

12th Storyworth: Are you still friends with any of your friends from high school? How have they changed since then?

Unfortunately, I am the world's worst "friend" for longevity. It has been almost 50 years since I last saw ANYONE from my High School days, and I would recognize none of them today, as I am sure they would not recognize me. In fact, the only true "friend" I had from that time and I had parted ways permanently before I completed Clarkson, and I have no idea where Bill Bolitho ever went nor what he did as a career. The last positive memory I have of him was when the two of us went to the Montreal Expo in 1967, a first away from our families for either of us, and the start of my "independence".

Sadly, I also have lost contact with my Best Man, who had been my roommate for four years at Clarkson, and I had done so by the time I was leaving Fafnir, only three years after my graduating from Clarkson. I know; pathetic. But I think that says more about me and my life choices than most anything. I had always been a "lone wolf" – from my childhood money earning efforts and appliance repairs through my ultimately hanging out my shingle as an Independent Contracting Consultant during my Engineering and MBA career.

I suppose that seems paradoxical for someone who remained married to the same woman for 38 years, and still maintains pretty close ties, driven mostly by the fact of parentage of our wonderful daughter, and HER creation of our sole grandchild, Ainsley Lynne. But then I have never been able to understand any parent who could simply up and leave his/her family. I just never felt that bond with "friends". In fact, the only contacts I have bothered to maintain have been with people I have known for less than ten years, and most for fewer than five. The sole exceptions have been the man who had hired me to work at GE in the first place, Dick Coffin, who I have known for thirty years, and a woman I worked with in Ogdensburg at Shade Roller, now Cindy Green Sweet. It is hard to imagine that I have known her just over forty years, and I really cannot explain why we have maintained contact, except that she helped me survive some rough periods in my marriage. Dick only gets periodic contact, most often at his prompting, although we converse like no time has elapsed since our last contact, which I also cannot explain. Cindy is on the distribution listserv of these, so I think I'll add Dick ;-)

I like to think that the one who has changed the most over all that time has been ME. I doubt most anyone who actually remembers me from "back in the good old days" could actually explain what about them was either good OR old. I'm sure I can't. As I think I've noted throughout most of my writings, I believe I am pretty much at my optimum existence point in time, but I know almost nobody who imagines they would have been better off in some earlier period, unless they completely ignore all the good things they have which they take for granted, most of which didn't exist "back then". Dawn and I have been binging "Outlander" on Netflix, which essentially portrays a woman who travels pretty liberally between the 20th century (post WWII) and the same period 200 years prior, in Scotland, France, Jamaica and the USA. We haven't gotten past season 4 just yet, so I cannot predict what MIGHT happen, but had I named it, the series would be called "OutlandISH" ;-). It's definitely NOT based on the real paradoxes which legitimate time travel would create.

So I guess in summary, this week's response is pretty bland. Sorry. Better luck next week ;-)

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