

Fire

October 2023

Mesmerised

End of a full day of activity
Feeling muddy, achy and tired.
The body is feeling exhausted
But the mind is buzzing, it's wired.

Pioneer Camp full of us teens
Learning skills that we'll never use.
Working as a team to solve the problems
Not caring I've got yet another bruise.

We all need to settle down now, get ready
For sleep time in that great bell tent.
So it's time to light the big fire
And discuss how the day has been spent.

Mesmerised by the leaping flames
Shooting up into the night time sky.
Feeling the warmth on my now cool skin
As we reflect on the day gone by.

Marshmallows are stuck on sticks
Toasted over that roaring heat.
Slightly burnt but oh so perfect
As our end of the day little treat.

We all sing a little campfire song,
Attempt to do it as a round.
Our voices combining with the crackling fire
Make the most wonderfully beautiful sound.

Those flames seem to entrance me
As I watch them flicker and leap.
Their beauty and power enthrall me.
I'm relaxing, now ready for sleep.

Time to put out our beautiful bonfire,
Douse those wonderful flames away.
So sad to see them diminish
But it's been a perfect end to a perfect day.

© Rosemary Brown 2023

Fire

The colour of flames, Red, Orange, Gold and the crackle of burning wood,
Excite senses and warn of danger in the air.

Man has forever loved the colours and made pictures in the mind gazing at flames,
In moments of relaxation on cold and wintry nights which can spark a sense of danger,
A trigger or a wire.

Fire is our friend for succour, comfort and warmth and utilised for cooking too.
Danger curls in brutalised man, and fire can kill and maim, destruct our life and land,
So beware of fire is it friend or foe?

© Irene Derwent 2023

Fireworks and pumpkin pie

There we are, on a cold bonfire-night in a field in Loxley,
Under a black cloudy sky and high sprays of exploding lights and whistling rockets,
With overbearing officials in high-visibility jackets,
Who fly into action spouting 'health and safety',
Just to say "Sorry people, those sparklers are'nt allowed".
So the children's brief joy is trodden into the cold wet ground
(Removing the blindingly Non-existent danger to the crowd).
We stand by and watch, impotent; traditions and innate love of fire,
Kept at some anonymously-determined safe distance,
And we are all homogenised spectators of our unspectacular lives,
Who just might, perchance,
Erupt into a mad dance,
A wicca'dly naked run around a fire in a field....
Alas, no, we didn't.

So, there we were, stood in the wrong queue for hot baked potato (with cheese).
The wrong queue was for hot dogs (with onions)- can we join the other queue please?
The bonfire, made from pallets (of all things), doesn't honour bright Belenus at all
A bonfire without a cheek-burning heat is no bonfire at all.
There's heat in the coffee our Jan serves from the hot drinks stall,
Under electric light from the noisy generator that powers it all.
And in the darkening field, the bonfire safely dies.
The entirety of its brief sad life reflected in the children's sad empty eyes.
Then a hopeful old man with sad whiskers and plugs in his ears,
Starts going on about how Labour's health and safety is ruining his life, he fears.
And then Laurie and Zoe arrive, so he turns back to his life that knows no laughter,
(i guess).
And their hugs are so warm and their smiles are bright.
We all walk to the pub and talk, and laugh, and eat chips (with melted cheese),
Then we drive over to Jan's but we can't stay the night,
So she brings out a pumpkin pie that she's baked for us that day.
We ate it, hot with fried potato and baked beans, the day after.

© thom Sefton 2023

Granny's Fireplace

The cheerful fire glows and speaks to me, flames of red green and blue cast their spell,
In my Granny's black-leaded fireplace.

This hub of the home had nurtured all, used for cooking bread and meat,
On the trivet sat the black kettle, source of endless cups of tea.

A home of small pleasures which had sheltered the bairns,
8 children had been raised and now she was all alone,
But my granny was a treasure, always happy when I called,
And we had fun as we toasted bread on the end of a fork.
Delicious butter and so it was difficult to go.

© Irene Derwent 2023

Fire

Remember, remember the 5th of November
Well I can recall when a child
We'd build up a fire at the end of the garden
The weather always seemed to be mild

My sister and I and the young boy next door
Had been round and about finding wood
And fearing the locals might pinch it
We'd hide it as best as we could

Mum made toffee apples, there'd be Yorkshire parkin
And bottles of beer for the chaps
With potatoes to roast in the base of the fire
Pails of water in case of mishaps

We'd saved up for weeks for a special firework
But only to find it a dud
So my uncle set about it with a red hot gas poker
Then it lit and my word it was good

We had sparklers to write out our names with
Roman candles and catherine wheels
And rockets galore, jumping crackers and more
But now the date no longer feels

As exciting as then. Times have changed for us all
But the memories still never end
Though the grown ups are gone,
Thoughts of them linger on Of the times round a fire with friends

© Jean Ellis 2023

Fire in our street

There's a fire in our street and everyone's on their feet
 It's lit up the night and set us all running
 Running to catch it bursting out of number five's front room
 Boom! That's the window - exploding
 Fingers of flame climbing the wall like a shoal of salamander
 A line of dads're running a chain of buckets, quick thinking
 We watch, young mouths open, eyes flickering
 The mother's screaming but the kids are all safe
 Father's at the Bull, serving up a skinfull, someone's gone to fetch him.
 There he is, coming round the corner, running
 His face is revealing; Tell him, tell him! - The kids are all safe.
 Thank God
 Next door's Watersons are outside complaining, their wall is so hot
 The wallpaper's curling and their house is all they've got
 There's a flush of anger in their faces, feeling the heat
 This is really happening, tonight, right here, in our street.

Next day and the shell's all charred, dead embers sopping
 The Waterson's place was spared a drubbing
 One of the kids married a ciggy with a cushion
 And that, as they say, was that
 But the kids are gone - to live in some uncle's flat
 The windows are boarded in flat brown ply, number five's been given a soot-black eye
 We didn't see them all for quite some time but they did return and start over again
 And the fire that lived and died, right there, in our street
 I remember now with vague images, all faded and barely connected
 But still something momentous that happened one night, all those years back then.

© thom Sefton 2023

Cosy

I used to watch the flames dancing on the logs on the fire
 The autumn colours, flickering brown and yellow,
 with touches of blue.
 How does such beautiful, calm colours produce such heat?
 From
 A pile of dried wood stored in a shed to keep it drier
 Will they, unused, serve to stop tides rising-is that true?
 Can one small gesture create a universal feat?
 How
 Does my simple gesture save the doomed world
 From destruction, from fire or floods and total disaster?
 Will a banner in hopeless optimism, boldly unfurled,
 Ensure that the impending ending will come less faster?

© Dennis Alexander 2023