



THE MEMORIAL WALL

On a steamy Darwin February day
I stood beside the Wall,
Beyond the new museum's artificial air,
Surrounded by relics of a long-gone war –
A Wall of Memory.

Hundreds of shiny metal plaques
Upon a wall of stone,
Each tolling the death of one or more –
Perhaps the whole crew of an Allied plane –
Which ventured forth

From these, our far-off northern coasts,
But never did return.
Or a comrade working on the ground,
Fatally struck by an enemy bomb
While on duty there.

Or the sailors on ships in the harbour,
Some far out at sea;
Or men unloading ships ashore,
Surprised by menacing shapes above;
No escape for some.

Army men sweating and doing their best
Under a blazing sky,
Sighting their guns on the planes up high
While others were strafing them down low;
The gunners stood fast.

There are women's names as well as men's
Recorded on that wall;
Civilians among the servicemen,
And people who came from far-off lands;
All serving to the end.

We who survived and those who follow
Heed the lesson of that wall.
Should days of danger come again,
Emulate the deeds recorded here
On this Memorial Wall.

But, above all,
First strive for peace.

BOB ANDREW 2017