

[Keeping in Touch - 19 April 2020](#)

Good morning all

Another week bites the dust, interesting times they certainly are, people seem to be going back in time 40, 50, 60 years. Not in age, but in the ways of amusing themselves and their families. Toys, board games, jig saws, and the like, are running out of stores like toilet rolls did from supermarkets. Whilst electronic gadgetry may be still in favour for some, old fashioned amusement options seem to be making a big come back in these times of isolation. Maybe people are finding the need to use their imagination in a more stimulating way as they while away the hours, instead of being fed mindlessly from a T.V. screen. I feel life will never be the same again, slowed down, yes, altered in some way, yes, maybe it will be for best, who knows. (Sorry for those who have suffered though).

Thank you to those of you who have sent contributions in, very much appreciated.

Don't forget, If any of you are, or you know someone who is feeling the strain of isolation, make contact , phone/email, or go to the end of the street, take a deep breath , and yell your heart out. There is know need to suffer in silence.

Ros Gates has kindly sent some amusing scenes for your enjoyment. (Click on screenshots below) Thanks Ros.

Also Julie Nadya has kindly sent in a essay she wrote whilst doing her TEE recently at age 50 . Clever Lady. Maybe it will jog your memory about something that happened in your childhood.

The Wattle Tree

My wattle tree, a magnificent and lofty specimen, stood tall and proud in our back yard. It was behind our home and slightly to one side of our very large country block. Its greyish-brown bark was rough, but its branches were wide and accommodating, as though cradling me in its huge arms, safe and sound from the perils of day to day living carried on at its

base. This tree was my haven where I fled when I had displeased my mother or father. I could safely climb to lofty heights to escape boring homework on balmy autumn days. Those afternoons I would be perched in the green canopy, pretending to be on the lookout for a pirate ship searching for a treasure island, an Indian scout looking for any dangers ahead, or on safari in Africa waiting for elephants or giraffe to appear.

I could sit amid this splendid backdrop and peer down upon the neighbourhood. I could see my mother as she hung out the washing, pruned the roses or called to my father, “Cuppa’s ready love”. Next door I could see Mr Bryce, short and fat, waddling to tend his vegetables, while Mrs Bryce, short and thin, cared for her prized cyclamens. There were geese, honking away as they fed in another neighbour’s yard, as well as a lone horse that pranced elegantly in his enclosure. Some days I would be there as the sun went down, bathing the clouds, sky, my tree and even me in its glorious colours of red, orange, yellow, pink and purple.

Our back yard had the usual rotary clothes hoist, a wood shed, bike shed and Dad’s tool shed, where he spent a lot of time on weekends. From my green canopy the “go-cart” track we children had made looked like a snake, winding its way through the apple

and peach trees, past the chook's yard, around the grape vines and down to the bubbling brook at our back fence. In the two properties adjoining ours, I watched where that brook formed a glistening lake. In spring and summer we canoed on that lake and some even swam, those who were game enough to chance the great fat leeches that lurked in the watery depths.

One neighbour, Mr James, a builder, had his huge sheds and construction yard in the rear of his property. Workmen came and went all day long, scurrying in and out, hammering, sawing, drilling, building. They were rather like the ants in my tree that also came and went, up and down, always busy and although the ants were small, I was always careful not to sit in their path, as they gave a painful nip on the bare legs of the unwary.

My wattle tree's leaves were not fat and shiny. They were small, soft and feathery. Their blue-grey colour was a perfect complement to the brilliant, fluffy balls of yellow flowers that covered it in its entirety every spring. The bees would come then, dozens upon dozens, buzzing from blossom to blossom until their legs were fat with golden pollen. They would fly off rather unsteadily, overburdened and slightly intoxicated with their bounty. Birds safely nested

here bringing their young to adulthood. Wood doves, honey-eaters, magpies, sparrow-like birds and Willy-Wag tails were all regulars, with an occasional visit from crows or a laughing kookaburra. Nomadic parrots, cockatoos and galahs also utilised its branches.

My wattle tree had never looked lovelier, a huge golden ball of blossom, as in that spring of the huge storm. That fateful day, a Friday, I had battled home from school against strong, gusty winds that threatened to blow me from my shaking bike. Clouds were scudding overhead, becoming blacker and blacker while great bolts of lightning could be seen in the distance. I flung open our back door and raced inside just ahead of the rain that clattered onto our tin roof. It was so noisy I could scarcely hear my mother as she hugged me to her, saying, “Gee, I’m glad you’re home. We’re in for a beauty”.

The great black clouds closed over us and lightning flashes came brighter and brighter. The lights flickered on and off threatening to go out with each new burst. Thunderclaps followed each burst of lightening and we counted the seconds, twelve, then ten, then nine, until the boom of thunder followed, trying to gauge how close the storm was. The poor old dog was in the corner of the kitchen howling his

song of terror as the thunder boomed. Then there came a flash, electric blue-white in its brilliance, with a simultaneous and explosive “crack” of thunder. The windows rattled, cups and plates shook, the whole house rumbled. My father shouted above the din, “Hell, I think that hit something”.

Next morning pale sunlight showed us the worst. My wattle tree had taken a direct hit. It was torn apart and lay dead on the ground.

Within minutes children arrived from all over the district on their bikes, in their carts, on foot. They arrived on their own, in groups, even whole families, to see the tree hit by lightning. They swarmed into the downed limbs, picking huge bunches of the golden blossoms to take home.

Later more people arrived, friends and neighbours, to help with the mammoth task of clearing it all away. The back yard buzzed for hour after hour with the chain saws as men and boys toiled. The kitchen buzzed also, a hive of activity as mothers prepared refreshments. My tree was gone, but still such activity persisted around it.

As I helped my father stack some logs away, he put his arm around my shoulder and spoke softly, “Your old friend will warm our toes next winter. What do you think about putting a tennis court in that space”?

What a lovely story, thanks Julie .Anybody else got a story to tell , I’m sure there must be some out there, please send them in so everyone can enjoy them .

I meant to mention last week, what a beautiful couple Wally and Fran looked on their wedding day . The photo in the Bulletin was beautiful , haven’t changed that much either. Well done Wally and Fran.

Stay safe, Stay well.

Cheers

Stuart.

I mean ... How fast was that kid going 🤪



New public benches have arrived



Well its official.. I finally found Rock Bottom



JUST CHECKING TO SEE



IF Y'ALL DOING ALRIGHT