

A Time to Remember

Do you stand at the end of a year and look back on what you have accomplished? If you are in the last part of your life, as I am, I often look back at the year past and all the years before that.

I have not had many goals in life. Initially, in school, I wanted to get the best exam results I could. Later after my first marriage collapsed my sole goal was to find work that would allow me to support my family. So pretty basic. I've often wondered if I should have aimed for more but at the time those simple goals used up all my strength and ability.

Now in my elder years my personal goals are still fairly simple; keep as healthy as possible, read interesting books, find happiness in arts and crafts, have enjoyable times with my friends. I have some family difficulties that I cannot solve and that take a lot of energy, but aside from that I mostly enjoy my family.

You never stop learning! This little collagraph print results from nostalgia for childhood holidays by the lakes of the north (in Ontario that's not too far north). And it is the result of an interesting teaching video on Youtube. A collagraph is a varnished collage that is inked up and printed on nice paper, but in this case instead of a paper collage the textures are built up using different types of acrylic media. I made a little series of collagraphs illustrating a childhood camping song 'Land of the Silver Birch'. This one, when printed, turned out best. I printed with black ink and when the print was dry coloured parts with aquarelle pencils.

It is an unfortunate truth of modern life that as you age the internet helps to keep you connected with family and friends. It also opens up a world of interesting things to learn. And if you are disabled and can't get to the library or to your clubs or groups or other activities it is invaluable.



Many years ago, more than twenty, I was the NZ Quaker representative to Australia Yearly Meeting. It was held in Hobart that year. I look back on that trip with real pleasure for what I saw and experienced in Tasmania. It was all brought back to me when I read 'The Angry Women's Choir' by Meg Bignell. The Hobart Friend I stayed with for several days after AYM took several visitors for trips around the area and out into the countryside. We went up to the top of Mt Wellington and then along the Derwent valley to a park where we saw the tallest gum trees and amazing tree ferns. During the YM one of the excursions was to the Royal Botanical gardens. I still have memories of the trees and flowers. I confess I don't remember any of the people, but the trees, Oh yes.

The book is fiction but it is so well planted in Hobart and in Tasmania that you feel the truth of the story. It's the truth of women's lives mainly— life, death, family, love, hate, assault, friendship, betrayal, illness, health—the main character is a little too good, energetic and smart to be quite believable to ordinary, un-energetic me, but she suffers as much as her friends for various reasons. The problems of the modern female culture affects all women.

The solutions to the problems are only what we can do now, with the resources we have now. Religion has had effect in the early lives of two of the characters in the story. R C in both cases. Communion with nature is much more positive in the story as is music and art. This is one of a number of really good stories I have read in 2024.

Music is another matter—I have had tinnitus and I find having music on helps me to ignore the sand pery noise.

It's a long story but maybe ten years ago or so I bought the album Once in a Red Moon (Secret Garden) and first heard the song You Raise Me Up composed by Rolf Løvland, words Brendan Graham.

When I am down and, oh, my soul, so weary
When troubles come and my heart burdened be
Then I am still and wait here in the silence
Until You come and sit awhile with me

You raise me up so I can stand on mountains
You raise me up to walk on stormy seas
I am strong when I am on Your shoulders
You raise me up to more than I can be

You raise me up so I can stand on mountains
You raise me up to walk on stormy seas
I am strong when I am on Your shoulders
You raise me up to more than I can be

You raise me up (up) so I can stand on mountains (stand on mountains)
You raise me up to walk on stormy seas (stormy seas)
I am strong (I am strong) when I am on Your shoulders (ooh)
You raise me up to more than I can be

You raise me up (up) so I can stand on mountains (stand on mountains)
You raise me up to walk on stormy seas (stormy seas)
I am strong when I am on Your shoulders
You raise me up to more than I can be

You raise me up to more than I can be

Lately I have found some affinity with the song . Even though I don't personally believe in a human looking deity but only in 'spirit', the words still speak to me. I'm too old to stand on mountains but I can use all that the Spirit can help me with to live each day.

Yours in Friendship

Carril Karr

Sorry for the 'bitsy' letter today. My thoughts have not come together very well. Thinking about you all as I send out this letter. Carril

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