

2nd July 2024

Young

**“May your heart always be joyful; may your song always be sung;
and may you stay forever young.”**

Bob Dylan, *Forever Young*

As a treat for my daughter’s birthday – but really because it offered an opportunity for my wife and I to be nostalgic – we attended a “gig” recently, appropriately named, *The Sensational 60s Experience*. We were wonderfully entertained with the music of our youth, from bands such as *Dozy, Beaky, Mick and Titch* (a line-up which included the original “Beaky”), *The Tremms* (including former members of *The Tremeloes*), *The Swinging Blue Jeans*, *The Fortunes* and others. Boy, did we rock!

It would have been an interesting exercise to work out the average age of the audience. But suffice to say, my 40-something aged daughter would have been one of the youngest people there, with the majority of the audience renewing their youth, just as we were.

Clearly, nostalgia isn’t a thing of the past! But I was left with two thoughts after that remarkable gig, which, at first reading, appear to be contradictory. The first is that I’ve found myself singing a Bob Dylan song from the 60s, revived by Joan Baez, Rod Stewart, and many others. It’s called *Forever Young*. Dylan’s dream is encapsulated in the opening lines:

*May God bless and keep you always, may your wishes all come true
May you always do for others and let others do for you.
May you build a ladder to the stars, and climb on every rung,
And may you stay forever young.*

The *Sensational 60s Experience*, and much more besides, keeps *me* young, and helps me keep Dylan’s dream alive in my senior years.

And the second thought – enigmatic and thought-provoking as it is – comes from the programme notes for the gig. It’s a note from Paul Weller – he of *The Jam*, of blessed memory – when he writes:

*Maybe if we live long enough, we grow into what we always wanted to be.
Just maybe, if we stick at what we love, it’ll come around and come good.*

I like that. I don’t know why, but it seems to fit me right now. Whether that is being “forever young” or not, I don’t know. But, like Dylan, it certainly helps keep newness and youthful discovery always more than a dream.

A prayer for today

If I am a child of God, I am, indeed, “forever young”. Amazing! Amen