

tears from Gwernfyda

It's the year 2002
and I'm sitting beside the fire in a house in Wales
timber-framed in Welsh oak in 1552
and I'm thinking back nearly fifty years
to a day at Maralinga under Australian skies
and I'm asking myself the questions
that I've asked so many times before
who were we?
why were we there?
and who sanctioned it?
and were the Aboriginal people asked
before their land was blown to smithereens?
and were kangaroos and wallabies torn limb from limb?
were mulga trees incinerated and birds and lizards vapourised?
and had anyone in authority thought about the aftermath?
and did the nuclear cloud rain radiation over Alice Springs?
and was anything learned for the benefit of mankind from all these things?
and does the list of questions . . . like the fireball and the growing cloud . . .
grow greater as the years pass by?
and is there a list of answers of comparable length?
and if not why not?
or has everything that was done that day
been swept away? forgotten?