Brij Over Troubled Waters

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Read out in February 2013, at the function to thank Brij Lal when he stepped down from his role as Acting Director of CHL.

In 2012 we were sorely perplexed:
our Director was gone; we awaited the next.
Ken George was appointed, but till he was here
how would we survive a long leaderless year?
Then, when all was confusion, and none could find peace
an intrepid captain stepped up at the crease.
He could bat like Tendulkar and out-bowl Patel
when it came to defending our Team CHL.
He dealt with our crises with patience and humour
(assisted of course by the wisdom of Huma).
He knew about budgets, RTS and RIBG
and could argue our case with the powers that be,
But even more crucial (I know you’ll agree)
was the way he promoted the School Morning Tea.
His burden was heavy and painful at times
(almost as painful as some of these rhymes)
but we’re endlessly grateful for all that he’s done,
for (if you will forgive the obvious pun)
he’s served as our bridge over wild stormy seas
with his warm human touch and his calm expertise.
So lift up your glasses and give a big cheer
For a match-winning innings throughout the past year.
From Suva to Seoul to the Suez Canal
there’s no leader like our own captain, Brij Lal.
Glossary

CHL  School of Culture, History and Language, College of Asia and the Pacific, The Australian National University

RTS  Research Training Scheme. A grant given to domestic students undertaking a higher degree at an Australian university

RIBG  A Research Infrastructure Block Grant is described, in the weasel words of the funding body, as being dispensed ‘on a calendar year basis, to eligible Australian higher education providers (HEP) to maintain and strengthen Australia’s knowledge base and research capabilities by developing an effective research and research training system’ (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, ‘Research Infrastructure Block Grants.’ Online: education.gov.au/research-infrastructure-block-grants (accessed 13 December 2016)).