

Ballad of the Canning Stock Route; or [The Silvertails and the Dusty Crew]

Celebrating a trip along the CSR in July/August 2011

Thanks to ALL the Dusty Crew: Dave and Kay Blore, Geoff and Lyn Bath, Russ and Helen Saunders, John and Annie Whiting and Terry and Meg Dillon [and *in absentia* Rusty Jack] who made this trip such a challenge, such fun and so memorable. Meg D.

Now Roger was a stockbroker
Whose clients were his fans
He drank his espressos at Marios
Bought his wine from Irish Dan's
His tailored suits had nev'r a crease
His nails were buffed at Jan's.

He fancied an adventure
That wasn't very hard
An oily young Merc salesman
Handed him the very card.
"Here Take this new Merc Series G
It will be a breeze
To do the Canning Stock Route."
Rog paid and grabbed the keys.

He teamed up with six other fools
All with Merc Series Gs
Three Merc mechanics took the tools
And all the likely spares
A food van followed on behind
With heaps of yummy fares.

Meanwhile the Dusty Crew set out
From the other side of town
All loaded with necessities
And almost weighted down
In four Cruisers and a dusty little Nissan.

The weeks rolled by
The wells were passed, good fun was had by all
With corrugations and sandhills
Not too hard and not too tall.
And then one day disaster struck
The Mercs ground to a halt
The Merc mechanics tried their best
They could not find the fault
Their catering van was far behind
Stuck at well thirty two
What good luck it was for them
To meet up with the Dusty Crew

The men were fiercely bearded,
Wild eyed with dusty jeans
They looked like wild bandidos
On the Mexicali plains.

The women leapt from all the cars
Red dust in hair and nails
Their clothes well worn and battered
And bought at Target sales.
The Silvertails looked all aghast
The Merc mechanics fled
Who were this wild and dusty crew
That filled them all with dread?

"G'day to all. I'm bearded Dave"
Their leader said all merry
"and here is bearded John and bearded Russ,
Bearded Geoff and bearded Terry."
"You look as if you're in a jam
We'll help you we're Australian
"With your hun cars we'r e guessing
That their engines are a'failing."

The Merc mechanics flapped their hands
"What it is we cannot say
But we've phoned home to Hamburg
The Chief Mechanic's on his way.
He's flown in on the red-eye flight
And chartered on to Newman
A car was waiting at first light
But it broke down east of Cotton Creek.
Herr Flick has caught a camel train
He'll be here in a week".

"Now buggar off you useless pricks"
Said bearded leader Dave
"You've had your chance. Go take a walk
And leave it to the brave."
So John and Dave they stripped the Mercs
Down to their chassis bare
And with bolts and fencing wire and stuff
Built them up with time to spare.

"By schnitzel and by sauerkraut,"
The Merc mechanics cried,
"This fencing wire is marvelous stuff
But what's that by your side?"
Dave slipped the can of CRC
Into his pocket wide.

Meanwhile the firemeister Russ
Had got a fire going
And with Terry throwing big logs down
The coals were soon a'glowing.
The ladies too had got to work
Soon camp ovens were a'sizzling
The tables laid, the plates all hot
This great big feast would hit the spot
And stop the buggars grizzling.

Then Kay and Lyn appeared
With four large Quandong tarts
"We made them in our Dream Pots,
These soon will warm your hearts!"
Bearded Geoff brought out two crates of wine
And passed the bottles round
And up and down the table
You could hear the cheerful sound
Of Silvertails and Dusty Crew
Eating all that they were able.

"By Jove!" said Rog, "This wine is good,
The best I've ever tasted.
It goes so well with the lovely pud,
I think my life's been wasted.
I see myself in a country vale
With vines around me growing
So tell me Geoff, Is your winery for sale?"
"The winds of change are blowing.
My bloody oath it is", said Geoff
"And it won't cost you a zillion
It's a bargain. It's a steal.
It's yours for just five million!"

"Done deal," said Rog, "I'll write a cheque
My bank manager's a dear."
"No need" said Geoff with cagey grin
"I've got a sat phone here.
Just make a quick bank transfer
And at Goorambath...you're in!"

But Roger hadn't finished yet
His life was still so lonely
He fancied a domestic pet
To make the winery homely.
'My wife's run off with a Chinese cook'
He confided to the Crew
"I'm going to have to take a look
At a dog to see me through".

So Rog rolled up to bearded Russ
And offered him a price
If he would part with Rusty Jack.
Russ decked him in a trice!
"It's true" said Russ "my dog is great
"It's sure there is none finer.
But I'll not part with my little mate
For all the gold in China."

"Don't worry Rog," said Annie
"Take this dingo pup instead.
It'll be a loyal mate and true
It can sleep upon your bed."

"I got it from some folks up Billowaggi way
While handing out my parcels
Of baby jumpers bright and gay
So right along the stock route
Bush babies bonny and bright
Are wearing rainbow jumpers
To keep them warm at night."

The silver tails were now replete
Well wine and dined and happy
But Helen noticed that their shirts
Were dusty and quite crappy.
"Try this," she said and passed around
The Stanhome washing stick
With buckets, suds and elbow grease
They soon were looking schmick.

Now Rog felt quite contented
And John had packed the gear
And leader Dave rallied the Crew
And the Silvertails gave a cheer
As the Dusty Crew roared off in four Cruisers and a Nissan.

That night the desert moon
Rose above the sleeping Crew
The Canning Stock Route waited still
With challenges anew.

Meanwhile in far off Gol Gol
By a gate sat Rusty Jack
Looking at the moon and waiting
For his master to come back.

The end.