Symptoms of Homesickness

Being brought to tears by Paul Kelly songs.
Never having a dream set outside Australia,
Even when you’ve lived in half a dozen countries.
Craving VB, pasties, Minties and Vegemite.
Missing the sound of Richie Benaud’s voice
And the Wide World of Sports theme music.
Buying every book about Australia or by an Australian
That you ever come across in second-hand bookstores.
Owning an Akubra hat, a didgeridoo and a boomerang
Even though you have no use for any of them.
Wearing a Wallabies jersey to pubs that show rugby
And insisting on calling every one you meet “mate.”
Having an Australian flag in your office, in front
Of your house, or tattooed somewhere on your body.
Looking for the Southern Cross in the night sky.
Reading Australian newspapers online every morning.
Yearning for a Christmas at the beach with the reliex.
Filling your iPod with Chisel, the Oils and Hunnas.
Getting up at three a.m. to watch the Tri-Nations,
The Ashes, the Commonwealth Games or the Grand Final.
Drinking Fosters, even though you don’t rate it.
Ordering fish and chip at faux British and Irish pubs
Because it’s as close as your gonna get.
Playing cricket in the snow on Australia Day.
Keeping a bottle of eucalyptus oil to smell
When the pain is almost too much to bear.
Wondering how much it costs to fly a body home.

Nathanael O’Reilly