AEMSC 2022:

What a year Twenty, Twenty Two has been,

At our last gathering, I was not to be seen.

Gary Minch, in my absence, took it upon himself,

To read you poetry, that cometh, from the top shelf.

But despite some covid Twenty One pain,

We were back, celebrating our gathering again.

Well, the old year disappeared, New Year came,

But just like before it was much the same.

The sun hardly shone, clouds gathered, it drizzled rain,

The water was warm, and we could stand the pain.

Tropical lows, hovered around the coast,

Giving swells about which, board riders could boast.

While the king tides and rising swell

Brought sand into our dressing sheds, bloody hell!

Car park, playground lawn, and road covered with sand,

Please tell me, what is happening to this land.

It was the talk of many, …. Well, some,

If we thought it was bad, there was more to come.

Early February with crutches, saw your poet return,

Though he got around, there was no energy to burn.

Something that concerned him and gave no Joy,

Missing that day was the best conversationalist, …Leroy.

Though the following week this dog did look twice,

Before he started barking, which was normal and nice.

From a drought, when dams were gasping for water,

Animals were taken from their yards for slaughter.

La Nina was soon in full swing dropping rain all around

Even when it was sunny, moisture was left in the ground.

Another deluge followed, it was quite a shock,

Some of the cliff collapsed, to finish on our amenities block.

There was another collapse further to the south,

Leaving a big slip area and many with a gaping mouth.

Council was quick to react, closing the pathway behind,

The alternative was to use the footpath we did find.

Close inspection of this area, we could say for sure,

Was a little Irish, we now have the cliffs of Austin Mohr.

Early June was another time that we gave three cheers,

The first alignment of 5 planets for a thousand years.

Twenty Third of June was to star gazers a real boon, for Mercury,

Venus, Mars, Jupiter & Saturn were joined by a crescent moon.

This is said to be next visible, in Twenty forty,

Not quite a thousand years, perhaps a little bit naughty.

The winter solstice happens in June, when some of our regulars

To Tasmania go, swimming naked to shrivel like a prune.

Those that stayed behind and was not one of them,

Offered support by jumping in the pool at six PM.

There has been no confirmation if they swam in the altogether,

Surely, they would have, it was the right type of weather.

With winter well underway, members take off to warmer clime,

Then sent in photos of themselves, swimming in waters sublime.

Jane and David to Huskisson, with water sitting at 14 degrees,

Lisa to Kinchega and Cawndilla lake, wherever they may be.

Jake took in Bowen, while Cookie swum in the Shetland isles UK,

At Skaw, northern most accessible beach and a river, in the one day.

Kay and Geoff finished in Fujsawa on the beach in Japan,

A holiday thoroughly enjoyed, which had taken a long time to plan.

It must have been relaxation of the covid rule,

Allowing many of our crew to leave Austinmer and Thirroul.

Let’s look at where in Australia, our members may be,

The Kimberly’s, Perth, Yallingup, Kangaroo Island and Menindee.

Whilst others have travelled abroad to swim in places grand,

Like Lake St. Clair, Maldives, Fiji, Bali, London and Iceland.

There is changing demographics, occurring in the AEMSC,

The first of the morning swimmers now are female, all three.

Next are The fab five, but reduced to the fantastic four,

Though Jane, Liesel and Frank often beat us out the door.

And who was it, when in the pool, felt something sting,

It was an octopus, but not one with a blue ring.

It was in July when torrential rain was pelting down,

700mm was registered at various sites around our town.

The pool became dirty, while turbidity reading, numbered ten,

Deterred some people who we only see now and then.

As the rain abated, back to the pool our swimmers came,

Saying, “if it happened again, they would do the same.”

September saw a film crew at the pool, cameras side by side,

The woman was dressed in white, not sure if she was the bride.

Despite our suggestions and the water looking fine,

Even with a rising sun we couldn’t tempt them into the brine.

The biggest event to hit Wollongong was three years in the making,

Many people were against it, while others thought it breathtaking.

“Union Cyclysts International,” bike riders who travel the Globe,

Racing each other over a week, while wearing lycra from a wardrobe.

On separate days both ladies and men crossed the Sea Cliff bridge,

Following the roadway nestled below the escarpment ridge.

Our members, on those special days, to Austi beach, they strode,

Cheering and clapping, as past our pool, the cyclists rode.

Helicopters filming from above, gave our members some glee,

Believing they would appear on TV screens for all the world to see.

Come October we left behind winter, water reaching a 14 low

Temperature had risen to 18 bathing caps were now for show.

All it took was another low pressure, giving us some more rain,

When the water temperature rocketed down to 15 again.

On October 11, on arrival we near choked and gagged,

Our lovely dressing sheds, by vandals, had been tagged.

They spent some considerable time having their fun,

Wollongong council were advised and tagging quickly undone.

For the first time, I had finished this year’s poem in advance,

Pleased with myself, that it was done, nothing left to chance.

Then in October the news we had all been waiting for, came to hand,

The land and environment court rejected development on THAT land.

Over two years of opposition to plans from relatives Forte,

Those wise persons said NO to 78 apartments, you’re getting nought!

There was jubilation all round, you could hear the cheering in Thirroul,

Which carried over Kennedy Hill and out to Austinmer pool.

The last item to mention was thought to be a deadly attack,

When bluebottles in the pool wrapped around Mark’s back.

You could hear him scream as he pulled the tail from his torso

Running to the dressing sheds and still screaming but more so.

All were pleased to hear from Jo the next day,

That after a few hours Mark settled, as the pain went away.

Again, we are gathered, in the clubhouse at Austinmer,

While this poem is read for you all to hear.

Christmas is coming so very fast, as is New Year,

Let’s raise our glass and wish each other good cheer.

**Another Roscoe original 24/11/2022**