AN EMAIL TO NARDOO

Nardoo station was gripped by drought in 2003. They'd been feeding out cotton waste to two mobs of sheep one hundred and fifty kilometres apart for six months, so husband and wife had hardly seen each other. They were only back together because one mob had to be sacrificed as the feed ran out. They badly needed a holiday. Still, this fourth generation family provided great bush hospitality to a visiting poet. The next day I was astounded at the difference with Canaervon Gorge national park, and its waist high grass. So I penned a holiday invitation.....

To the crew at Nardoo station it's time to quit the drought,
Canaervon Gorge waits cool and still, so best you come on out.
The creeks are flowing crystal clear, green grass up to your waist,
you might forget ten thousand ewes that died out on your place.

Now some would load the ute up with a picnic and some hams,
but I advise the road train with a thousand starving lambs.
They must all need a mighty feed; this park here's short on stock,
and without you they'd all flounder and the bushfires burn the lot.

There's a hose down stop at Roma, you can wash the sheep 'fore bed,
the fleece round here are clean and white, not outback dirty red,
shampoo and blow dry the dripping lambs if you want them to fit in,
all sleek and fat's the go 'round here, not flyblown, drawn and thin.

Tie marker flags upon their backs and try to watch their track,
they keep the grass so thick and tall, you'll never get them back.
Hold hard the Kelpies by the mob so the changes won't surprise them,
or they'll go muster goats instead 'cos they won't recognise 'em.

Now the water here is funny 'cos it's lost that sulphur smell,
and it don't feel soft and slimy so bring lots of soap as well.
And after just three minutes, don't throw people out the shower,
the locals swear it's legal here to soak for half an hour!
Here comes a might thunderstorm - you remember hearing rain?
It's the stuff that shifts your topsoil to your neighbours place again.
So don't dance naked in it or you'll make the tourists stare,
just grit your teeth and looked relaxed as if you couldn't care.

Then when its time to head back home, you'll need a second rig,
Two groaning road trains just to hold your lambs as fat as pigs.
If they disdain they dry Paroo, and ask how they'll stay fat,
the boys will all be wethers soon and that will fix up that.

Now you're the ones with fancy sheep, the wheel it has full turned,
the shearers wryly smile and ask "will that be cut or permed?"
Those ewes so spoilt will hate the dirt, the muster will be taxing,
and when you think the crutching's done, they'll want bikini waxing!