

**A Tribute to Edward (Eddie) Hassan the Bard
1948 – 2003**

THE PALAIS

A friend and I went to Caerphilly
A great castle there, and it's very hilly
Went to a dance, known as the Palais
My friend's name was Lella Ali
The band was good, so was the dancing
Run catch the train, no time for romancing
Off to sea, I travelled the world
From country to country as life unfurled
I settled down in Wellington
I have a daughter, and a son
Forty years married to a girl from the Valleys
I met her the night I went to the Palais

FREE PARKING

I drove into town the other day
Parked the car at a pay and display
One dollar per hour said the sign
I said to my wife "That will be fine".

I put three dollars into the slot
A two hour ticket was what I got
I thought to myself, this is strange
And then the machine gave me some change.

Four dollars I got, in the hand
This pay and display is just grand
Two hours free parking, and what is more
I've never been paid to park before.

If ever I go to town for the day
I'll be sure to park at the pay and display.

MIRACLES

When Val wants a hair-do
It's Hazel she calls
Hazel will cut, blowave and all
Shampoo and rinse, then a set
The best hair-do, you will ever get
A cup of coffee, and a chat
Through it all, Eddie just sat
It's finished now, said Hazel to Val
Thank you Hazel, you're a real pal
You make me feel younger
What can I say
Another miracle, performed today.

TROUBLE-FREE

We volunteered and was accepted
To pass each test, it was expected
Each chore we did, was at the double
Trying so hard, to keep out of trouble
Of to the village, we thought we were great
Chatting up girls, for a date.

Then we found there was dirty tricks
On board the ship, "Vindicatrix"
They dosed the drinks, with bromide each day
To keep us lads, from going astray
But we forgive them, it's all in the past
And I think it's starting to work at last.

ANIMAL-FARM

We were the watch keepers
At the campsite gate
Two pool boys, myself and a mate
I sat on the mailbags, smoking away
When in rushed my mate, full of dismay.

The camps full of cows, he said with alarm
Is this the " Vindi " or animal farm
Off the mailbags, I jumped in a hurry
Now this really was a worry.

I'd never seen a cow, face to face
Now here they were, all over the place
The cows wandered off, out of sight
I'll call our relief, I said with delight.

We took to our bunks, it was four AM
Those bloody cows, causing mayhem
Did you see any cows, we were asked the next day
We just shook our heads, well what could we say
I'll never forget, the night so calm
And the "Vindi" became animal farm.

ON DECK

When David Ware was just a lad
He got the call off the sea real bad
He joined the " Vindi," to learn the ropes
Had some sea-Pie, it soon dashed his hopes
Twelve weeks later he went to sea
As a deck boy, one day an A B.

Burgoo and Black-pans, the days of coal
So much better than life on the dole
He went to Cardiff, it changed his life
Where he met Joy, now she is his wife
Just memories now, of those days at sea
It all began, when he joined the "Vindi."

MAGIC-DAYS

Long ago in the days of steam
To go to sea, young boys would dream
Some boys, well they stowed away
And some like me went a different way
Travelled to Sharpness, and paid a fee
Trained on a ship called the "Vindi"
We found it hard, really tough
The food was poor, and never enough.

The course was twelve weeks
An eternity, but then I was able to go to sea
I finished the course, then off to the pool
I'm going to sea, I feel real cool
I travelled the world, on various ships
Sometimes short, sometimes long trips
Steam and coal, those were the days
For me they were magic, in many ways.

Promises-Promises

Politicians of every hue, are there for themselves
Not me and you
They live in style, at our expense
Waste millions on things that don't make sense
One idea was a real honey
Let's move the Beehive, it's not our money
Roger and Richard had a secret pact
Called "Rogernomics" now known as "Act."

Save the rail, and cheaper power
I wonder why, we are feeling sour
Tax cuts for the wealthy, that's what they say
Perhaps it will trickle down some day
Sold the assets, they said they wouldn't
Believe them again, I just couldn't

Increased their pensions, late at night
Seven minutes flat, to their delight
Renew your licence, we've already paid
Another broken promise made
One thing I forgot to mention
In the year of the aged, they cut the pension
Come the election, you'll hear them again

With "Promises" "Promises"
Have they no shame.

DEPORTED

Arrived at New Plymouth, moored at the pier
Went ashore to have a beer
Off to a dance, at the local hall
It was really good, I had a ball
Came Saturday night, when it was dark
I jumped my ship" The Garvel Park."

I spent the night at a local farm
Suddenly, I was filled with alarm
You have to milk the cows I was told
Oh no! not me, I'm not so bold
I left for Wellington, on the train
I won't be staying at a farm again.

Went to a party, where I met Sally
We got on fine ,we were real pally
And then when I began to stray
Sally decided, I would have to pay
She turned me in, without remorse
Two months in jail, I got of course.

Homeward bound I was once more
Deported on the "Paparoa"
Over two years, I was away
And paid the price, for going astray.

THE OPTOMIST

It's eary morning, and such a nice day
I think I'll go fishing, at Lyall Bay
Arrive at the bay, and choose a spot
Will there be fish ,to fill the pot
Cast the lines, and spread the berlie
The water is calm, and it's still early.

The fish are biting ,I've got a run
I hope it's a snapper, that will be fun
I battle hard, with rod and reel
I can't believe it, it's only an eell.

Ever the optimist, I cast again
This time it's a spottie, what a pain
I remember the time, long ago
I could fill a sack, in an hour or so
I still enjoy the days I go fishing
Though most of the time, is spent just wishing.

WELLINGTON

This city in the south Pacific
Is really great, it is terrific
A quiet place when I first arrived
Now it's vibrant, it's come alive
Te-Papa, Theatre's, restaurants too
There's plenty here for people to do
Visitors are always impressed
They think this city is just the best
See the harbour on a fine day
It almost takes your breath away
I'm happy here ,it is my home
From Wellington, I'll never roam.

THE VINDICATRIX

They towed her out, through the locks
To the breaker's yard, at Newport docks
A very sad sight ,for all to see
And now she is just a memory.

A fine old ship, built on the Clyde
That fills the Vindi boys with pride
So many years have passed away
Since the Vindi went to the breaker's that day
There were thousands of boys, just like me
Who trained on her, to go to sea.

Those days at the Vindi, were a real revelation
Remembered by all, in our association
We meet and chat, of days gone by
Of the Vindi, and jankers, and of course, "Sea Pie"
And though we are old and grey
We are still "Vindi boys", even today.

JUST LADS

Seventy thousand stewards and sailors
Were taught about life-boats, oars and bailers
We queued in the mess, along with our mates
The mechanical man, tossed food on tin plates
There was officer Strange, who issued the mail
When he gave it a flick, through the air it would sail.

It was very tough, but we survived
I'd have to say, we actually thrived
The "Vindi" has gone, it's such a shame
We will never see, the like again
And though each of us, were just one of a crowd
To have been on the "Vindi"

Makes us ever so proud.

THE OFFICERS

We joined the Vindi, when we were just lads
Leaving our mums, and our dads
We wanted to go to sea one day
For us this was the only way
The officers there taught us so well
But at the time, we thought it was hell
They moulded us, just like clay
And made us, what we are today.

THE WATER WORKS

In and out of the loo, I go
Try as I might, there is no flow
Taxi to Newtown, take some pills
No, they didn't cure my ills
Back to Newtown we go again
Full of water, full of pain
In with the bagpipes, release the flood
It's very sore, and there is some blood
Val was great, she held my hand
Through all the pain, she was just grand
Back to the doctor in Newtown we go
A larger bagpipes, to start the flow
After two weeks I'll throw them away
Perhaps, I'll be able to !pee! !Hooray!
The hospital now for an inspection
A new bagpipes, as I have an infection
Shiver and shake, all through the night
Hot and cold, will I ever come right
The infection has now gone away
Thanks to the nurses, night and day
Jo and Johnny and Tracy Gillies
A ward of old men, with sore willies
An operation, on Wednesday for me
Then at last. I'll be able to !pee!

PAL-TALK

My new computer, is just swell
Complete with headphones, A mike as well
Log into the chat room, for "Vindi boys"
Just like me, they all have new toys
We chat to each other, and it is just great
For each "Vindi boy" has become A mate
It just goes to prove, that if you are bold
To learn new technology, you are never to old.

This poem I wrote for my friend Peter, who had a mishap while washing the paint
Work on his house.

"THE FLASHER"

"C'mon Peter" said Flo, his spouse
"Go outside and wash the house"
"I'll help" said Janice, Peter's daughter
"I'll hold the ladder, and fetch the water"
Up the ladder he did go
To wash the house as white as snow
Holding on so he wouldn't fall
He lost his pants, and showed his all
His neighbours laughed and cried with delight
They'd never before, seen such a sight
Peter's From Wales, so he's a Celt
Pity, he didn't remember his belt.

TIGER-BAY

When they razed the houses, in Loudon Square
They left the people, feeling despair
The homes they lived in, for so many years
Were all destroyed, it left them in tears
In high rise flats, they live today
Many just longing, for old Tiger Bay
The residents, well they had no say
Then the name was changed, To Cardiff Bay
Though the homes that I remember, are gone
It is the place , where I was born
And though the planners, have had their way
To me it will always be Tiger Bay.

TWICE-BITTEN

These people in the government now
Are treating tobacco, as a cash cow
They say, it's to do with people's health
They don't fool me, it's a tax by stealth
With "Rogernomics" they gave us pain
Then promised, not to do it again
They pleaded and pleaded,
Give us the power
And now they have left us, feeling sour
The very next time, they ring my door-bell
I'll be happy to tell them, go to hell.

SAILOR

I have often wondered, where I would be
If I had never gone to sea
Would I still, be living in "Tiger Bay"
I have often wondered, but who can say
I made many trips, on British ships
Across oceans, far and wide
Sailed into many different ports

The "Red Duster "flown with pride
And then one night, when it was dark
I jumped my ship "The Garvel Park"
Travelled by train to Wellington
Lots of parties, Life was fun
Two years later, In Cardiff again
Thrown off the pool, what a pain
On a Swedish ship, I went back to sea
A Matros now, no more an AB
Of all the trips ,I have made
This was the best, that I was paid
My trips to sea, I remember them all
It was really great, I had a ball.

THE CHARIOT

One day I decided to trade my car
I searched every car yard, near and far
Cars big and small, some old some new
Red and black, brown and blue
Four speed, five speed, auto's too
I never saw one, I thought would do
Sales men appeared in a flash
At the thought of a sale, and some ready cash
And for my car, they made some offer's
That would put more cash ,into their coffer's
To the Hutt the next day ,went Val and I
A sunny day, A nice blue sky
We met Frank Angus, in his yard
He showed us his cars, and gave us his card
A white Mitsubishi, I took for a spin
I'll buy it Frank,I said with a grin
A two litre car, it's very snappy
The search is over, I'm very happy.

"THE TOWN CRIER"

When he left the police force, he did not retire
He told stories to children, and became "THE TOWN CRIER"
A public speaker, a 'Thespian" too
I have to wonder, what next will he do
When dressed as "Santa," at Christmas time
The children love him, they think he's just fine
A talented man, he's got such a lot
A friend of mine, named "Tony Scott."

HEART- ATTACK

To the doctor I went, with a pain in my chest
Wired to a machine, then he gave me a test
To the hospital now, where I spent four days
I thought it was time ,to change my ways
Give up the smoking, it's easy to say

I'll have to do it, without delay
I've smoked cigarettes by the score
But from today, I'll smoke no more
I had a fright, a heart attack
And cigarettes, I've bought my last pack.

THE-ADDICT

It was during the war, when I started to smoke
The bombs were falling, it was no joke
Just light a fag, it will keep you calm
I never thought, it would cause me harm
I carried on smoking, when I left school
Thinking I was real cool.

As a teenage lad, I went to sea
And smoked even more, they were cheaper you see
A cigarette, a coffee, or tea
It's been a way of life for me.

I had to stop, without delay
A heart attack, I had today
For 61 years I've enjoyed a smoke
It's a way of life, I have had to revoke
I got the message, loud and clear
Will I smoke again, "No bloody fear"
This one is for my friends Bronwen and Ken Newman.

JAMMED

Bronwen and Ken, friends of mine
Bought a computer, to come on line
Ken said to Bronwen, it will be great
To surf the net, and e-mail my mate
But what a surprise, when they switched on the power
The computer was jammed, for hour after hour
They clicked on the mouse, without result
They could not get in, they could not get out
Contact the server, to put it right
And they will be on the net tonight.

WELL DRESSED

Dressed in a suit, from "Saville Row"
Ken felt real cool, raring to go
He went to a dance, at the Trades hall
Danced all night, and had a ball
One day he got married, and settled down
In his "Saville Row" suit, he would stroll through the town
The marriage ended in divorce
And the "Saville Row" suit
Why! She burnt it of course.

This is my favourite poem, written by R.L.Sharp

Stepping stones

Isn't it strange, that princes and kings
And clowns ,that caper in sawdust rings
And ordinary folk, like you and me
Are builders ,of eternity
To each is given a bag of tools
A shapeless mass, a book of rules
And each must make, ere life has flown
A stumbling block, or stepping stone.

JULIAN'S JACKET

It's very old and scruffy now
But once was the pride of some poor cow
Julian's jacket has seen better days
Now he leaves it where ever it lays
He wears it to work and also to town
Believe it or not, it used to be brown
The last time he lost it, was very funny
In the pocket, was his mother's money
He called all his friends in despair
Did I leave my jacket there
One of them found it, yet again
All his prayers were not in vain
His jacket draws comments whenever its seen
What is his name? It's Julian Breen.

JULIANS CHICKEN

The chicken he cooked, well it smelt great
He left it to cool, upon a plate
He fell asleep in his armchair
When he awoke, the plate was bare
Where is my chicken, Julian cried
If I catch that cat, I'll skin it alive
The cat took off, licking his lips
For Julian, well it was fish and chips.

PHOTOGENIC

Driving her car in Nae-Nae road
Heading home, to her abode
Calamity Annie is her name
Every day is just the same
Disasters are many, in her life
She always seems to be in strife
Burnt pots and floods, and a shrunken curtain
There's always something, that's for certain.

And now while driving home today
A camera snapped her, along the way
A speeding ticket, she received

Left her feeling very peeved
Eighty dollars to be paid
Calamity Annie was very dismayed
She ranted and raved, so angry and vexed
Her friends just wondered, what will be next.

CHRISTMAS-CRACKERS

Peter took Janice, shopping today
To the super market, along the way
Pushed the trolley, around the aisles
The Christmas Crackers, were stacked in piles
His daughter Janice, suddenly stumbled
And into the Christmas Crackers she tumbled
The boxes were scattered, all over the place
Leaving them both, with a very red face
The next time he goes shopping, he will go alone
For Janice his daughter, is accident prone.

THE GUEST

I met a man, his name is Neil
Full of charm, and great appeal
To our reunion, this year he came
Our reunions, in future, will not be the same
Though he was never a "Vindi Boy"
He made us laugh, and brought us joy
With Frank Downs, he stayed for a week
And left Frank tired, through lack of sleep
For Neil, he has a very loud snore
Which poor Frank Downs, just had to endure
And though he went, to the school at Gravesend
He came as a guest, and left as a friend.

MISHAPS

She turned on the tap, in the bathroom sink
To turn it off, she did not think
Jumped in the shower, feeling high
Shampoo her hair, and then a dye
She came out of the shower, and what a surprise
She just could not, believe her eyes.

The sink was full, and overflowing
Bloody hell, Annie was bellowing
Water, water, everywhere
And Annie ,standing naked there
She called to Troy, to get out of bed
I've had another mishap she said.

Troy went in, through the bathroom door
And saw the water, all over the floor
He had a laugh, and said what's new

Mishaps like this, you've had quite a few
The laundry, the pots, now the bathroom as well
Your always shouting, "bloody hell"
But she has always been the same
"Calamity Annie" is her name.

BLACK-PAN

Of all the watches I kept at sea
The 12 till 4 was the one for me
The coal burning stove, was kept alight
By the standby men, throughout the night
We peeled the spuds, for the next days dinner
With a generous cook, we were on to a winner
Maybe, steak, and goodies, for every man
This was our breakfast, which we called "Black- Pan".

Rest in Peace mate, you'll always be remembered.