

# Armadillo Dreaming

Bob Morrow

The dying creek has sunk between the causeway stones,  
an actor slinking backstage from a show that's failed.  
Pipes gasp for irrigation water, dream of floods.  
Pumps hold their tongues.

High on the bank – layered silt of centuries –  
the 1890 woolshed has collapsed:  
bleached splintered wooden bones,  
dull silver carapace of corrugated iron,  
giant armadillo stranded in a prehistoric drought.  
Rusted by the dust, a row of shearers' quarters  
like cells in a lock-up or an outback monastery  
wait in vain for vanished inmates.  
Flapping flyscreens trawl the wind,  
crow's croak trickles into silence.

Beside the drying creek bed a canoe tree stands,  
the lines around the shape etched on its trunk  
as clean now as the day the bark was cut,  
back when the show still played,  
before the armadillo came to die.

Bob Morrow began to write poetry in 2003, while on a visit to Ireland searching for his ancestors. A keen body-surfer, he divides his time between Melbourne, the bush and a Bass Strait beach. 