Estuary -- The epic of how we saved the Bay

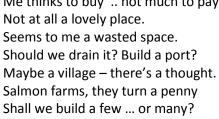
By a true Ralphie

A duologue for two speakers.. Oh and a commentator



Opportunity knocks!

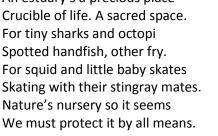
Shallow, muddy, windblown bay Me thinks to buy .. not much to pay. (Land developer)





(Ralphie)

An estuary's a precious place Crucible of life. A sacred space. For tiny sharks and octopi Spotted handfish, other fry. For squid and little baby skates Skating with their stingray mates. Nature's nursery so it seems





Develop! That's the way.

Take over nature! Wreck the bay! We'll dig canals and mansions build. Those little critters have to yield. We greedy humans we come first. Great buildings built to slack our thirst.



But that's not all. There're seabirds too. They've flown a million miles to you. Godwits and the red necked stint A threatened species. Worth a mint! Black capped plovers. Oh! And yoiks! Grebes and herons, one thousand poiks Those cheeky devils black and white With orange beaks their food to spike.

They're here to rest and feed and breed Loving care is what they need. Not a plan for relocation Because we've wrecked their habitation In the name of reclamation. Don't send those birdies to damnation.

(Commentator)

Came the Twitchers! Twitchers swooped from everywhere To save the birds of shore and air. They perched or waded by the shore Priscilla Queen of birds for sure. Birdy Eric said "Not fair!" They tweeted lots and what is more. The birdies knew. Of that I'm sure.









Warning! (Ralphie)

Potential RAMSA now at stake
The estuary's not yours to take!
We must rally for the birds
Not to act would be absurd.

Still twitchers twitched in deep despair Until Priscilla said "There! There! We'll demonstrate to show we care."

Battle lines!

(Commentator)

Battle lines were duly drawn! Placards waved in frosty dawn

Both sides faced off. No peace in sight We'd set ourselves a ten year fight.

Standoff!

(Ralphie)

We met and organised our group
A small but dedicated troop.
The erstwhile Ralphies we became
Our lives would never be the same

Late nights, big plans, some mystic tantra "Save Ralphs Bay" became our mantra.

Hard work ...

(Ralphie)

Thomas flexed his digits
And a Ralphie web he wove
Gill stood by to help him
It became a treasure trove
Of stuff to read and how to help
Of things to buy and points of view
Emails sent out late at night.
Supporters came. Our numbers grew.

Bren and Rach hit Salamanca
Bren the maker, Rach the banker.
Set up a stall to make some dough.
As market folk they're in the know.
Spruiked their stuff to all and sundry
Made lots'a dough to bank on Mondey.

Gathering evidence.. Science experts work pro bono

(Commentator)

A pile of writing. Stuff that they know

Evidence of many sorts

Ready for commissions, courts.

And the enemy....

(Commentator)

The other side was courting too
To gain support from all of you.
Glitzy mock ups of our bay
Choked with houses of the day.
One could wager either way
Pollies grouped as we expected
The council's views were not neglected.

Community Action

(Ralphie)

We worked our little hearts out Stayed up late at night

And every day more people came

They came to help us fight.

Each brought their own heartfelt submission

Address - the RPD Commission.













Final hours .. Cassy sat in parliament

(Commentator) To raise awareness her intent.

Pollies grouped. Some crossed the floor. The council came but not much more.

T'was largely left to us to do. Jane and Jess and others too.

One can't dismiss the sense of doom

As RPDC hearings loomed.

The Hearings (Commentator)

Boffins met in suit and gown. We all stood up. They all sat down Then came discussions diametric. The little court room was electric Big corporate dollars now at stake Others too a quid to make.

Madam Defage was there as Noela Excited! We could scarce control 'er With pen and ink pot, notebook too Record the lot .. That's what she'll do.

Days later .. (Commentator)

Debate now over . Time to speak.
The panel gave their wigs a tweek.
Transfixed we sat to hear our fate.
For the Bay it's now too late ????
Wigged heads wagged and some de-wigged
The spokesman spoke. Not one reneged.

At last .. (Ralphie)

We could not believe our ears
The court erupted with our cheers
The poiks can keep their precious bay.
The Ralphies had just saved the day

The developers? I hear you say. All they could do was slink away.

GRM's oillage tales







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