

Living In The Past

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By Anne Barrable



I know I'm living in the past - you may have heard me say that Colin calls me a Luddite. I have a mobile phone which sits on the end of my bed, and all I use it for is to receive a 'meaningful' text from my sister every evening - I don't send texts myself, and I don't use the computer, so I don't email.

What a simple, easy life I lead, but where would I be without Colin, who does all these things for me? My old-fashioned way of conversing is to write letters, which I enjoy, and do regularly to all my family and friends (but it's beginning to cost quite a lot in postage stamps!).

Getting back to my musing...

I often wonder what is politically correct or 'Health and Safety'-wise. People say "Anne, you can't say that!", or "You can't do that!", and I'm not being unkind or even thoughtless; it's just that things have changed so much over the years.

I remember as a child going to Warley Woods to pick huge bunches of bluebells, which completely flopped by the time I got home on the bus. Years later, as a Sunday School teacher in Chelmsford, I would go to Galleywood Common to pick Pussy Willow for the children to wave on Palm Sunday (Not sure if I should have done that even then!).

Going back to my Guiding days, when going off to camp we would all pile into the back of an open-backed lorry and ride with the tents and equipment. Then as a 16-year-old I went dancing in Romford every Saturday night and was never transported or collected to keep me safe – I went on the bus! I’m sure you have equally important memories of your own which you cherish.

Now, I confess I like watching repeats of ‘Heartbeat’ on the TV while preparing our evening meal. I know the storylines are sometimes silly, but I love the scenery, the 60’s music they play throughout, and I love the way the police are always in evidence, and the doctor is always on call whenever she is needed. So, you see, in many ways I love living in the past. Can anyone please help me to move on?

My recent contribution to our previous church’s magazine (I still write every month) was a rather negative article – ‘Where is the church going? People are not coming forward to take on jobs, etc.’

Then I read a piece from the Chief Executive of Evangelical Alliance^[1], and whilst I agree with some of what he was saying about how things have changed, and how ‘online church’ has its uses, especially for the housebound, I personally do not like sitting in my living room in front of the TV screen for a service. I believe an important part of worship is having others around me with whom I can share – is this yet another instance of me wanting to live in the past?

^[1] “Don’t Write Off The Church Just Yet” published in The Times 29th January 2022 – web version here: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/dont-write-off-the-church-just-yet-ldb053fp>

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