

Desiree Moore - HERITAGE WEEK GYMPIE 2022

Soon after moving from the rat-race of the city to the Gympie region in October 2010, my husband was using our push mower as we had not purchased a ride-on mower at the time. He looked up to see our neighbour approach him on a ride-on mower. Before my husband could say, "Jack Robinson", he was on our neighbour's mower manoeuvring around with precision. He later relayed that act of kindness to me. Basically our sweet neighbour had given my husband a short set of instructions, and walked off saying, "You'll be right!" And there have been endless kind acts from them ever since. Our Christmas card greetings to them always began with, "Dear Perfect Neighbours..."

Another encounter of kindness occurred with some Energex employees, within a few years of our tree-change. I'd returned from jury duty around lunchtime, and noticed those workers enjoying their lunch-break at the front of my property under a coolabah tree on a Queensland sunny day. I realised that my husband, who was unwell and still asleep, had not had the soup I'd made for him earlier that morning before the planned power outage for that day.

I approached the lads to ascertain when power would resume. Before I knew it, they offered to heat the soup in the microwave installed in their work-van. After my husband and I enjoyed freshly-heated soup, I texted my city-friends to show off that act of kindness.

A few years ago, my husband decided to successfully lose a bit of weight by walking six kilometres in total, to and from the golf course plus the eighteen holes, twice weekly. One morning soon after his regime started, a mature-aged neighbour, who'd seen him walking with golf buggy in tow, pulled up in her car. My husband declined her kind offer of a lift. She wouldn't take "No" for an answer. She alighted from her car and grabbed his buggy which she swiftly planted on the back seat of her sedan, and promptly drove to the golf club. We are still friendly with her to this day.

Another neighbour, a golfer who realised that he'd been walking, and started to offer my husband a lift, which also meant driving to our place to collect him and ultimately drop him off at the end of the day. So the weight-loss plan was short-lived.

In February 2022, whilst I was shopping at a local supermarket, my right sandal-strap broke. I apologised to other customers for my inability to move out of the way, due to my recently broken footwear. Whilst waiting for my husband to meet up with me, a young man approached me. "Are you the lady whose shoe broke?" he asked. To which I replied hesitantly, "Er -yes". I hadn't even blinked, and he produced a pair of sandals – presumably purchased from the local chemist. He said, "I'm not sure if they're your size" and handed them to me. He refused my offer of payment, crushing the obvious receipt in his hand, and walked away. "Who was that masked man?" I asked myself. He was literally masked due to the COVID rules at the time. What a Cinderella moment! And the new sandals fitted perfectly!!

I've since shared that anecdote with many in the area, to discover either they've been on the receiving end of kindness as well, or have "paid-forward", including paying for people's groceries, or offering to do odd-jobs for those in need.

It's wonderful to know that locals have pitched in to help the homeless, and other disadvantaged people – supplying food and make-shift accommodation especially after the recent flood devastation.

Lastly, a recent bitter-sweet anecdote about an eleven year-old boy who lost his life in an accident on the property. His mother appeared on television to request assistance when she discovered her son had taught himself to play the piano via YouTube. He had composed a beautiful piece of classical music but had not completed it. That story had gone world-wide, and our Delta Goodrem, and separately musicians from symphony orchestras in Brisbane had got wind of it, and the late Kyan Pennell was honoured posthumously with his musical piece completed.

.....