



Home from Eye: A year with a new friend

Several Wednesdays a month I collect a lady from day care in Eye. She greets me as an old friend, surprised that I have come all the way to take her home and admires my “new car”. She cannot remember my name or how she arrived in the morning, but she does remember that the roof comes off the car, and if it is sunny asks to have the “lid off”.

We drive back slowly deep in conversation. My friend explains how she walked home to Debenham the other day as she admires the hedgerows, the countryside, and complains about discourteous drivers. Last week she spoke to her mother and her grandmother is happy in care. She was previously in the Wrens and speaks with confidence and a little bit of mischief about the things they got up to. Although she says she was well behaved and didn’t disobey the rules, her tone of voice and speech suggests otherwise. She came from a one-parent family and has great fondness for her grandfather who guided her life and was there when she returned from school.

She is good fun and we laugh a lot. Sometimes she mentions the love of her life who did not come back from the war. We get back to the wiggly road that is Gardeners Road and she recites “Round and round the garden”. Goodness knows what people who see us think!

My friend was 90 this year. At the beginning of the year she could remember her way home. Now she often thinks she still lives in her childhood North Country. She is unable to remember her street or the house where she lives in, but she goes confidently through her front door, and we have both enjoyed each other’s company.

Jan McIntyre