

For Bruce Bennett

Julian Croft

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That conference at our last time together
Was of Peace and War at Gallipoli.
We climbed the Nek in cold Autumnal weather,
Stood at Lone Pine, took in the holy
Sights of futile sacrifice and wondered,
As thousands have before and will again,
Those Balaclava words 'someone had blundered',
And youth and hope was once more lost in vain.
We're told that Anzac made our nation,
That we're the proud inheritors of loss,
And each step we've made is one more station
Of its apotheosis on the Southern Cross.
One thing you've done, despite our constant wars,
Is open windows to a peace, not theirs, but yours.

Julian Croft (born 31 May 1941) is an Australian poet and Emeritus Professor of English, University of New England. He was a founder of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature and co-edited its journal, *Notes and Furphies* for many years. In addition to gathering prizes for his published poems he has written widely across genres and academic themes