, Mother would look away
All the meals with father in mind
The provider looked after, children meals followed
I hear my three sons discuss their father's way
Tears sometimes stain my cheeks
My eyes do the talking as taught
Acceptance of their fathers look
No smack no hits ever undertook
Now in later life just as before
I am judged by my sons memories of long ago
In days of choosing memories of our own
Words and actions appear as told
As for you my trusted friend
We will be together until the end
My shadow has a life of its own
We talk as we walk of all we know
There in the morning light
Always standing by me until night time falls
Sometimes casting a shadow on bedroom walls

John A'Hern
Inner Self Pays A Visit

Another day over, or so I thought,
tap on shoulder demanding attention,
brought thoughts, inner thoughts,
stood quite still knowing the scene.
A voice now demanding attention
came from within my very being.
My inner self-had come to see me,
hold on tightly, here comes some strife.
G'day my friend, remember me?
deep breaths followed, from inner soul.
laughter rang out, certainly not mine
my inner self-was loose.
Tried to ignore as best I can,
taps on the shoulder were now in my head.
Remember me? remember me?
a voice much louder and angry as can be.
What do you want? I gave in,
yet more laughter at my plight.
What are you up to? can I join in?
The answer, answer, or there will be!
Be what, my thought and answer,
Inner voice angry and out of control
do not mess with me my always friend
I live within your body and soul,
like a Genie, I come and go.
Go back in your bottle if a genie you be,
go back. Go back! Do not mess with me.
A troubled mind brings me to life
spit it out, what causes your strife?
Age and weariness dragging me down,
depths of despair as I look around.
I do soothing as well as despair,
came the voice of inner repair.
Here if you need me, a voice from within,
I know, I know I said to myself.
Calmness overcame my thoughts
Night time, I fall asleep as was the norm.
Awoke after night full of dreams,
my inner self still fast asleep
stood and stretched ready for another day
walk slowly and quietly and keep it at bay.

John A'Hern
Innocent Email

Innocent email arrived today
From a friend not far away
The content read, then read again
Just saying hello and how are you
Exchanges between friends over backyard fence
She spoke of issues as good friends can
Words used like blows to the head
Death and gloom are her companions
Deep breath taken preparing myself
A visit was made to a sick friend
Two hours of listening to horror stories
A time given a sentence to be served
Time and pain her constant companions
I sat and slowly sank into surrounding darkness
Clearing possessions, her only thought
Clear the decks good for the soul
Tears had flowed until none were left
Able to talk of death and its intent
In a daze we said our farewells
Left her standing on the edge of a precipice
A lonely figure waving farewell
My mind unable to comprehend
I now sit at my desk so confused
Attempting to say what is best
This is the line where I must stop.

John A'Hern
Invisible Is A Lonely Word

Invisible a lonely word
Through your life, term is used,
Decisions made so absurd.
Casual stance you cannot win
We are here, just say the words,
Clothes we wear give the clues.
We have feelings that may not show
Now just waiting for snow,
Quirky smile passes our lips,
On with life and its twists.
Chubby Checker do your stuff
The World still turns it can be rough,
Never say enough is enough,
Walk tall, look, but do not fall.
Sitting quietly in a bar
On your own as, always,
Thinking through the day just gone
You turn and catch a glance
Look again as in a trance
Eyes so dark are staring back.
A smile so bright your heart it misses a beat
Needing help, she comes this way,
She sits as if always known,
Lost for words, keep on track.
Words exchanged, a voice of an angel
Sailors once talked of sirens this way,
One is sitting next to you.
A hand touches yours
Is it a mistake, the eyes say not?
Invisible clothes are brushed away,
Names exchanged, leave together.
Night air is so embracing
The help you needed is walking beside you.

John A'Hern
Journey Ends

Travel with the Woman of your dreams
Fell in love, she understood
Moods inherited from whom?
Loves to buy shoes must be bargains of course
Joined in dreams and made dreams happen,
Loves cooking for enjoyment not as necessity.

Travel by car lots of stops and scenes
Need home from home comfort,
Sometimes good other times perfect
Then there are those wishing not here places.

Reach planned destination
Looking at views balcony perched,
Time for a walk and people watching
Outrageous fashions of young folk today
Forgetting we were outrageous in our own way.

Bedtime calls weary from efforts, all-quiet in this district,
Spoke to soon as drunken singing beckons
Like the sirens of the Sea.
Lay awake waiting for the singing to stop
Fall back to sleep then wake to the Sun shining.

The morning is time for our coffee
More food decisions breakfast time beckons.
Time to leave is always a sad occasion
Back in the car turn navigation device on,
Entertainment can come from strange happenings.

Navigation device insists on a right turning
None in sight for several hours.
Device now throws a hissy fit
Turn around at once it insists,
Laughing at suggestion you disable it.

Now near our Castle, smiles all round
Sitting with glass of wine in hand,
What did we do differently? Both laugh,
Happy you are home again
Time to relax and reflect your travels.

John A'Hern
Leaving Home

Moving through life, choices are presented
Sometimes where we live is decided for us.
Then there comes the mortgage journey
Sometimes one and other times many.

Build your home one that fits the bill
Then there comes that amazing day
In we go without delay.
As time goes by, we change our jobs
Sell the house and move your belongings.

Now the memories cloud our judgement,
Each room we visit brings them back to us.
Become emotional wrecks as we step back in time
Each room tells a story of time gone by,
Do you remember? Yes, we remember.

The children’s bedrooms bring the tears
Hold each other and remember quietly.
As we close our front door for the last time
We say goodbye to our good friend
Thank you for sheltering and providing for us.

Turn and look back just the once, hearts they sink,
For days to come we cry without reason.
New home it beckons
Give me a chance it seems to say,
We settle down for another stay.

The children settle in life and a new School
For them, this is just another of life's moves.
Then there came that fateful day, a job offer but it was far away
We speak in quiet tones,
Promises to follow to the end of the World if needed.

Our home our family all came to the fore
We left our Parents Sister's Brother's and friends,
The emotion almost too much to bare
We settled into our Australian home.
We visit the land of our birth frequently,
Walk past Family homes looking for a change.
Still, as we left you our dear homes
We love our dear homeland and our new Country too.

Our children have settled and have homes of their own
We sit in ours and dream of what's gone.
We have fallen in love with this home of ours,
We hope it is the last and that is all that matters.

John A'Hern
Lighthouse Keeper

Lighthouse keeper vacancy announced,
Envelope delivered, contents read aloud,
A smile turned into laughter
Then into a shout.

Applicants all sitting quietly,
Into the room strides a man
Age etched on his face,
A cheery smile a sparkle in his eyes.

Sat himself down in front of group,
Questions asked and answered,
Nothing is written down,
The old man just watched and listened.

He touched our hero on the shoulder
The job young man is yours.
The day arrived, followed directions,
Arrived at a place never seen before.

Waves raced in toward the rocks of a lonely cove,
Met with the lighthouse keeper.
Somehow seemed rather sprightly
Was this the same older man seen before?

No time to waste, up the steps they climbed,
Reached the top, and gasped at the scene.
50 metres off the ground sat this whitewashed pinnacle
One eye that rotated, his at night to maintain.

Months of training, time to let go the reins
A shake of the hand, the old man disappeared.
Days turned into weeks and months
Tending to the light that shined so bright.

Standing at the perimeter of the one-eyed monster,
Safety rails in place, sometimes holding tightly.
Voices are hearkened, that is absurd,
Cries of distress carried by the wind?
Down the steps faster than ever before,
Out into the night, all on his own.
The white foam of the waves
Revealing nothing, did he imagine.

Flashlight scouring the sea
Human lighthouse surveying the scene,
No sign of wreckage, voices no more
Standing and watching, hour after hour.

Daylight brought the sunshine
His eyes met with a sad sight
Bodies on the rocks, how can this be?
Down the steps, this time in a dream sequence.

Stood and looked at life taken,
Local lifeboat crew comforted a broken man.
Evening arrived, he could not eat
If he closed his eyes demons appeared.

Holding the safety rails tighter than normal,
Dangerous voices inside him were calling
Throw yourself off repeated constantly,
His grasp relaxed, he had let go.

Coastguard visit found our hero,
An old man stepped forth from the shadows
Asked for cremation and ownership of ashes,
Ashes were scattered in places he knew.

The lighthouse now manned by someone new,
On stormy evenings, as they hold the rail
A figure would appear as bright as day,
A voice was heard, never ever let go.

John A'Hern
Loneliness Of The Sea

A beach or beaches, so many to explore,
Ocean or sea or bay are viewed, some never seen before.
Familiar rocks, lighthouses erected to save lives
Seagulls activity, their sounds and out of control flight.
The sea seems to call like sirens from sea adventure tales
Neptune and stories of Davey Jones locker abound in memories,
The loneliness of sailors as they sail the seven seas.
Waves breaking as they roll to the shore
Slowed down until they are no more.
Soft sand or pebbles dependant of time gone by
Sand to walk on, it squelches between toes
Pebbles that hurt feet, protect the coastline.
Sounds of pebbles moving, as the tide washes over them
Tides relentless movement coming in or going out,
Angry waves soothed as they reach the shore
Sand or pebbles soothe its angry soul.
Fear of watching the sea in the darkness of night
What lays beneath the sea surface?
Another world, all fish species fighting for their lives.
Fishermen, why not fisherwomen described?
When do they decide, their catch enough will fill?
Regulations looked after by whom.
Fishing boats with massive nets drag the ocean floor
No creature is safe from these marauders.
Restaurant fish meals, eyes looking sad
Better to choose cutlets, no feelings of where from.
Feelings whirl as you leave this wondrous haven
Striding through life with new found admiration

John A'Hern
Love Letter

A Family home stands empty, dust has gathered where once the surfaces shone,
Silence instead of voices and laughter echoing through the home as in times now gone.
The day has arrived, dreaded, put off for so long,
Parents passed within weeks of one another, heartbreak if not strong.

Three Sons' gather with heavy hearts, the task before them a sad one,
They stand arm in arm giving courage to one another.
Front door opened, the house greeted them with eerie silence,
They stand in their own silence; it was going to be a long and sad day.

Personal belongings gathered and placed in bags
What to keep what to dispose of, oh so sad.
Bedroom drawers when opened, had their tears flowing,
Each item held and treasured as each relived their memories.
A letter is found then opened, a love letter to Mam from Dad,
The contents read aloud, occasionally stopping to control sobs.

You walked past my home and smiled a smile that made me glow,
A hello and hi were our first words.
We sat on a front garden wall and talked, both smiling at each other's stories.
Walking with you holding hands, I felt so proud
With each day that passed my feelings for you grew stronger.

Your smile soothed me when I lost control of all around me,
Your eyes so brown and dark, always showing your feelings,
Your voice, I could listen to forever.
Engaged with little changing in our love except for becoming stronger,
Choosing the ring was a marvellous time the choices were amazing
You knew the one and pointed it out, it has stayed with us together.

Our times together on a motorbike, your arms wrapped around me,
You enjoyed our times when you became my motorbike chick.
Marriage beckoned we answered the call,
The church our friends and family, memories live with me forever.

Three children, you brought into our world
Our love for them and each other grew even stronger,
Your strength in dealing with worries reassured as always.
Our home made more enjoyable because of your very presence,
You always knew when I needed your laughter more than ever.

We are now in what is called the twilight of our lives together
I lay awake at night worried about what tomorrow may bring,
I pray and hope that when the call comes that I may go before you,
I love and adore you my one and only true love forever.
A silence, yet more silence filled the home.

A letter placed on the keep pile that was growing larger
Finished, the Boys all agreed and walked out the front door,
A hand held the doorknob having trouble letting go,
The others came to the rescue, three hands joined and closed the door.
Once Children, now grown men with happy Families leave the scene.

John A'Hern
Love Provides Exit Plan

A kitchen table, centre stage
Only two sit here today,
The main characters in all scenes
Eye to eye in control, so it seems.
Arms outstretched, hands clasped tightly,
Words spoken slowly not sprightly.
Age has wearied, love unbroken
Memories shared, emotions showing.
Both so proud of their offspring,
Occasional visits are now slowing.
Health an issue needing help,
Doors never open, the message sent,
Blinds also closed, what is meant?
All the signs but who would know.
Whom to call their souls to reap,
Whispered talk of the pact for leaving,
Together always that is the action.
Hands grip tighter whispers continue,
Keeping secrets all in fashion,
All now silent just facial expressions.
All in order time to bow
Tears flow at such simple words.
Will they miss us?
How will they know?
Curtains closing leaving stage right
The day will now turn into night.

John A'Hern
Love Will Find A Way

A lonely boy with sporting attributes
Few friends to speak of is it an issue?
No time for girls without question
Busy training looking for perfection

School challenge is mathematics retention
Teachers knew there was a distraction
Boy was withdrawn unable to penetrate
Sport, sport, appears to be his fate

The friends he had were special
Coming that close not seen as essential
Days into nights all rehearsed
Off to school wait for the finish

Another day what can one say?
Weekend coming hip hooray
Sport the order of the day
People looking up to sporting heroes

After the game a different person
Shy withdrawn did not like questions
Just a smile and a shake of the hand
Then departs back to his silent land

Another day standing by a front gate
A girl walked by was this fate
She paused and turned causing alarm
Crossed the road ready to charm

Dark brown eyes looking right through
Her presence his inner thoughts calmed
All so quiet as he struggles to compose
She sits down upon his front wall

They talk and talk about the World
Then agree to meet again
Hand in hand they wandered afar
She has now become the armour that protects him
Meeting Of Friends

A pit is dug, not any old pit but a fire pit.
The fire materials are prepared, surgeons working at their skills.
The pit is the meeting place for 12 friends,
Male and female no distinction, everyone treated as equals.
Once a month these friends gather around the fire pit
Talking about day to day events or meaningless words, Maybe.
No jokes but laughter shared.
An event is shared to a silent audience, all awaiting the result.
Discussion ensues with no conductor
Everyone obeying the silence chapter.
Food and drink is shared and enjoyed,
compliments are given freely and acknowledged.
Eldest in the group, oh so quiet, begins a talk on a life gone by.
Silence so quiet, breathing can be heard.
Questions are asked, answers not returned, all lost in another World.
A sob, all turn to look, memories have found their target and understood,
Hands reach out linking the circle, story and questions continue.
More sobs occur as story stirs memories,
Life floats by, its glories unfold,
Wipe away cobwebs of life as known, new memories joining the queue.
Just for this evening, think back to Mother and Father
Did you know them? or wish for a time after?
Story finishes, no comments made, all stand as if a message was made,
Meet again in one month hence, good night to all especially friends.

John A'Hern
Memories Of Parents

Mist, known by coastal folk
clears slowly to reveal memories.
Silhouette becomes visible
jaunty walk a cheese cutter on head

know you well or maybe not.
Man, of few words never a shout
look of the eyes or maybe a nod
temper never lost, not even a swear word
A touch or a handshake lost in translation.

Wait until your father comes home
threat dealt with by looks,
quiet life is all he asked,
doing his best in going forward.

His bastion his shed full of bird life,
canaries' budgies, all large as life
talking and tweeting all at once.
Cup of tea calling, spoon rattled loudly
response was instant, comfort was calling.

Memories of my Dad rattle around my brain
no words of love no sounds exchanged,
ruffle of the hair the only acknowledgement.
Came the day a farewell was given
standing on a cold railway station,
shake of the hand a look in the eyes
Gone, gone forever, changes did not happen.

Mother just stood, terror in her eyes,
eldest was leaving she did not know why.
No hugs no kisses just look of dismay
tears flowed but still no interaction
I blame myself for all this unfolding

why oh why am I this way?
I need to stand with parents once more,
Explain, explain what is gone before,
faces and your words drift past me each day
I love you. I loved you what more can I say.

John A'Hern
Memories Will Not Show Themselves

Deep-seated memories will not show themselves
Trying so hard well maybe,
Your dreams are challenging ones
Wake with them fresh in innermost thoughts.
Should we be worried?
Should we even care?
Looking for meanings
Thoughts or dreams,
Memories also along for the ride.
What is a thought?
What is a memory?
Where do they sit in the queue?
Questions with or without answers
Who or what to believe is the challenge.
A family story is long forgotten
Sparks a trail of questions,
Where are the answers?
Parents long laid to rest
No one to ask
Drives you further
Into memory and thought land.
The harder you try
The more they drift away,
If only if only
Said with conviction each day.
Cannot remember infant school days
Junior and senior as bright as day.
Your Family and friends face's
Shining like beacons,
Teachers, and coaches
There for the asking.
Twilight of life expectancy
Who decides that?
Will you pass meekly?
Alternatively, throw a tantrum.
Wake each morning always a plus
Get on with pleasures afforded to us.
Waiting for night time
The thoughts trigger dreams,
Here we go again
Why can I not see?

John A'Hern
So many memories, so many times
Saying hello, then goodbye.
Worn out from a farewell tour
Family and Friends all gathered for sure
One of those times you will never forget,
I leaned on the bar of the Pub for a rest.
A hand on my shoulder then around my waist
I turned to consider a familiar face,
Eyes so bright and full of knowledge
Looked at me for several moments.
What is it that starts the machinery rolling?
I grasped for names, hello said quietly
Do I know you? you bet you do.
Hypnotising stare unlocked my memory banks
A smile started, then his voice,
I wish to call you by your name
All them years entitled to hear.
A teacher who tried to teach me maths
All came back in an avalanche.
His thoughts back then he softly said
This boy has dreams, hope that the World acts kindly.
Admiration for his skills
Communication was the thrill.
Now and then the penny dropped
His wry smile, hidden thoughts.

John A'Hern
Mirror, Mirror

Morning arrives, out of bed, coffee beckons,
Pass the hallway mirror, reflection directions.

Stop dead in tracks, return to check the vision
Looking weary despite night's invasion.

Closer inspection of this vision,
Hair receding but not stopped intrusion
Out of nose and ears, a forest is flourishing.

Need a shave without question,
Vision seems to say you have permission.

Now I realise there are two voices,
Mine I recognise, other not so sure.

Younger man's voice still no recognition
When you signed up for this adventure
Did you think there would be no questions?

While I thought about an answer,
Questions flowed from the asker.

Look around, no one watching,
Decide to join in this session.

When I choose to talk to myself,
Questions are usually answered
With the sense, that makes me happy.

This face to face has now turned ugly
Poking fun will make me angry.

Now the vision is of a younger man,
What is going on?
I stand in awe at the happening,
Laughter comes from the younger man,
I now stand and listen.
Life's lessons are being given,
Mirror becomes mist covered,
I lean forward and begin to rub.

I freeze and look at two new visions
Mam and Dad stand before me.

A voice whispers in my ear
Ask the questions you did not before?

Could not speak or see for tears
Awoke in bed, it was just a nightmare.

Lay there with the scenes fresh in my head
Up I get and head for the kitchen.

Pass the hallway mirror without a glance,
Return to mirror coffee in hand
No vision to see, not even me.

John A'Hern
Mixed Emotions

Leaving family home, grief as if losing a loved one
Reasons differ as life deals its cards,
Accept the hand and hold close to your heart
Never show a single card, decisions needed can be hard.

Leave your home for greener pastures
Some gates are locked warning trespassers,
Mothers and Fathers pass on so quickly
On your own, life can be prickly.

Memories abound in strange ways
A word or an action comes your way.
Walk the road of so many dreams
Lack of people and houses unseen.

Demolished, making way for progress
Stop and stare at old family home,
Still standing proud, defying inevitable
I Stand so still for hour after hour.

Each moment in my life has passed so quickly,
A visit is called for showing bravery.
Find myself standing at the front door
Off its hinges looking forlorn.

I pick it up as if helping an old friend
Place against a wall deserves a rest.
Step inside, met by familiar settings,
Desertion has taken its toll of surroundings.

Silence, so silent, a noise it makes,
Walk the rooms, still looking proud.
Inner voice has taken control
Leave right now and save your soul,
Ignore the message do not understand.

My parents' bedroom is where I now stand
To this day when I am judged
I swear I smelled the perfume, of a Woman I called Mam,
Left the home with one look back.

Then returned to life and reality
As said before, words and actions, inspire dreams
Sometimes a nightmare or so it seems,
Believe what we want, or dream dreams.

John A'Hern
Nature Awakens

Nature stretches and wakes from Summer pleasances
An exaggerated bow and a wave of its arm
Welcome to an Australian Autumn
The weather mood did not look well
Rain it fell the flooding kind
Farther afield wind and fire
Destroying homes and people's desires
Nature always restless looking for what?
No conscience no feelings as on and on Nature strides
The swath of destruction will leave memories
Australian population has learned to travel with Nature
Stay by its side do not seek shelter
Outpourings of grief will heal tomorrow
Stand up and rebuild no time for long term sorrow
Those untouched by these first days of Autumn
Can only watch and pray for no lives lost
Has Nature finished its angry behaviour?
Beware the silence and stillness that follows.

John A'Hern
Nature Reminds

Mother Nature strides her World,
No curtains no stage, audience imagined.
A wave of her hand,
A nod of her head,
Weather pattern, humans dread.
Lives are lost for what reason?
Rain and wind sent for lessons.
Warning given, time to shelter,
Laughter at the places chosen.
Rising tides, flooding rivers,
Water unstoppable, even in trickles,
Wind destroys unmovable obstacles.
Sounds sent to destroy the senses,
Calm returns to scenes of destruction,
Why does it happen?

John A'Hern
Needing More Time

Out of the mouth, and heart, of an ancient
Came words that left me broken.
Stories of childhood in an English village,
Large families, parents struggling.
Bursting through to achieve unknown skills
An education, that left words unspoken.
A teacher appeared to everyone's gaze
He had found his chosen profession.
A war declared between Countries
He jumped to his countries defence
Gone in a flash, no goodbyes sent.
Standing with other young men
Orders given, obey without question.
Who oversees all these young men?
An officer comes to the front line
This man holds their lives in his palm,
Off we go to fight the enemy.
No enemy seen, shelling and loud explosions
An order given to move forward,
A hill that must be taken,
Off we go without hesitation,
Looks all fill the void and the intention.
Hill reached, survival in the thoughts of all the men,
Impossible to face such an onslaught,
Retreat orders given we gave thanks to Heaven.
Crawling through the scenery like cowards
Men praying, some crying
No shame given to all the actions.
Line of trucks all filled with humanity
Trucks in front, disappeared in cloud of dust
Confusion of how it could happen.
Spotted a tank just picking us off
Deserted trucks, as we ran for our lives
Cowering in the undergrowth.
Found by enemy looking for us
Came a voice, comrade or foe,
All stood up hands on heads
Our enemy stood before us.
Never seen a German before
Looked no different than us,
Lives were spared, prisoners of war
Spent several years in hell.
All so quiet, then one day, shells came raining down on us
In the confusion hundreds escaped,
In all this time, I had never seen death
Now it lay before me.
I cried at the loss of hundreds of men
No thought of them being my enemy,
Running, running until we saw soldiers
American forces just strolling along,
So many questions aimed at us.
Led to a beach with ocean full of ships
Led aboard and sent to freedom,
Arrived back in Blighty, smiling.
Walked down a lane of memories
Passing my school my smile broadened,
Stopped outside my Family house
Standing there unable to move.
A hand touched me on the shoulder
I turned to see my parents standing there
We hugged, no words were spoken.
Here I end a tale of mine
My time it is used up
Other days and other times
Will come to use it up, the Lord willing.

John A'Hern
Ocean Road

Came the call, travel South
Plan the stops, overnight or not,
Scenery we have never viewed before
Only on photos and travel shows.

Pack the car with this and that
Dress for weather, bother or not
Lots to see without delay
Weather kind, on our way.

Need Ocean views they give pleasure
Grass is green from days of wet weather,
Trees stand proud waiting for spring
Some with leaves, others without.

Pass through a town named Batemans Bay
Fisherman’s paradise if that is your game.
Onward we go scenery changing
Come to paradise called Narooma
Aboriginal meaning clear blue waters.

Next a place with name of paradise
Eden, name of a famous garden,
Place of pleasure the ancient meaning.
Harbour views get our attention
A coastal town full of whaling memories.

Stories abound of whale hunting
Museum creepy with strange feelings.
Twofold bay with all its stories
Killer whales helping hunters,
A name Old Tom spoken in whispers
Ghosts still roam these misty shores.

Through small towns and villages
Picturesque views giving pleasure
Travelled through forest scenery
Trees like sentinels guarding greenery.
Now a Town named Lakes Entrance
Views to die for as we go exploring
Princes Highway is beckoning,
Travelling onward South as the crow flies.

Great ocean road now lay before us
Many signposts with fairy tale names,
Small Villages viewed as we drove on through.
Travel on we need the ocean
Reached the town of Anglesea,
Beaches, Bush, and Kangaroos.
Ocean views set us smiling
Great ocean road living up to its reputation,
Need to slow down from all the travelling.
Next day we start the hairpin bends
Round and round with ocean to our left.

We reach the Town of Lorne
Wife in love we stop for a while,
Onward with sadness, goodbye Lorne
Now we reach Apollo bay.

Fell in love with changing scenery
Next day, time to visit the Apostles
Not twelve now does that matter,
The sights and sounds easy to describe
The sound of waves like claps of thunder.

Waves rolling in to meet the Apostles
Sights that take our breath away
Memories, to last several lifetimes
Hold each other and just imagine,
The journey memories here must end
Spending time with my always friend.

John A'Hern
Day by day, sometimes pray
Out of control what more can one say?
Walk the streets, no eye contact made
On your own, will you fall?
Stumble, caught by hands unknown.
Considering eyes, you have known before,
No words are spoken, lost in imagination
Tears flow, why?
Who are you? Needing to know,
A hand holds yours.
Walk with me, quiet words spoken
Walking holding hands with who?
Feelings strange, cannot understand
Suddenly feel love as never before.
Turn to look at a face you should know
Words will not flow, no control.
Please forgive, unable to understand
A smile appears that would melt the heart of a GOD
In an instant, they are gone.
Standing still, strange looks from passers by
Weekend dreams have returned it seems
What is happening here?
Stumble onward, trying to fit in
Pass a house, familiar surroundings
The door it opens, a voice is heard
My darling! my darling! where have you been?
Weekends, they come and go
Keep on fighting, tomorrow, who knows.

John A'Hern
Parents

Time spent around Mothers, maybe for some,
Father the wise sage offers advice or none,
Secrets shared with which one?

Meal times sometimes a Family fray
Each Parent in turn has their say.
Important for each one around the table
Listen and learn, sometimes a fable
Others join in until told leave.

Eat your food no time for wasting
Lectures waiting about food preparation,

School days' happy wonderful teachers
They join our Parents in giving life's lessons.
Teachers viewed as Parents, if not pestered,

The last day of School arrives, hip hip hooray.
Sadness fills the air as we say our goodbyes,
Some will meet again in their adult lives.
Others never to cross your path again
Heading home, you turn and look back,
Memories that will help keep you on track.

Looking for a job a daily reaction
Lament at your grades now needed for interaction
The jobs you want are out of reach.
One interview ends with positive speech,
Report to the Manager and listen intently,
Shown to your desk, sit down gently.

Reams of paper start to appear
Desk sighs under the weight of so much paper.
Mother asks and listens intently about your new job,
Fathers wander in from time to time
Listens for a while then disappears

New lessons in life are about to take place.
Each week you hand over a sum of money,
Accepted with thank you from financial minded Mother,
Father stays in the background with occasional mutter.

Girlfriend introduced, Mother turns into Detective,
Is she the right girl for you?
Can you afford to get married?
Where are, you going to live?
Each answer followed by yet another query,
Fathers approach explained previously.

Wedding arrangements put into action,
Mother leads the way Fathers follow proudly.
A Mothers job is to mourn loss of Son or Daughter,
Father shakes or holds a hand known forever,

Children of your own brought into the World,
Changes in your parents are easy to observe.
Loving the Grandchildren different to what you remember,
Enjoy these moments that do not last forever.

When one evening while sitting with your own Family,
You both may hear what seems seem like an echo.
Laugh aloud as memories reach out to remind you,
Your Mother or Fathers words have come back to haunt you.

John A'Hern
Pathways Between Desks

They strode the pathway between the desks
Looking, watching for mistakes
Occasional stops whispered words
In charge of their domain keeping silence
Back to the front of the classroom
Desk viewed as a castle
Drawbridge raised, portcullis down
No words are uttered as all looked forward
Lost in a world of learning
Whirring thoughts keep on turning
Why am I here please turn me free?
Day after day this is so dreary
No laughter allowed, no talking out loud
The rules of learning take their toll
The day it ends, I walk back to my home
Mother asks that dreaded question
How did today go?
You mutter a reply and head for your island
My bedroom waits as loyal as can be
It comforts without asking questions
I lay on my bed holding my head
Bursting at the seams from lessons learned
School days end you are turned free
Joining in with the rest of humanity
All I learned does not help me
Then again, I do show humility
Meet the girl of your dreams
Family life follows the scene
Pass on life's lessons
I become the teacher aware of this fact
I watch my children learning so fast
I do my best from my lessons learned
Another day beckons, pay attention as the wheel turns.

John A'Hern
Railway Station

A once proud and busy place
Built to help the daily race
Railway tracks, like welcoming arms
Leading to places of joy and charm.

Stationmaster always busy
Sweeping the platforms then picking up litter
Tending to the flowers and gardens
Oh so proud of all his creations.

Came the day such sad news
No longer needed what would he do
He Looked up and down the tracks
No sounds of approaching click clack
Birds still sang no changes for them.

Station would become memory lane
Grass and weeds take over
Such a once loved place
No humans no trains such a lonely state.

Windows like eyes peered into space
Why me, why me, the winds sang
Changes called progress sweeping the land
Railway stations joining the history band.

Dead of night the wind pays its visits
Bringing the sounds of lost spirits
Stationmaster revisits his domain
Staring at broken glass, and rusted gutters
Hanging down like tears of disaster.

Human tears trickle down a cheek
He imagines all the scenes gone by
then falls asleep in the peaceful scene
never to wake from his wonderful dreams.

John A'Hern
Reception Followed By Deception

Reception, followed by deception,
Words of comfort used, then correction.
Promises made, broken in reflection,
Preaching, not speaking, used when correction.

Head for thesaurus for true meaning,
Younger voters, the I want generation,
Their visions are clouded
When it comes to looking at the future.

Their time is now, bounding forward,
Waiting is not in their game.
Eloquent mild-mannered promises flow,
Off to the voting booths they go.

Tick the box, decision made,
Anger when their choices fade,
Protest at the voter's choices,
Blame the oldies, cries are heard.

Times have changed from previous decades,
Woman and Man did not change preferences,
Parents choices passed through the ages,
Never a doubt, never a question.

What has changed with younger generation?
Are they thinkers? or lost in translation.
Time passes on, government gathers,
They seem to be lost, decisions shattered.

Old fashioned ways still ruling thinking,
The younger generation know they are fooling.
Read or watch media reviews,
Lies or truth who decides the making?

Friends now argue, losing control,
Government lost in way forward thinking
Discussing terms, unsure of the way,
Meanwhile, friends become enemies.
Refugees

An army without the tools to kill
Move silently across the land.
Length and breadth covered with ease
Not noticed, no one in command,
Numbered in the tens of thousands.

Silently, their numbers dwindle
Replaced by others quite frequently.
They band together unnoticed
Governments try to control with process,
Moving targets hard to deal with.

Without them, the country would not survive
With them, the country struggles,
Just as with Native Americans
They are moved to reservations,
Names are changed to reflect the place.

The process goes on day by day
Replaced by others straight away.
Time is the real enemy
One, to sixty
One, to twenty-four
One, to seven.

One, to one hundred, maybe
On and on the cycle, continues,
Day by day
Week by week
Year by year.

Special occasions celebrated
Where will it end?
Wait for name and number
Queue length changes frequently,
However, the army keeps getting stronger.

John A'Hern
Remember, Remember, The 5th Of November

A note from the fun Police,
Guy Fawkes failed his mission
Happier folk around if he achieved it,
Celebration of the failure
Happier if succeeded, by Guy and his friends.

Never made sense of all this confusion
Backyard fireworks all quite dangerous.
Light blue touch paper
Stand well back
Mishaps happen and that is a fact.

Tree branches gathered for a bonfire,
Bonfires keep the brigade busy.
UK tradition has spread its interest,
Ex-pats in other countries, follow the celebration.

In Australia fireworks in private banned
So are fires that get out of hand,
If seeing flames are your interest
Biggest bonfire you have ever seen
Presently lurking not far from me.

Bushland burning deliberate or not
Destroying property and risking lives,
Wildlife habitats are gone in a flash,
Local Councils arrange free displays,
Lovely colour and loud noises.

Money going up in smoke
Better to spend it on poor folk.
I join the fun police in stopping the mayhem
So long ago Guys temptation.

John A'Hern
Resources

Resources, tend to think of from the land,
Water, trees, gas or oil, the scourge of the human race.
Humans use resources, for good and bad,
Career choice, we provide our resources
Employers approve and endorse us,
Forming teams or groups, Problems resolved.

Protest rallies, who are these people?
Rent a crowd loud and proud,
Resources provided willingly.

Governments waffling, resources problems
Career choice to provide guidance.
Voted once, voted twice, voted once again
Sometimes there is doubt,
Is the X placed in the right place?

The pooling of resources needed for the fray
Use our brains for thinking, use our hands for doing,
As parents once said, count to ten.
If still there is doubt, count to ten again.

John A'Hern
Restaurants

Restaurant food discussed today
Not unusual, friends will say.
5-star restaurant, I am on its trail
Reading menu, words just fail,
Exquisite titles to entice,
Not a problem for me, all sound so nice.
Choose the steak, or maybe fish,
Bird on the wing, others are not,
Free to roam the range, maybe.
Meals come with small jug on the side
Liquid gold waits inside,
Sauce the title, or gravy resides
Choice of patrons, one or the other,
Drizzle or pour are yours to decide
Admire your work and then devour.
Many a French fry has been drowned
Soggy and lifeless they abound.
Sometimes, they are hidden under the meat
Chef's revenge, oh so sweet.

John A'Hern
Revisit The Hill

Stumbling up a favourite hill
A day like no other listening to the distant thunder
The top it waits there challenging still
Thoughts and memories collide
When younger, running was your choice
The hilltop is reached, wind is your only friend
No human voices or traffic noises
You sit half falling to the ground
Gather breath then settle down
You look over the Town of birth
It helped you when you where down
If it had arms it would hug
The clock starts ticking when we are born
The hands of the clock move on and on
Photos and memories locked in each tick tock
Where has the time allotted disappeared
Older age recognition of older faces
Inside feelings young at heart
Your body aches even when you ask
You move to lay upon your back
Staring at a cloudy angry sky
Thunder noises moving closer
Flashing lights as lightning invades
Your eyes they close, memories impose
This is the spot you would choose as remembrance

John A'Hern
Rhythm Of Life

Through our lives friends are made
Not put together as in assemble
You meet, greet, and decide
Girls or boy's, men or women
Decisions made, feelings shown
Feel quite proud of your new companions
Talk about unmentionable problems

Sometimes happy sometimes sad
Laugh and cry nothing else matters
These bonds can last for several lifetimes
Help each other when decisions matter
Hold and hug when danger threatens
Fall in love, it can and does happen

Attend birthday's weddings and parties
Death can sometimes raise its ugly head
Just attend and count your blessings
Family gatherings introduced extenders
Make more friends, there are no rules
Hands on shoulders, hands in hands

Greetings given and exchanged
Parents of others become as your own
No one left out of this band of humans
Stronger and stronger, bonds never broken
This band of warriors at disposal
If lucky enough to be in this situation
Count your blessings, tomorrow beckons

John A'Hern
Rock And A Cave

During life, we all experience difficulties
Whom do we turn to for advice?
Best advice will always come from secret inner friends,
Looking around to make sure no one hears.
Control your thoughts and temper of course
Conversation with oneself can bring along some discontent
Depending on the question of intent.
The decision made is always right
due to the understanding of the inner friend.
The rock guards the entrance to your cave
Do not disturb is the invisible message,
Disturb me not if you are a fool.
Learn that to disturb the rock can lead to ugliness,
Check for movement of the rock for the day ahead,
Peek inside wait for reaction always respond with positive action.
The cave the warm friendly cave protects you from demons
Day by day they come and go we all have our personal demons
They bring with them anxiety that is designed to torment us.
The end of another day safe and sound from today's challenges,
Time to return to your lover's arms.
The cave sits waiting lonely as ever waiting
The rock must go and then show the World your talents,
Afraid to let go your cave it will not know it will draw you back if you let it,
The cave awaits there lonely it can wait.

John A'Hern
School Days

One of those days you dread
Has arrived, no fanfares prepared
School friends get together.
All ready to check out each other,
Those handsome dudes who hogged the girls
Not so these days, what happened?
Girls, who stayed in the background,
Now so sure of all around them.
The gang not changed, all as if yesterday
Laughs, as memories talked of for hours.
Then there is the peacock bunch
Strutting around looking for love.
Hate it or love it, school always there
Each day preparation, sometimes despair.
Double session of maths, deep breaths taken
Slow motion walk, prepare for sentence.
The teacher knew the answers would they tell us?
The blackboard springs to life
Your feelings take another nose dive,
Fractions are the flavour of the day
I need to leave, please do not make me stay.
Teachers trying to pass on knowledge
Some succeeded, others failed.
I escaped one sunny day,
The end of School adventures,
Walked away never looking back.
Life and its trials was laying its tracks,
Sometimes I wish I could go back to school
I am now ready to learn and do.

John A'Hern
Seaside Village Adventures

Life for children at this seaside Village is wild and free
A band of misfits, boys and girls treated equally,
Their hill overlooked the village, adventures awaited
Running through grassland, over boulders, passing cottages.

Amazing sight, all their clothing colours blazing
Girl’s dresses flowing as they ran to exciting places.
Onward across the Promenade where Villagers were walking,
People waving, all known to each other in this seaside village.

Onto the beachfront, the children run
Oldest like sheep dogs, keeping control.
Shoes in hands, bare feet no problems
Inlets to explore, including caves.

Attention now turns to the Coast Guards hut
Coast Guards telling stories, causing laughter to fill the air,
Time to say goodbye and head off home
Another day tomorrow, more adventures for sure.

Summer appears, habits change, swimming added to their games
Into the ocean without fear, with no lifeguard near.
Ocean water no problem to these self-taught aquanauts,
Swimming out and around the moored yachts.

Growing up can be quite a shame
they no longer join in the games,
Gang grows smaller as they grow older
leaving the village for pastures greener.

All now moved on, the silence quite disturbing
The wind now occupied the cliff-top dwellings.
A young man and woman at a friend's birthday
Glancing at each other, recognition happens.

They embrace, tears flowing as each remembers,
Make the decision to visit their childhood village.
Arriving at their village one fine summer's day
Walking to the cliff top where they lived and played.
Standing, looking out over their beloved village bay
Memories of times gone by now engulfing them
This couple added true love to their friendship,
Suddenly both became aware of voices approaching.

Beaming Smiles as an approaching group came into sight
The group ran toward them like times of old.
The group as one all joined hands
Forming a line facing the ocean, they were children once again.

A pact was made on the cliff top that day, regular visits,
The group dwindled each Year until none were left.
The cliff top remains, a lonely overgrown area waiting for visitors
Wind and weeds have taken control of this once loved place.

John A'Hern
Shadows

When we are feeling lonely,
A friend stands close at hand.
Standing there beside us
There at our command.

Sometimes leading the way
Other times, behind it does stay.
Overhead the sun it shines,
Our friend resides, seldom seen.

Shadow is alive and well
Expressing outlook on life.
It comforts and protects,
In moments of daily strife.

Walking along a well-worn path
Our shadow well ahead.
Its length goes forth to investigate
What is around the bend?

Shadow walks on its own,
Walking faster, must catch up.
No others are around,
You shout out your name.

The shadow turns and waits,
We Stand and look perplexed.
The shadow disappears,
It has joined you, where to next?

John A'Hern
Shopping Adventures

My Wife and I went shopping today
Not one of my favourite things I do say.
a challenge or two coming our way,
Good Manners and the making of decisions
seem to disappear, that is true.

Need to fix mobile phone problems
join the traffic, busier than normal,
Speed is the order of the day.
Road speed signs appear to be a suggestion
Lots of deep breathing and comments flowing,
Older and younger, Forgetting traffic codes and manners.

Truck horns blasting are quite a distraction
The truck driver's patience it is cracking,
The screech of tyres, vehicles braking
Along with fragrant smells of rubber burning.

Car park full of angry impatient drivers
Oops there goes a shopping trolley,
The lady holding handles not very happy,
The event has rattled her concentration
Now her car is lost in the confusion.

Looking for mobile phone we can fix them store
All shapes and sizes to delight.
I smiled and had thoughts of being asked
Would you like mash potatoes with this or that plan,
My Wife gives me the evil eye.

Shop it is full of mobile phone lost souls
Pay now, pay later, pay for the rest of your life if you want to.
Shop assistant looks up from behind desktop monitor
Gives you the looks of what are you here for?
The young lady seems to be quite efficient
As she presses several buttons,
Done and dusted we are out of there.

Wife suggests that we visit the grocery store
I give her the look and then say let's go
Wife says something funny has happened to her ankle
We sit a while then a decision made,
I am to enter this tide of humanity on my own.
I am quite famous for these commando-shopping raids
List in my head, now there is a problem
Out I come to a radiant smile.

Leave the car park and join the traffic
Red light, green light
Watch for lane changes, the voice commands
how to get there gadget it does not need charging
Just the occasional yes, my darling
Turn right, turn left, home at last
Take deep breaths, giving thanks.

John A'Hern
Sitting on a park bench contemplating life
good and bad and sometimes in strife,
sometimes a smile, followed by a frown
on it goes hour after hour.
Look at sandwiches interest ebbs
feed the pigeons, a voice suggests,
become aware of company sitting
turn to look a smile beckons,
ask a name eyes so piercing
hand touches shoulder
coldness flows right through.
Try to speak, voice has deserted,
company waves their hands
scenes appear, I am there
childhood, parents, friends appear.
Gone in a flash a slideshow of life
tears and happiness now engulf,
holding hands, then company disappears
Imagination running riot.
hands reaching out where others held them
quickly place hands by side
afraid that others will see a crazy
however, it is not me.
Enough of this entire dream sequence
I stand to leave this park bench of memories,
hand once again touches on the shoulder
I shudder and turn to see the intruder
stranger stands with hand held out
reach to shake without any doubt.
Gone, GONE, no one there
come back, COME BACK, and tell me your name.
I hang my head but not in shame
echo drifts across the breeze
on with life, smile and frown
all accepted without question.
Walk away spring in step
start again, tomorrow beckons.
Sleep, Where Are You?

Sleep is something we take for granted
Bedtime calls when Sandman contacted.
As children, a strict bedtime
Sleepy or not we obeyed the rule.

The lucky few that sleep soundly
The Sandman keeps his promise.
Mornings arrive much too quickly
Now we struggle to leave sleep behind.

Morning light stirs the senses,
Blunder around looking for what
Peace and quiet will do for a start,
Early morning hours, normal for some.

Time drifts by ever so slowly,
Another day beckons.
Stagger around doing your best
Hallucinations taking over.

Bleary eyes rubbed quite often
Friends all comment on the problem.
Another night approaches,
Brain near explosion.

Time for bed a yawn takes over,
Crawl between sheets with favourite pillow,
Laying there staring at blank ceiling,
Eyes flicker and start closing.

Jump awake stare at clock,
Minutes show just been dozing,
Toss and turn squirm and groan,
Lost in sleep deprivation.

John A'Hern
Speak When Spoken To

A Mother always sitting in silence,
Darkness adding to this quietness.
A child observing, adult decisions,
Adults providing resolutions.

Day after day scene repeats,
Conversations hushed as adults speak.
Child still observing such confusion,
Manners taught, no speaking.

Father deals with situation,
Leave Mother alone in her seclusion.
Evening quietness adds to the gloom,
Dearest Mother passing through.

Men of knowledge attend the scene,
Lots of talking, child watches, unseen.
Mother not in position next morning
Father explains, child not talking.

Mother visited in her new home
Still sitting in a room, alone.
Recognition, holding hands
Warmth, comfort, child does not understand.

What do you see when you look at me?
A question thought not asked.
Child lurks around corners unseen,
Father cries himself to sleep.

John A'Hern
Grandfather, viewed through a child's eyes,
Approach a room the door always closed.
Sitting in the room in darkness
Except for dappled window light
A storyteller to delight.
A Grandfather sits in his favourite chair
Face lights up, knows who is there,
The child sits at Grandfathers feet.
Stories flow, no rhyme or reason
Life's lessons are played with words.
Listening to all that is being said,
Occasional pauses, laughter rings out.
Silence tells the child time to say cheerio,
A rub and a kiss on the head follows,
Close the door silently, memories locked away.
Most days this is repeated,
One day the door is locked, no answer within.
Father appears on the scene of door knocking child
Leads him away to explain the whys.
Grandfather passed during the night,
A tear appears glistening in the sunlight.
The child just listens, does not make sense,
Yesterday's stories still fresh in his head.
The sadness surrounds, adults gather,
Hugs and kisses filled with sorrow,
Words not heard by the child,
Burial being the last request.
In the days of speak when spoken to,
The child just watches all around them.
The house so quiet, Mother sits in the kitchen
The child dares to ask a question.

John A'Hern
Stumbling And Bumbling

Stumbling, bumbling our way through life
Lectures from Mother, explaining strife.
Many a time a finger was wagged in your face
Learn life's lessons or await your fate.
Facial expressions remaining calm,
Do not smile, this lecture can lead to harm.
Then words used causing fear and dread,
When Father returns, your fate will be decided.
Parents dealing with life's issues
Not supplied with a manual of disputes
All their experience picked up during their lifetime.
Passed on through the decades, yours to decide on
As you grow older, your time will come
Standing, deciding, your own medicine handed down.
Beware facial expressions as memories flow
It is your turn to pass on if known.
Fingers wagging? Passing threats on?
Good luck my friends when your test comes,
Just one more thing, remember to have fun.

John A'Hern
Sweet Dreams

Some nights are dark, not dark as in darkness
The dreams that turn into nightmares
They bring the dark thoughts along with them
Dreams or nightmares travel alongside each other
day to day happenings can trigger this experience
Some are short and disappear when we awaken
Others are adventures with persons unknown
Where do you come from? an unanswered question
On and on this happening occurs
My latest adventure into this unknown
I will do my best to pass it on
Off to bed fall asleep toss and turn
Pillow becomes my enemy as I punch and fold
Then a sound so quiet awoke me from a troubled sleep
Eyes wide open laying thinking
sound was in the room with no one around
A slight rustle of clothing clearly heard
Someone or something was in our home
sound still there despite me being awake
nightmares like this are hard to take
I sat upright now fully awake
The feeling of someone there
Hair on back of neck in full alert
Nothing to see no mist or shapes
I fell back asleep awash with confusing dreams
When I awoke all still fresh in my thoughts
Was it a dream or a visit from whom?

John A'Hern
Sycamore Tree

Sycamore tree, standing proudly
Years in the making of its surrounds.
Standing at the base of the trunk
A 10-year-old trying its luck.
Looking, smiling, and up they go
Only monkeys would put on a better show.
Branch after branch heading for the top,
Chances taken as leaps are taken.
Reach the summit, a shout of victory,
Hold on tight out of breath.
A kingdom to watch over
Views not seen by mere mortals,
Unless a skill to climb tall trees.
The tree relieved, its branches protected
The young person inherited,
The child bestowed, is safe and well.
A speech is made, words made up,
If trees could smile this one surely would have.
A voice from the kingdom down below,
Brings our hero back to reality.
A mother's voice demanding action
Come down at once tea is calling.

John A'Hern
A tribute to Teachers does unfold
Men only in this boy's teenage World
An area called working class
Boys on the brink of lost without trace.

Teach them or befriend them?
Their fate in the Teachers hands
Lunchtime breaks discussing
Heads held in hands, where to next?

Expel or explain their path in life
Parent quick with justice when told.
Discussion unable to break the mould
Day after day same surroundings.

Interest ebbs until the bells sounded
Teachers lives not in the reckoning,
They tried their best in strict surroundings
As for me a survivor of these times.

I must thank this thin long line
I remember your names as if yesterday
Your character remains, what more can I say
What did you do at the end of your days?

John A'Hern
Teenagers, misunderstood, that is the message,
Look me in the eye tell me your thoughts?
No looking down, no looking away,
What is your question? What is your need?
Somewhere to go, somewhere indeed.
Always picked on, these are your thoughts,
No long-winded stories, we need to get along.
Not understood, the statement made
You belong with us and all the human race.
Is it an illness? Is it made up?
Do not look down, do not look away.
Do you obey? What is that you say?
Orders given left and right,
Too much information you need to take flight.
Head up look around
Stop this looking down upon the ground.
The World and it lessons are here for the asking,
Ask your questions, do not make up an answer.
In years to come as time rolls by,
You wish for your time again
Questions and answers, same old, same old.

John A'Hern
Teenagers In Adult World

A teenager in an Adult World
Comments made none left unsaid
Blame game full steam ahead
Others look on unsure of the end
Looks in the eye will tell if lies
You are to blame words etched in time
Growing up happened in a flash
Replied to with ones you trusted
Mentors, teacher's the ones you trust
A World of comments misunderstood
Recognise the intent, blame laid at their feet
Answers to the intent said with bravery
Always taught to be obedient
Words flowed, later in life understood
Stood and walked away from the fray
Leave them to their World of non-fair play
A life to live without blame
All quiet from unsure onlookers
Tomorrow comes a better future
Rid of pretenders looking for assurance
On with life grown up in an instant
Never told how or passed on
Parents voices added to the throng

John A'Hern
The Calling

Born in a village nestled in a Welsh valley
Only work available, follow Fathers underground
No thought of health enters miner's minds,
Wives in control of all around them
Kept their men and children happy,
Recognised when trouble was brewing.

Mateship important when starting a shift
Night or day giving support to one another,
Miner feeling worn out of late
His body just feeling tired and aching.

Frightened wife watching for signs
Never seen her man in this condition,
No diagnosis from the doctor
Just rest and drink plenty of water.
Hearing children's voices
During dreams and waking hours.

Now unable to leave his bed
Wife sits with him and soothes his head,
She squeezes his hand when pain is sensed.
The miner whispers about the children's voices
Wife shakes her head and starts sobbing.

Wife lies beside him holding on tightly
The dreams become more vivid nightly.
The miner now tells a story about that day,
Working the day shift nothing unusual
The mine sirens start blowing the warning sounds,
Nothing untoward happening underground.

Everyone trained to never question
Miners all gathered and up in the cage,
Shift bosses shouting orders, no confusion.
Shovel! Shovels! Came the shouts
Village! Village! Were the next calls.

Miners running towards the Village, overtaking slower movers
Passing Villagers all heading in the same direction.
Knowing the road, headed for the Village School,
Round a bend and School in sight, almost stopped at the scene unfolding
Mud sliding off what had been a mountain,
Engulfing all without question.

Trying to make sense of where were the children
The miners training had them trying to plan a rescue,
This moving monster of mud has buried the children.
Headed for the top of the mountain to stop the sliding monster
Worked as if their own lives were in Danger,
They are, they all realised as they pondered.

Day turned into night meaning little to the miners
The rescue effort joined by manmade machines
Did little to help rescue the children.
The rescue effort finished with little success
Except to carry out Children all at rest.

This dream has plagued him each day of his life
The children's voices becoming louder each day
Calling to join them and help them play.
No blinding lights or ghostly figures visible,
Slowly slipping into a never awaken slumber.

Miners Wife senses this moment has come,
She squeezes his hand to show she understands.
As Villages go, his funeral would be a good one
Who other than these villagers would say that of a funeral?
This village today stands green and proud
Memorials grace that hallowed ground.

John A'Hern
The Day Ends

A sunny and restful day slowly ends,
The blue of the sky turns into reddish hues,
The sun sets slowly letting darkness take control,
Night is now in command.
Birds have settled in their favourite trees
Time for the night time creatures to appear.
Noises in the night time air
Some familiar some not so,
Imagination as to what is making that call.
Chirping of frogs looking for friends,
Bats flying overhead, heading for the fig trees.
The family dog looks around
Barking at the scene of night time sounds,
Just to show that the dog stands guard,
The dog settles in his favourite place
Dreams of tomorrow will now reside.
Why is it that blinds and curtains closed tight?
Shutting out the darkness of night,
Night time imagination for those that need.
Favourite armchair awaits eagerly,
Sitting reading latest book
Dreams await from words that float.
Time for bed, words often said,
Sleep taken for granted, some just weep.
Body at rest repairing the day's movements
For those that wake another day beckons.

John A'Hern
The Ending Of Welsh Industry

Decision made, visit arranged
Industry museum needing change,
Press play and watch Museum screen show
Looking back at Historical flow.

Birth Town that is now a City
Copper production Capital is its claim,
Nicknamed Copperopolis for all to say.
Numerous other industries having their day
Dockyards, easy access, the Ocean at play.

I sit and watch history lessons
Diversity dominates the landscapes journey,
Influences of copper industry and docks,
Illustrated in intricate shapes and forms
That scar aimlessly across the land.

Canals lying overgrown, dormant, and waterless,
Wait for granting of a redevelopment plan.
There is a more simplistic method
Walk away from screen, a few minutes away
In real time, it can be seen.

Disused seams and mineshafts
Turned into museums on the hillsides,
Visible memorabilia of a nation's history,
Meticulously wrapped in reconstructed tourism
amidst a poetical landscape.

Disregarded subjects and objects
Push play to read more on screen.
Historical content and hands-on experience,
All abandoned in favour of touch screen technology.

Machinery encased in toughened Perspex,
The more dangerous dismantled and stored in warehouses,
Never to be seen by Fathers Children,
Health, safety, and technological progression.
This prevents a real-life view of the past.
Take a few moments away from the screen,
Holograph seems real at the time
Have a talk to an ex-miner, a trawlerman, or a sewing woman,
Take time and indulge in real life history.

As you walk through this once prosperous city,
Look at the scars on the landscape around you,
Before it becomes a supermarket, a museum, a leisure centre,
Memories stored in a museum's hard drive.
Enough for today, my heart it breaks.

John A'Hern
The Hill

Childhood playground lost in council planning
Grass and gorse grew unhindered,
Running exploring every corner
Large rock outcrops and quarries.

A structure called the reservoir
Surrounded by high stone walls,
Trespassers will be prosecuted!
Inside a deserted landscape beckoned.

Reservoir but no sign of water to be found
Iron sheeting covering the centre of the structure,
Through the years, they had become rusted
There you see the water.

Run, running until the reservoir was far behind
Another landmark this is called the Windmill,
A building nicknamed the windmill
A Beacon used to help ships navigate shallow water?

Thirsty and hungry running back home
Tomorrows came and went you grow into an adult.
You leave your home and the hill
You return several years later your home it no longer existed.

The hill still looked down and seemed to say you are invited
You walked not ran and looked for familiar landmarks,
Houses stood where once grew the grass and gorse
Fences existed where once stood open spaces.

Views have changed, looking down upon your beloved Town
Old School has moved, but only a couple of hundred metres,
New names new roads, I looked at an area named the Marina
Yachts and boats so expensive, all moored, no sign of any owners.

You walk the streets as done as a child
Everything much narrower now, the distances much shorter,
Houses are in a time warp, little or no change in how they looked
A man approaches and asked, what are you doing?
I know you, both saying at the same time
Shaking hands and hugging as friends,
Our families were friends in the days gone by.
Onward, reaching the Beach, where are all the sand dunes?

Two piers stretch out into the sea
Waves rolling in stirring up the sandy mud.
Looking for the Markets, do they still exist?
Cockles in a paper bag with lots of vinegar and pepper.

Vegetable displays are enough to turn a man into a vegetarian,
Until Jones, the meat is spotted, selling his magnificent lamb
They will keep a welcome, you will return.

John A'Hern
The Last Time

A single thought multiplies
Once again voices call
Familiar and friendly
Calls turn into shouts
Come pay a visit
Your country of birth needs you
Dr Who time traveller
Where are you when I need you?
Plans discussed then torn to shreds
Team meeting of two planning escape
A journey oh so lengthy
Worth it when the throng calls your name
Sadness of the heart-breaking kind, waits
Age taking its payment demanding a toll
We will sit and hold their aged hands
Talking of times gone by
Last time never mentioned
Afraid of emotions ruling visit
Words chosen carefully
Crafting sentences cheerfully
Evening times bring loneliness
Hold tightly as the day ends
Travel is the enemy, age acts discreetly
The age voice it placates us
Sleep brings dreams
A restless night awaits us
Visit it is over
We leave knowing it is the last time
Photos and memories cloud our senses
Time travel back to the land of our choice
Consoling one another
Dreaming of the others
Age, how do I disown you?
You can, is the answer
But that would leave just memories.

John A'Hern
The Lost Art Of Conversation

Conversation seems too easy
Hold with who is the question.
Surroundings lead to lonely feelings
Others around peering through railings.

Thoughts turn into conversation
Unless holding back, afraid to hurt feelings.
Speak up speak out, voice to be heard
Do not hold back that is absurd.

Talk to yourself will you listen
Questions asked, Is there a reason.
Join a group, interact, and Listen to others,
Have your say, people smile, Hooray.

Wake at night voices drifting away,
Sound familiar it is your echo.
Voice returns after several months
Concern that quietness will reign.
Slow and steady no need to explain
Friends understand, the art of conversation will return.

John A'Hern
The day returns from its slumber in this Welsh City
Busy people walk the streets.
Awareness of hidden dangers, watched over by a few,
Apartment bedroom window, a watcher settles in
Binoculars at the ready, watching, just watching.

Suspicious person spotted with camera in hand
Binoculars trained on them, watching.
Phone call to local constabulary,
Report made of suspicion person at Marina.
Constabulary know the watcher by name,
Smiles, cross the faces of officers at their desks,
They are reminded of a boy and a wolf.

Sirens screaming, heading for Marina,
Watcher now stands on apartment balcony
Shaking head at all the action.
Suspicious person shocked at the attention,
Move on verbal given, watcher nods head in agreement.
Crowd that gathered, make up stories, local media in all its glory.
Watcher settles back into keeping all safe,
Safe from what is another story.

Sunlight reflects on object across the bay,
Binoculars trained from whence it came,
Watcher spies a telescope.
Watcher versus watcher, binoculars trained on telescope,
Mexican standoff, who is watching who?

Familiar call to boys in blue, patience running thin,
Report is made of someone perving behind the shades.
Off speed the police cars, sirens attracting crowds as before
Officers banging on apartment door.
Telescope watcher pointed out,
Sergeant looking through binoculars, met with wave from telescope watcher,
Reports to binocular owner, waving seen.
Binocular owner brushes police aside,
Flashes breasts, let that decide.
John A'Hern
Thinking

Spending time in the thought arena
Sometimes too many for thought camp to handle.
Age plays tricks, a magician gone astray,
Words, describing, come slowly our way.
Inward chats with the main machinery,
Not always an answer, so we ponder,
How old is too old to travel the sky ways?
I listen to chuckles coming from thought land,
Deep breaths and onward like knights of old,
The land of my fathers is once again calling.
Doing ones best to answer this challenge,
The reason outweighs any thought challenge,
A time warp awaits, all as remembered.

John A'Hern
Thoughts And Daydreams

Standing here just standing
looking around at surroundings,
enjoying sounds of nature,
neighbour's children's voices present.
thinking just thinking,
childhood sometimes blank
other times I give thanks.
Family faces flash through my memory,
friend's faces remembered.
Childhood pets I miss you,
friends always faithful.
Sporting deeds are gone forever,
wedding feels like yesterday,
wedding bells oh so joyful.
Buying renting filled with emotions,
houses lived in always remembered,
children growing leaving home.
Lack of conversation, questions unanswered,
memories not always flowing.
Grandchildren visits treasured
entertainment always present.
Communication oh so valuable
conversations live forever,
On occasions, none are present.
Older age such a challenge,
no preparing for its visits,
holding hands so important
touching hugging both without question.
Feel so proud of achievements
love an often-misused word
in this instance said daily,
sometimes whispered brings a smile.
Standing looking and just thinking
onward upward positive lessons,
treating others with respect.
Sudden memory of your School teachers
some are good others threatening,
parents included in this section.
A voice brings you out of this thinking,
darling cup of tea waiting,
life does not wait,
why then are we always waiting?

John A'Hern
Today Turns Into Tomorrow

Day to day not normal events
We can sometimes control their intent
Tomorrow is waiting for the unwary
You love your life there is no dreary

Health comes knocking
Remember me, it whispers in your ear
Your thoughts your feelings as well as fears
You awake in hospital lots of fuss

No pain to speak of, why are you here?
Heart attack has sneaked past your defences
Time starts to heal like mending fences
Sitting resting contemplating

In front of your eyes your loved one falls
Health has not left your home It is overstaying its visit
Back to hospital as an observer
Watching staff weave their magic

You hear words that hammer at your brain
A heart attack is once again laying its claim
How can this be is it a dream?
Hours turn into days as you sit by your loved one’s bed

Visiting hours over, each day you walk away
Sliding doors of the elevator shut you out
Staring at a steel wall that opens at a buttons touch
So many thoughts streaming through your head

None make sense as they catch each other up
When one loved one falls ill the other manages
When both are ill your World collapses
You both sit and dream of tomorrow's chances.

John A'Hern
Tradition

The sound of bells
Church bells that is
Ring so loud
Sound so mournful
Call to arms
Call to prayer
Ring the hours
Like big Ben
Marriage celebration
Sending message of loss
Celebration of Royal occasions
At the finish of funeral service
I miss the bells on a Sunday morning
Childhood memories start flowing
Wake you from slumber
Ring in a New Year
Lay there listening
Bell ringers so skilful
The sound seems to call you

John A'Hern
Trees In Stress

The usual walk watching scenery unfold
These days a walk is more of a stroll
A path never walked appeared
Off I go plenty of time to spare
Birds abound safety in their nests
Path now disappears not worn underfoot
Not many intruders have walked this ground
Trees appear they are in stress
Most just look like a tangled mess
I ponder the cause of naked trees
Branches all twisted so sad to see
In my best tree whisperer voice
I talk to them that is my choice
No others around to hear my sounds
Imagination hears their replies
Question after question is answered
A story begins to unfold
Once more humans are the cause
What human cause affected you so?
Why do you look so tired?
Clearing for houses shouted loud and strong
Once we ruled this patch of nature
Now we stand awaiting our executioner
What can I do what do I say?
I stand and look in dismay
The trees will return from where they came
Into the ground where they once stood so proud
A photo of remembrance is taken
View my offering and check your emotions
Do you feel shocked or do you hide your feelings?

John A'Hern
Understanding The Need

Retirement of the handicapped
Think it through or just ignore it.
Chance provides an opportunity
Lonely place lacks unity
Job and challenge waited patiently.

Handicapped Adults needing understanding,
Relaxed environment, hearts are aching.
Adults challenged with daily life
Left on their own sometimes in strife,
Retirement beckons will it change their life.

What is their challenge?
Big bad World has done its damage,
How will they manage?
Such harsh words are spoken
The handicapped description is broken.

Communication without problems
Knowing when to show emotion,
Personalities begging for release
Busy, so busy doing their piece,
Another interest surface's from beneath.

Horticulture such a long word
Delighted when shown this new World,
Watching plants grow a new-found interest
Hours spent talking to them,
Frequent visits to show botanical gardens.

Watch their actions, always smiling
They have found the meaning of Spring.
Interacting with other people,
Shocked at first that time was given
All good things end.

Why? The question with no answers,
Moved away to supposed greener pastures.
Miss them all and their questions,
Task now is given never challenging,
No goodbyes just a wave.

Too much emotion for some to handle
I would do it all again my challenged friends,
As I sit here thinking things over
Thoughts cloud my mind
Please provide me with an answer?

John A'Hern
Views Versus Memories

Walk streets and roads of childhood dreams
Adult views not what they seem,
Distance shorter, houses smaller
Schools just seem the same, but taller.
Camera in hand, point and click,
Lace curtains flutter, unseen, so quick,
Doors open and close noiselessly
Not one challenge from the unseen.

Reach the beach, a place of dreams
The tide is out so far, cannot see.
Dwellings now stand where none stood before
A tower stands majestically on the seashore.
Landmarks are gone, history lost
On and on pursuing what?

Trams once ruled this seaside view
Double decker buses also in queues.
Walk and walk the promenade
Reach a village where love was found.
Walk narrow streets of memories,
People acknowledge your very presence
Makes a change from peering through lace curtains.

Back to Town now a City
Changed so much such a pity.
One more challenge before departing
Family home memories calling.
Standing still while memories swirl
Talk to yourself not making sense
No one around, no questions hence.

Turn and look at what was once greenery
Hill of adventures smiles down serenely.
Enough for today, visit the local pub?
Some still standing others are shut.
Memories live on in dreams.
Confused and looking for what?
A child of ten or twelve moving on,
A home where trouble was not a real thing.
Need the comfort and love a grandmother can bring,
Nain the name in Welsh, understand but not speak.
A call echoed calling me to her home,
Voices heard long before you arrived.
A home of noise and laughter greeted,
Cuddles called a Cwtch in welsh language.
Smiles that lasted for days,
Food and understanding at your disposal,
Stories and laughter yours for the taking,
A twinkle in her eye knowing you were related,
Your Mother a part of this initiation.
Allowed to express an opinion
Full of love and understanding,
Leave this home full of satisfaction.
Mother greets, your smile painted, never fading,
Gossip passed as always from these visits.
Tears stain my Mothers cheeks,
Mothers of Mothers always entwined.
Laughter and cuddles follow the gossip,
Another day will surely follow.

John A'Hern
Walked The Streets

I walked a street, so familiar it seemed,
Row upon row of terraced homes
Stood so gallantly.
Left and right I cast my head,
Memories all around.
Children's voices, bright and loud
Filled the evening air.
Smiling within, my walk continued,
Nods saying how are you everywhere.
A front door opened as if to say hello,
No one there inside the open door,
I stepped inside nothing to fear.
An empty porch a passageway
So, dark inside a midnight glow.
I walked the passageway as if on air,
Doors to left and right.
Reached the end of darkened passageway
Still no sign of anyone inside.
Faces appeared as if floating on air,
My children's images as clear as if it was day.
I reached to touch but just felt emptiness,
The faces reappeared repeatedly.
Then the face of my long-lost love,
Tears came to my eyes.
The face it flowed towards me,
floated through my soul.
I turned to look where it had gone,
Nothing but darkness there.
I fell to my knees,
Holding my hands over my face.
A voice brought me back,
Can I help you there young man?
Young, I wish I could have been,
I was in fact eighty four.
Someone, something, helped me to my feet,
Led me back through the passageway
Out into the bright street.
The door it closed,
I looked around no street no homes,
Just me standing on hallowed ground.

John A'Hern
Walls Have Ears

The words echo, walls have ears
Echoes around the centuries not absurd
My Pisces ways have me believing
From childhood to where I am today
Days when food was in short supply
Mother became a magician at meal times
The kitchen table was quieter than normal
I was often banned to my bedroom
Appreciate what you have, met with quiet disapproval
My bedroom was my kingdom full of imaginary friends
Noise of conversation brought my parents to the scene
Fathers head appeared through a half open door
Looked and left me to my own World once more
Mother checked giving me the look
She held out her arms inviting comfort
Be careful of words and how they are spoken
These walls have ears that listen and hold them
My invisible friends all nodded in agreement
My punishment room was really a treasure
Friends came and went the door frequently opened
Now later in life as I think of these times
I feel I have deserted them these friends of mine
On occasions when waking from dreams
Laughter is slowly fading but I can hear
I utter some words then hear a closing door

John A'Hern
Wedding

A wedding, simple enough
A loving couple tying the knot
Countryside to admire and stay
That is a fact despite the rain
All gathering in church so old
14 century so we are told
Waiting for the ceremony to start
A stranger walks down church path
Hello and good mornings are exchanged
Carrying robes bundled in his arms
Looks of who or what is he?
Dreadlock hair hanging proudly
A smile that would melt any heart
He reappears dressed in priest regalia
A priest so different does it matter
He carries a flute and plays a mournful sound
Walking through the flowered grounds
Locals know this man so proud
The service starts, babies crying
Not put off despite the noises
During service he makes a statement
Listen to the sounds of the wind
Nature pays us a visit for one minute
Church goes silent babies stop crying
A moment is happening, my Pisces thoughts take over
What strange visitations are at play?
A marriage like none attended before
Within this man there exists a soul like no other
A shake of the hand as I leave the church
A feeling that soothes my soul
I have seen and been In the company
Of someone special
The smile I have lasts for hour

John A'Hern
Wheel Of Life

On yonder mountain a remarkable sight,
stumbled upon by chance.
In shrouded mist, clearing
shapes start to unfold,
strange mechanism, a wheel is seen.
Sitting there in crossed leg pose
a being as old as time itself.
Asked a question no response,
asked again, this time recognition.
What is this place?
What is this machine?
One at a time answers back at me
as fingers gripped the wheel.
Quietly spoken words follow,
judgement is passed of all we see,
when wheel spins the centuries pass
then a subject stopped upon.
Where the wheel stops, it has no conscience
decisions made no heart string nonsense.
Music chosen, do not ask questions
too many names to say,
all then called no order or rhyme
join the line pay for their time.
The name David first to be called,
weeping and wailing across the land,
shock and horror all on show
quickly followed by the Prince of music souls.
The wheel has no feelings at all,
Name of George whispered, who, when, how?
The old one speaks, truth to behold
judgements not based who or where,
humans cannot believe who is taken from here.
Study the wheel trying to understand,
Politicians, Family, where will it land.
Wheel starts to creak as it bursts into life
move on quickly and live your life.

John A'Hern
Where

Walk do not run, the search starts
In the kitchen, leaning over the sink
Thoughts, thoughts, thick and fast.
What is it you are looking for?
Onward now, know where to go,
Standing in the bedroom, here for sure,
Behaviour explanation to confound.
Holding head between hands
Squeeze the brains, need to understand.
What to do, need intervention
Where oh where did I put them?
Better still, remember concentration.
Return to the scene of the crime
Been there done that, time after time.
Kitchen is the answer, get there quick
Now you will remember
It is not a trick.
Car keys once again have played their hand
Knowing you will remember if it happens again
Not lost just misplaced, knew it all the time.

John A'Hern
Whispers, Just Whispers

Whispers, whispers, in my sleep
Imagination oh so deep,
Toss and turn, throw off the bedclothes
Thrashing around, reaching out.
Where does it come from?
Why does it visit?
Eyes open wide, still darkness outside
Lying there soaking wet from sweat.
Needing help, but from who or where?
Out of bed walk the house,
Quiet as in days gone by
Hurts my head more than noise.
Bedroom calls, do not go back,
Throw on a track suit
Walk the streets
People around, very rare.
Fit right in, no stares no questions asked
Are we all from the same dreams?
Morning comes as daylight starts,
Where to now, my forgotten dreams?
Stagger back to my home
Nothing changed, only me that is gone.

John A'Hern
White Charger

My white Charger it is slowing down
It used to skim along the ground,
Now it needs a rest from the fray
It looks at me in strange ways.
One more time my gallant steed?
Shakes it head at my desires,
If only, if only we could ride once more
Off too distant shores we go.
Deeds a plenty needing attention
Charger knows action is wanting,
Eyes so proud and shining
Considering my very being.
I need your help one more time?
On your back and off we ride.
So much sadness waiting for us
We will ride and make it vanish,
If only, If only.
Through the time zones
Time the enemy,
Will we be there?
To fight the invisible enemy.

John A'Hern
Who Is In Charge

Message sent, who is in charge?
I am, I am, loud and strong
Logical thinking needs a chance.
Who is first in the queue?
Is it touch or is it sight?
Think it through
No need to fight.

The brain sits there smiling,
Nothing can happen
Unless permission was given.
Back and forth the game continues
Ideas and suggestions flowing
The brain gets bored of interaction.
Makes a statement, time running out
Decide method of satisfaction.

Everything goes quiet, lost for words
Brain persists with lesson actions,
Without permission, nothing will happen.
Eyes send signals, need interpreting
Sensory limbs join in action
Hot, cold, hard, soft, feelings needed.

Hot, do not touch,
Cold, pain received,
Hard, touched without reaction,
Soft, you squeeze, satisfaction,
Messages received, thanks are given.

They all go quiet, where did the sound come from?
I am the voice; can I join in?
Boredom has set in
No return to bodily discussions,
Tired now eyes are closing.
Through the night, the heart beat steadily
Resisting the chance to say, sleep tight my children.
Wishing

A group of friends form a ring,
Discussion of what today may bring.
Banter flows back and forth
Then a Familiar shout rings out.

It is not fair there is no doubt,
Another chance, another life,
This one has dealt me nothing but strife.
All stand in silence, thinking caps on.

Silently hoping for wishes granted,
This group turn and look to one another.
The resident poet of the bunch speaks out,
Attention given without any doubt.

Let your Inner voice answer your command,
It can provide your choice, if you demand.
Countries, Parents, choose carefully
Then accept the choice peacefully.

Think it through, your future is in your hands,
Confusion surfaces, thoughts are shared,
Round and around, thoughts turned loose,
Time is up, your decision, you choose.

Are you happy? no time to doubt
Problems dealt with as we think them out.
Deep breaths taken, stay in command,
Live your life you helped choose this plan.

Parents tried to pass on knowledge,
Passed on by those before them.
Grass seemed greener, maybe for some,
Others wished, their moments still to come.

The I wish syndrome alive and well,
Lead your life and live to tell.
Be oh so proud of where you come from,
And who you are, with the name given.
Laughter fills the air, followed by applause,
The group realise about comments that caused.
Arm in arm, all stride away down to the pub,
Talking, sharing, then time for grub.

John A'Hern
Yesterday

Yesterday came and then it went
Went where? for me to lament.
Days come and go
Mostly go to where who knows.
A new year starts and then builds speed
Minutes then hours turn into days.
As we grow older, time accelerates
What day is it today?
Who cares who knows?
The end of a year is strange indeed
A holiday, religious once upon a time
Unfolds and brings families together.
Giving receiving, does it matter?
Happiness fills our very souls
No explanation no story to unfold,
Believe or not it does not matter
A strange feeling within our very souls.
Then a year ends and a new one takes its place
The one that ended was good and bad
Dealing out a helping of both.
Is there a ledger keeping the score?
Do we need to make resolutions?
It is good for our souls.
Lose some weight
Have more patience
Broken promises lay in pieces.
Take deep breaths
Back into the fold
Good and bad, WHO CARES WHO KNOWS?

John A'Hern