‘As Time Goes By’ Topics - June, July and August 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…**	
June 15th **‘Place’**	**‘Stock and Land’**	Tell us about a significant memory involving farming, agriculture or rural life. You must include mention of at least one animal or crop and one piece of farm equipment. If you haven’t lived on a farm, write about a long-remembered visit to, or experience of a farm or agriculture, something referencing rural life, ideally set in the north-east. It could even be about memories of a visit to an agricultural show or about backyard chooks in urban settings. Write about something you’d like to share with your family and others. Need inspiration – we have some of our Stock and Land stories on the website!	**‘The Place That Stayed with Me’**	Home can be a familiar place, but this topic encourages you to share your experience of another space of location that had an impact on you in a previous time. What are your memories of finding or seeing this place for the first time? Do you revisit the place in your mind or return in person? Explain the significance of the location to you. Place can also be about human connection; finding your place. Share your discovery of the place and people that made you feel welcome and comfortable. Need inspiration? You will find some inspiring examples in the guardian.com/lifeandstyle/series here https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/series/the-place-that-stayed-with-me
July 20th **‘Celebrations & Rituals’**	**‘Family Rituals’**	What are the family traditions or rituals that your family did and may still do together, perhaps even somewhat weird and wonderful rituals that only your family understand? Tell us about your family rituals or traditions.	**‘Life Transitions’**	Wetting the baby’s head, Confirmation, Bar Mitzvah, the Deb Ball, Exchange of Vows, hen’s/buck’s party, the wedding ceremony, the gold watch. Anyone been to a tin kettling?

				Rite of passage: ceremonial events have existed in all known societies to mark the passage from one social or religious status to another. Write about an event that marked the start of a new phase in your life. Take yourself back to your childhood/youth/ early adulthood. Did you look forward to the next stage of your life? Tell us about an event or ritual that marked the occasion and whether it changed your sense of identity. *Alternatively*. You've probably been to a few birth, wedding, funeral ceremonies in your lifetime (hatches, matches, despatches). You may have graduated or been inducted into a new venture. Share an event whether traditional, new fangled, exotic, frightening or funny. Take us to the occasion.
August 17th **'Anxiety and Change'**	**'Fish Out of Water'**	Have you had a unique experience when you were a 'fish out of water'? A time when you: • Felt totally out of your element • Felt like an outsider • Were a foreigner traveling or living in a new country • Were a rookie on the new job • Were in another unfamiliar and uncomfortable situation Share your experience in 500 words.	**'Taking the plunge'**	Write about a time when you found yourself stepping beyond what felt safe or familiar. This may have been by choice, through encouragement from someone else, or through necessity. Reflect on why this was significant at that point in your life and how it changed the way you see yourself. .. (Finding it hard to get started?… Here's a sentence to use or edit which might help…. " *I hesitated before saying yes, knowing that what lay ahead would test me in ways I hadn't anticipated …* ")