

Jeff Guess

## COUNTRY TOWN

Dreaming of permanence  
it never meant to end like this:  
the old road of dusty sunshine  
now a dark thick tongue of bitumen,  
old rusted verandahs  
never got a chance to shadow —  
now in landfill  
with their counterparts  
of ruined sheds and fences  
bottles and bedsteads.  
Still an idle traffic goes on  
in shops and businesses,  
that same sauntering  
the Progress Association would  
deem the steady forward pulse  
of prosperity.  
But the bank is gone  
and the original emporium  
a "bush tucker" restaurant for tourists.  
Few things remain,  
only what's left over:  
routines folded into  
yellowed cook books lie forgotten.  
Some things still trail a transience  
but neglect is legion.  
Deeper:  
a red gum post across  
from the post office  
survives the accidents of removal;  
old Dave's lunchtime pie  
and donut from the deli;  
a small ancient orchard  
of white fleshed peaches.  
And on the last Friday night  
of the month

the historical society  
reinventing the past  
trying to put this place back together  
the way it never was.