

**AH!**

I remember – being told  
One of the being-told things  
I didn't like being told: I was ill,

Never being one for being told,  
I didn't really listen –  
In one ear and out the other,

Then slowly, slowly,  
Things started changing  
The world was moving,

People were coming and going,  
But I seemed to be staying in one spot  
And just watching it all going on,

Unable to do what I used to,  
My children growing up –  
Leaving home –

My Mum and boyfriend dying,  
And grandchildren being born –  
On and on,

It moved so fast,  
Then the realisation –  
I couldn't breathe

But what's happening?  
Everything's changed,  
Moved or gone,

And I'm still watching it happen –  
Happening to me now! – I can't breathe –  
Stop! Stop,

Stop smoking,  
Sit down.  
What's going on?

I cry,  
And look at everyone who loves me.  
They are crying too – because of me!

*Sue Gibson*

## **FOR HARRY**

I felt happy  
When my first grandchild –

Harry –  
Was born –

And  
The excitement.

Every day,  
Since then,

We have seen him grow  
Into an eleven year old –

Very intelligent!  
A great sportsman!

My first grandchild –  
The excitement!

I felt happy  
When Harry was born.

*Barbara*

## **WILLOW**

I remember losing you,  
Your eyes looked so sad –

So ready  
To let go.

No more walks in the park  
Or swimming in the sea.

I remember trying  
To teach you to swim,

And you were so scared,  
You jumped on me in the water –

15 stone of Newfoundland on top of you  
Was no easy thing to shift;

But you did it.  
You swam.

I remember your dribble,  
Up the walls,

On the ceiling,  
Even the odd bit on the fridge!

You were so friendly –  
Loved everyone –

Never wanted to be alone.  
I miss you.

**Tracy**

## **OVERJOYED**

I felt overjoyed  
When I heard my son, daughter-in-law  
And baby grandson were coming home  
From Australia to live near me.

I had been very unhappy  
When they had emigrated,  
But had locked the hurt away,  
Inside.

And  
I had not realised  
How miserable I had found their going,  
Until they were due to return.

I believe myself so lucky  
To have them all –  
And a new grandson, too! –  
Here, where I can see them grow up.

*Sue Cleve*

## MIRROR

I remember all the times  
I have seen the sun rise,

I have seen the shadows  
It cast,

I felt its warmth  
On my face;

I see it glisten  
On the water,

A million stars  
Dancing on the ripples

Caused by a stone I threw –  
And broke its mirror surface.

*Gordon*

## **THE CALLING**

I remember the first time I saw Cumbria,  
The fells, the lakes, the waterfalls and rocks –

Grey, blue, mauve, and rugged  
The fells calling out to be walked on,  
The water glistening in the sun,  
The darkness at night,  
The sound of water lapping the shore,  
Boats tied together gently tapping,  
The sound of sheep calling to each other, 'Baa' –  
Ducks quacking and birds singing,  
Crunching of gravel  
And bracken underfoot,  
Sitting on cold rocks,  
Drinking warm tea –  
Cold noses and fingers!

*Sue Wallis-Taylor*

## IN THE GARDEN

I remember being sad –  
Then began working in the garden,

Stepping out into the garden,  
And pottering about;

Eventually lost myself  
In the weeding and planting

And felt more cheerful;  
Hearing the birds visiting to feed,

And as I was pottering quietly,  
They did not realise I was there.

The pleasure in finding  
I had a baby fish in the garden pond,

Which had managed to survive  
The predators,

The frogs / toads hiding under the lily pads  
And peeping out,

Enjoying the space –  
Time seems to stand still to me.

*Theresa*

## **LIFE BEFORE THE MOBILE PHONE**

I remember my life  
Before the dreaded mobile phone.

Peace, no pestering, no beeping,  
No ringing, no texting, no texts.

But I also remember the worry,  
The no contact when desperate,

The no being able to talk  
Whenever.

Good news to make you happy,  
Bad news to make you sad or angry.

Children badgering,  
Asking approval,

Or just someone saying,  
'Hello.'

When it comes to the crunch,  
We can't live with them,

As much as  
We hate them.

***Jo Jackson***

## **I REMEMBER HINGES THAT WERE NOT THERE**

Making a trinket box –  
I remember the fun the girls & I had,  
Cutting the wood, 3x5,  
Four sides and a lid;

First cut the wood  
With dovetail corners;  
Using a good wood glue,  
Leave overnight to dry;

Cutting the lid to fit,  
Using piano hinges,  
This would have to be cut  
To size;

Today, you can buy  
Small,  
Slim  
Hinges;

Before fixing lid,  
Stain your box  
And lid,  
Leave to dry;

If putting shells on lid,  
Do not stain top, only sides;  
If using flowers,  
Stain lid,

When dry,  
Fix lid to box, add decoration  
And then use clear varnish;  
To finish,

Line box with satin,  
Cost –  
Around £2.00 –  
And give as a gift.

***Valerie Withers***

## **REMEMBERING**

I remember  
Where there were no such things  
As computers

Or word processors,  
Not even  
Electric typewriters.

I remember learning  
To use an old manual typewriter  
At school.

*Jean*

## **CLOSE TO THE SEA**

I was born  
And brought up  
In Brighton.

And after moving  
Around the world as an adult,  
I really feel so happy

To be  
In this part of the world –  
I love

Being close to the sea  
And also  
The Downs.

*Jean*

## THE FRAME WITH SPACES

I remember walking on Winchelsea Beach,  
My boots were covered in mud,  
I got stuck in the sand dunes,  
And the mud was up to my knees.

It was a beautiful sunny day by the sea,  
I took some lovely photos  
Of the wooden groynes,  
And the waves rolling in.

A 2,000-year-old wood  
Was supposed to be there  
As fossils,  
So me and Matt went looking for that.

I took photos of the sea,  
The rocks, and the wood,  
Which are lovely,  
And I want to frame –

And the picture of me  
In my muddy boots;  
I have a long frame with five spaces,  
Waiting for the pictures to go in it.

*Rachel Gardner*

## **BURROWING THROUGH THE LONG WAY**

What can I remember?  
It started when I was about 12,  
I became interested in athletics  
Taking place at Preston Park,  
I used to go there and watch,  
And my Dad became interested,  
He became the trainer for me,  
He took it on himself  
To make me exercise every day;

I am going back to good years –  
A long way back –  
I have to burrow through it -

Athletics –  
I always thought I was happier  
When I was doing that – I was free –  
Much happier doing that  
Than sitting at a desk;

The trouble was it came too late to me:  
I got to the age when I was going to be serious about it;  
War broke out – that stopped everything for me.

In the war, I went into the munitions factory,  
I enjoyed it – but then the years got on,  
I got married, I had a couple of children –

Athletics – I never thought much more about it,  
Then with everything on TV, I never moved away,  
The high jump altered. The high jump I knew  
Was one leg over and the other follows,  
Not the way we do it now –  
Oh, it was too late to do it this way.

*Phyllis*

## **THE MARTLETS HOSPICE**

### **GROUP POEM BY DAY PATIENTS AND STAFF**

What is precious to me –  
In my life at the moment  
It is spiritual healing.

My parents and my animals  
Mean the world to me –  
And I add, my other half!

My mother is an inspiration,  
She is precious to me,  
And the beautiful ocean.

And everyone may say it – family –  
My Mum and my boyfriend  
Are precious to me.

My garden – all of it – is precious,  
My garden helps me to relax  
And forget the day.

What is precious to me?  
My father, and my cat Millie.  
And every day, my faith –

My faith keeps me going,  
I believe in Him,  
And I am ready, I am ready.

Precious to me is my family –  
My husband, four children,  
Two grandchildren;

Precious to me are flowers –  
Daffodils –  
Spring –

And precious to me is my family,  
Spanning generations,  
My elderly father I race after up the M25 –

My husband and son  
And two grandchildren –  
The grandchildren balance out difficulties.

And I have to say again –  
It is my family,  
They live a long way away –

Two sons and two grandchildren  
And a rather nice daughter-in-law –  
They are precious to me.

And what is precious?  
My husband and two sons,  
And two dogs – Alfie and Freddie!

Most precious to me is my family  
And the countryside,  
I love anywhere,

Wherever I am,  
I love the rivers, tumbling streams,  
Changing sky.

For me, my sons  
And my grandchildren are precious,  
And I love flowers, the garden, the sea.

I used to run a lot –  
Racing –  
Mostly a high jumper.

Today, I think everything has crashed,  
I'm not as well as I was,  
I need to build up – easier for me

Not to sit on my bottom.  
What is precious to me?  
I think it has just started with retirement.

And precious to me –  
Where do I begin –  
My grandson, yeah,

I have so much to be thankful for,  
Anything to do with creation,  
Wide open spaces,

The sense of freedom,  
The fact you are here,  
All is precious to me.