Sixty Years "Bush Music Club"

Let's all get together
To celebrate this day
With bells and whistles
Flutes and drums,
Bush Music all the way

Eric's on the fiddle,
Ralph and Dave as well
George on the accordion
Now that should ring a bell!

Let's program all the dances
Now Don is good at that
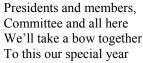Then Bob select some music
He doesn't mind a chat!

Tony, bring your lager phone
I know it weighs a ton
And Helen, your accordion
To show us how it's done.

Why all the fuss and "Do dar"
The dances, songs and all
You'd think the club turned 60
In fact: now I recall

Congratulations to us all
A milestone now we've met
Looking forward together
The best to come is yet

Presidents and members,
Committee and all here
We'll take a bow together
To this our special year

Mike Waters 2014

SINGABOUT

60TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

TRIBUTES TO JOHN DENGATE

Vale John Dengate

Gone is the seannachie, the satire that raised the blister.
Gone the sharp, intellectual, the schoolmaster we all feared,
The gales of laughter over the pint,
And the tears for the bronze smith's acid scarred hands.
He's gone like Declan before,
And like Declan will his voice and face stay with us.
But more of the man lives in his songs,
That agile scalpel wit, barbed ambiguities,
Precision of rhyme and metre.
Grieve for this bard, but mourn with pride,
For we have known him.

Vale John Dengate.

John Warner & Jenni Cole Warner
© August 2013

We Won't See His Like?

John Dengate's dead, that grand old man,
With a wit like a welder's torch,
Who rhymes as only the Dengate can,
With wicked invective to scorch -
The pompous, the liar, the political boss,
The cheat, the vindictive and vain,
And some have said as they mourned for his loss,
"We will never see his like again."

John Dengate learned, John Dengate read
He mastered the writer's craft,
He listened till language rang in his head,
Told stories and people laughed.
Lawson, Paterson, Judith Wright,
Behan, Ogilvy too,
Shaped his wisdom and shed their light,
Till his writing was forceful and true.

We stand on the shoulders of giants they say,
John Dengate chose his giants well,
But who dares to say that we won't see his like?
Only the future can tell,
For Dengate's a giant, with giants he stands,
His writing's out there to be heard,
And someone will treasure the works of his hands,
And learn of his skills with the word.

The world will again hear the true Dengate rhymes,
John's heritage makes that quite sure,
The ideas may differ in these changing times,
But his wit and his wisdom endure.
Someone will be there to take up the blade,
Who's learned well from that incisive pen,
Who's made of the flame of which Dengate was made,
Then we'll hear from John Dengate again.

John Warner © 14/09/13

Paean for John Dengate

Tune *Carrickfergus*

He was a poet of wit and laughter,
Precise in metre, and verse and rhyme,
He spoke for drunkards and broken warriors,
Of Sydney's streets in the Rare Old Times.
We sang his songs in joyful chorus,
And wildly laughed and laughed again,
No bloated, pompous party leader
Was safe from his incisive pen.

And proud to be a son of Erin,
He used her music and told her tales,
Of Ireland's exiles, her sons and daughters,
Who shaped the stories of New South Wales.
He sang of squatters at Parramatta,
Of murdered convicts at Castle Hill,
Of Carlingford's sweet creeks and orchards,
Of poverty at Erskineville

Hail and farewell you dread school master,
Whose twinkling eyes belied your frown,
They'll miss your whistle down there by Central,
Old busking Bard of Sydney Town.
While there's a pint upon the table,
While friends are singing bold and strong,
While horses race and bat meets leather,
Someone will sing a Dengate song. (repeat last 2 lines)

John Warner © September 2013

Author's note:

Carrifergus is strongly associated with Declan Affley, one of John's close friends.

After Declan's death, I noted frequently that if I or any other sang that song when John was present, he'd sketch a quiet toast in Declan's memory.

I use this tune to celebrate that historical continuity and place both men firmly in the ancient tradition of the bards of Ireland.