



Acts of Kindness

Living in the 70's

With a pun and a nod to Shirl (RIP) and *Skyhooks* in my title and focus, permit me to share what I am experiencing as I live my encore years past my main career arc – my 70's. Perhaps it is my 73-birthday approaching – happy birthday Sagittarians! – which has prompted this rumination.

Pleasing myself as to the way I spend my day, is the first liberty of my 70's worthy of commenting upon, and which I am embracing whole-heartedly! As a retired career Secondary School English Teacher, not having to respond to bells or times for class beginning and ending, is sheer heaven. If one is to take any notice of astrology, the Sagittarian is a freedom lover. How on earth then did I manage to last that long in such a structured system (probably more a comment upon star signs as 'reliable' personality profilers than it is on me and my career choice!) Let me say that I flourished within the Education system, finding within its parameters, within my classroom, just the right amount of space to be entirely myself, companioned as I was by young hearts and minds. Still, choosing when I want to be in company, and when I would rather be in solitude, is releasing!

Looking out my window and deciding when to walk (is the sun out?) is another great pleasure. Recently too, I have taken to 'rucking' which is my concession to ageing bones and the need to monitor bone density. With a backpack loaded with the equivalent of 5 kilograms – (cans of fruit and vegies wrapped in a towel!) – wrist and ankle weights and dumbbells equivalent to another 5 kilograms – I set out! I aim to do this twice a day (loosely and fondly I call it my dawn and dusk walks). I really enjoy them, and I am grateful for the continued ability to 'stretch my limbs.' Sights and sounds and the people I greet and some that I chat to (see Lindsay and the Magpies; the Boy in the Window and My Yarn Group as examples) provide connection and a feeling of community.

The inner peace I have found, having created my personal manifesto and intentionally living it – admittedly with all the human frailties I am subject to co-existing but not dominating – is a large part of my living and flourishing in my 70's. I find I am no longer victim to the myriad of concerns that formerly assaulted me. By doing my manifesto work, and in effect revealing my *raison d'être*, to myself, I am able to withstand that assault, knowing, accepting, and loving that self for all its imperfections. This knowledge, this practice, is my understanding of the axiom: 'There is nowhere for us to arrive at, but there is a way to be' (one of our My Manifesto Inspirational Cards).

I have found my way to be, living in my 70's.