

As I See It by Joan Barnett

Down Memory Lane

Proverbs 17:6 NIV. Children's children are the crown to the aged and parents are the pride of their children.

When we start school, we usually make new friends. Over the years we often keep up those friendships whether we continue to live near one another or writing to each other if not. Modern technology is even quicker with e-mails and of course the telephone which enables us to keep up with all the news.

If we live at opposite ends of the country or in some cases another country altogether then meeting face to face proves more difficult.

One afternoon in December I was fortunate to have a visit from a couple of my friends from primary school. We have always been in contact and met up occasionally but had not seen each other for over 20 years. Peter started school before me but for a while we were in the same reception class, he remembers coming to my birthday party, oddly enough I do not! It was probably my 6th birthday! Margaret, Peter's wife, came to our school when she moved to Rustington aged eight. We were in the same class until we moved on to our respective secondary education.

Peter had suffered a stroke which left him sight impaired. His sister also had a stroke, they tend to run in their family. With Peter and Margaret living in Aberdeen and Peter's sister down south in Rustington where we all grew up, the prospect of a visit could have been an ordeal now only Margaret can do the driving.

The situation was soon sorted when their son, Daniel, volunteered to drive his parents down south for the visit. We so often hear items in the press to give the impression children could not care less about their parents and family. Of course, this is not the case and the majority of our children grow up to be caring and helpful when the need arises without having to be asked. The verse from Proverbs sums up these sentiments very well.

Before visiting us on their way back up north, Peter was able to visit his school friend from his high school days, another person with a visual impairment. Once they arrived at our home and were settled with coffee or tea Peter and I were careful not to dwell on sight loss difficulties and what help is available. Margaret did ask about my mobile phone which gave me the opportunity to demonstrate the Blindshell and how it has speech for everything. We have already dealt with many problems on our telephone conversations. Subjecting Margaret and Daniel, to an overload of gadget information would have been too much for them to have to listen to!

We spent a very pleasant couple of hours reminiscing about our schooldays and also the Methodist Church and Youth Fellowship to which we also belonged. As always when we meet our thoughts go back to Mr Will Flowerdew who ran the Sunday group and youth fellowship. He and his wife always made any members of the group most welcome at their home.