

The Good Old Days

By Hap Hansen

Auld Lang Syne is an old Scottish term that probably meant then, 'Long ago.' Today, the meaning has changed somewhat and now, it is likely the best definition means, 'The good old times.' Boy howdy, have some things changed! Every time I turn around, it seems as though another bond of trust has disappeared. Perhaps never to return. A lack of Auld Lang Syne?

Years ago, in the small town in which I grew up, everyone trusted everyone else. It was unquestioned. If one had to borrow a few bucks from a friend, the loan was gladly given and gratefully returned, on time and in full. Auld Lang Syne. Do you lock your condo door when you leave to go shopping or come to Writers Group? You probably do and I do too. But it wasn't always that way. I don't recall ever locking the door to our house in my old home town. It wouldn't have done much good anyway, because the windows wouldn't lock! They only had simple catches on them, which would have been a snap to open if anyone wanted to break in. At our house, if someone wanted to steal something, they just could walk in the unlocked front door. In all the years I lived in a small town, nothing was ever stolen from us. Nothing! Never! Auld Lang Syne.

Years ago, a friend told me about the locks on their home when he was growing up. The home was never locked, even when they went on vacation for a week or two. In fact, when they sold their home, no one could find the key to the front door. You know what? The key probably never existed, or perhaps the builders thought they should keep the key so it wouldn't be misplaced! The best part of the story is that the purchasers of the home weren't concerned, because they never locked their home either! Auld Lang Syne.

Can we ever go back to those simpler, more trusting days? I doubt it. Life and living have gotten too complicated, too adversarial, too protective. It's unfortunate that has to be that way. But we must fight for the remnants of trust that still remain. As long as we can remember what 'The Good Old Days' were like, there is still a chance that some of that lifestyle can continue. Auld Lang Syne.