‘As Time Goes By’ Topics – February to May 2026

Our Aim

To have an enjoyable list of topics from which to build ‘slices of life’ stories for new and newer members,
to have an interesting list to challenge ‘old hands’, and choices across both lists for all
To have synergy between the topics chosen so that stories shared will blend well together in a two-hour session.
(Remember - you can always choose from either monthly topic, substitute an earlier topic or make up your own if you have writer’s block!)

Month	**Topics suggested for new/newer class members, or those who haven’t written on them in the past.**		**Topics suggested for returning members who have already written about the stories listed in the previous columns…**	
February 16	**‘New in Town’**	Have you ever been the new person in town? Or did someone else's arrival have a profound impact on you? Share your story in 500 words**.**	**‘This (…….) Life ‘**	Share with us a current or common preoccupation, using it as a theme to help us to get to know you better … Examples - ‘This (Downsizing) Life’ by an 80+ year old about planning to farewell loved home; ‘This (Number 8) Life’ about growing up as ‘Number 8’ in a family of nine children. Also – see our ‘This (….) Life’ stories!
	‘I Was There’	Have you experienced a significant news, historical or cultural event first-hand? Share your personal piece of history in 500 words.	**‘Triggers’**	Keep a notebook close by during the holiday break in which to note any ‘triggers’ which lead you to reminisce about a time in your lives. You may have been talking to someone, watching television or a film, driving somewhere, reading a book. Choose one to three of these - write about the memories evoked, keeping the total to 500 – 750 words.
			‘Memoir Review’	Review a memoir and share your thoughts with the class
March 16 ‘Influences’	**‘Someone Who Shaped Me’**	How did you become who you are? Think about someone who has influenced your life and start writing…	**‘Family influences’**	Your memoir doesn’t have to be gender specific, but as its International Women’s Day in March you could focus on women who have been influential in your life. Mothers often spring to mind. You might like to write your memoir as a ‘love letter’ telling the person of their impact on you… **‘Mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, ‘in-laws’, guardians’** Write about a close relative who was important in your life. What do you remember most about them? Set them in the context of their family history. What influenced their lives? Describe your relationship using your senses to recall a fond memory and reflect on the impact he or she made on your life.

April – **Moments that Matter…**	**'Memories Treasure Chest'**	Create/Draw upon an 'Memories Treasure Chest' in a shoe box, drawer or old case containing objects and artefacts that reflect your passions and enliven your memories, through scent and feel. Maps, menus, theatre programs, an old report card, vials of perfume, a garment, treasured photographs, a souvenir, an expired passport can sometimes trigger a work rich with detail. Select two items from the treasure chest as creative prompts – what do they mean to you? What were you doing, why; what were you thinking at the time this object related to your life? (250 words each object)	**'The Moment I Knew'**	Do you have a romantic realisation you'd like to share? From quiet domestic scenes to dramatic revelations, a chance to write about and share a story about the moment you knew you were in love. Tell us about the moment you knew … (Guardian series exploring romantic love and the moments we realise we have fallen in love. See - https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/series/the-moment-i-knew accessed 16.3.2025) **Alternative**… tell us about a 'moment you knew'… in a different context…
			'If Only I'd Known …'	Tell us about a time when, on reflection, if only you'd known (….), your life would have changed in some way, hopefully by being enriched!
May **'Things Fall Apart' -** **Loss and Learning**	**'Failure'** We have guidelines for May's topic **'Failure'** to support new class members.	**'Failure'** Write about a failure you've experienced – from the commonplace to the catastrophic - in 500 words. Resource: **'Failure'** (ABC Open) , ***(Or*** **'Success!'** Turn the guidelines for approaching the Failure story on their head by writing about a treasured success you've experienced – from the commonplace to the (almost…) world shattering, in your world at least!)	**'Heartbreak'** (We have some guidelines for approaching May's '**Heartbreak**' to draw on if needed)	Tell us about your experience of a broken heart. It could be a light-hearted story of a fling or blind date gone wrong, or a deeper story of love. It could relate to a special project, a job you loved, something dear to and valued by you. What were you hoping for, and what went wrong? Was there a positive side to the experience? What did you learn about yourself?
			'The toughest year of my life' (The guidelines for '**Failure**' could help if you are finding it hard to know where to start)	Were you ever warned, "Life's not all beer and skittles"? Share your memories of the toughest year of your life and how you managed to come through the challenges it threw at you. Queen Elizabeth described 1992 as her annus horribilis; her children's marriages fell apart in a blaze of publicity and one of her houses went up in flames. Describe the challenges you faced during your annus horribilis. Explain how you managed to cope with what life was throwing at you. What strategies did you use to get through the year? In the face of adversity what did you learn about yourself? You might reflect on how you view the year in hindsight.