



When I'm Sixty ... Two!

Every now and then, the topic for one of these little stories has something to do with a 'milestone' - perhaps an important birthday, perhaps an anniversary of a major event in my life, and today is one such day.

Before I tell you what it is, I should mention that this milestone is not one that everybody manages to reach. Indeed, over in America for example, *nobody* ever reaches it, and even in other societies there are people for whom it will remain an unattainable goal.

I have been thinking about it now and again over the past few years, knowing that I was approaching the event, but not sure exactly when I would see it take place, but just the other day - after having a long hot bath at the local 'onsen' facility - found that it had arrived.

After towelling myself dry, I stood on the locker-room weigh-scale for a moment, watched as the digital display stabilized, and read the result. I saw that for the first time ever, my weight - 62 kilograms - exactly matched my age. Milestone!

(You now understand why my US friends will never reach this particular balance - their society still uses pounds and ounces rather than the metric system, and as my current weight is something just over 136 pounds, I don't feel too optimistic that I will ever be able to match *that* with my age!)

Now unlike an anniversary, this milestone is not a single point that one passes and never sees again. After coming out of the locker room, I had a very pleasant - but fairly large - lunch in the onsen restaurant, so if I had weighed myself upon reaching home, the scale might have said "Next year, buddy!" when I checked. Indeed, the scale has been displaying something in the 63 range for years now, and I had not been expecting this equalization to arrive quite so soon. But never mind that little detail; the point is that I *have* arrived at the time in life where these two numbers blur together for a while.

An interesting part of this is that for more than four decades I have been able to predict fairly accurately just when this was going to take place. Through my 20s I usually hovered in the high 50s (58~59kg), and since then seem to have gained weight at roughly a kilogram a decade. Buying new jeans has usually meant just grabbing the same size off the rack without needing to try them on, but now and again they have somehow felt 'tight', so a move to a larger size has sometimes been necessary.

I don't think anybody needs to be ashamed of gaining weight at this rate, though. And given that I spent much of my youth as the butt of "Don't stand sideways, or we won't be able to see you ..." jokes, I am not unhappy with the current number on the scale at all.

Will the next couple of decades be as predictable as the past? The two numbers will now begin to diverge, with my age climbing steadily ever upwards (I wish it would be 'ever!'), and the weight perhaps following more slowly up after it for a time, but then beginning to fall back down, step by step, as I move into my dotage.

So I'll enjoy this little milestone for such time as it stays with me, perhaps drawing a smile from the nurse at the local clinic when I am having a checkup. "Age?" "62" "Weight?" "62" And she will look up and smile ... before asking "Height?"

Umm ... "Not 62!"

David Bull
Seseragi Studio
Nagabuchi 8-4-5 Ome City
Tokyo Japan 198-0052
<http://astoryaweek.com>