

312 words, column #25  
Java Talk  
(for October 11, 2007 to October 17, 2007)

## **Every Age Is The Best Age**

### *The Contrarians*

The Victoria Storytellers' Guild's youngest storyteller, according to my records, is turning 13 this week, and will soon be a teenager. The world's oldest man, according to the Guinness World Records, who is already a centenarian, will be turning 113, on his next birthday. If you asked them what they are wishing for, their answers come as a bit of a shock. The first one was more immediate. She can barely wait. What she wants is a big party and lots of presents. The second one, who perhaps would be more willing to have a tea party than a big party, was asked not what he wished for, but how long he wanted to live. "Infinitely," he said.

It will be interesting to compare these two contrarians in forty years, when one becomes a semicentennial (or quinquagenarian?), meaning someone in their 50s; and the other a sesquicentennial, meaning someone in their 150s. I think they will still be at the best age, no matter how many candles are on their cakes. A contrarian, by the way, according to the Encarta® World English Dictionary [North American Edition], is "somebody disposed to taking an opposite position: a habitual opponent of accepted policies, opinions, or practices."

Anyway, this week, the Victoria Storytellers' Guild's monthly "Stories at Fern" public gathering of storytellers and listeners will also be happening. I will be one of the scheduled tellers for the evening, so I hope you will come out to hear me tell *The Story of Tea and Dragons*. Maybe you are wondering how dragons light the candles on their cakes or how long they live. Contrary to that, however, the story has nothing to do with birthdays; and of course, dragons live forever.

Please join us at the gathering on Monday, October 15, 2007, from 7:15 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., at 1831 Fern Street. (Adults \$5, Students \$3).

Deidre Hill