# A COLLECTION OF

# bytestories

A WEBSITE SERVING AS AN ARCHIVE OF MY DIFFERENT ADVENTURES ON PLANET EARTH...

BY RON HAILES

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# The moment Covid 19 became real to me

I remember in early January when Covid was still Corona and in my mind it would soon pass and I would head back to Singapore to work quite soon.
This is 2020 we can fix anything!

Late February came and my mood was a little less optimistic and I posted on a Frequent Flyer forum this comment "Do you think its possible that demand will drop so much that Qantas won't fly overseas" most people on the forum said....unlikely!! We all know how that turned out.

As time went on it was clear that we would be living in the Covid world for a long time and it was going to be a hard long fight.

I think the defining moment for me was when on the Friday before the Melbourne F1 race when, because two pit crew members tested positive the whole weekend of racing was cancelled. I was stunned, this event was ready to go, people were lining up at the gate but because of just two cases it was all over.

This made me say to myself we are kidding ourselves if we think we can beat this in a few months.

It's now October and I have no expectation of returning to work in Asia anytime soon, if at all. The world as we know it has changed forever.

**In Newport QLD, Australia**

# When I'm Sixty Four

When I get older losing my hair, many years from now... the opening line of  When I'm Sixty four. The line  "many years from now"  seemed such a long time away in 1967. Time catches up with all of us and indeed later this year I will turn 64.

I often think back about all the things I have seen come and go. The arrival of TV in my early years, a war in the 60's that I was too young to understand and probably still don't. My first car, a Valiant, my amazing parents and brothers, a few career changes, and over 40 years of marriage. We have  two amazing kids, and as the song says "Grandchildren on your knee". Vera ,Chuck and Dave, well not quite but we do have the beautiful Thea.

In my life Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, the internet arrived and technology has raced ahead at a breakneck pace. Cars are electric but sadly we don't make any in Australia. As we watched Get Smart and The Jetson's on TV we saw  the future of mobile phones and driver-less cars, we just didn't know it at the time.

So what's the best and worst of the last 52 years, personally I think the best is the arrival of the internet, a true game changer. The worst, the arrival of terrorism. As Bob Dylan sang  in 1964... The times are a changing...

**In Gold Coast 2019**

# What happened to the Brown Dinner suit and the Bridesmaids

On February 5 we will celebrate 40 years since we walked down the aisle, Monica looking great with Bridesmaids and attendants, myself decked out in a brown dinner suit with a matching number of attendants. We were married by  a pastor and drove from the church to the reception in a suitably flash limo.

The reception was formal with the mandatory speeches, cover band, fake telegrams - google telegrams if you need to - and of course the first dance and the odd tired and emotional relative.

At the appointed time we changed clothes and everyone formed a circle and wished as well we left . This was how it was done in 1977.

Last week end our daughter was married in Blenheim NZ. Of course my proudest moment was walking her down the aisle, but other than that formality, this wedding was so different.

Firstly, Annelie and Tao chose to have no attendants and we had an amazing dinner at Hans Herzog winery, short on formality, no cake, but food from a Michelin chef no less. We all had an informal dinner on the Friday and in the gap between the service and reception the guests all played board games, so cool and so them.

It was an amazing day with various people speaking throughout the service and dinner, I have never heard such heartfelt words.

Finally on the Sunday we all got together with the newly weds for a hearty brunch and more board games. Truly a magnificent wedding.

I got to be father of the bride, MC and driver and I loved every minute of it.
What a great day.

**In Blenheim, Marlborough, New Zealand**

# Digital Disruption At Its Best

I was in Melbourne a few months ago and needed to travel from St Kilda Road to the CBD, about $15 in a Taxi. Silly me, I thought this would be simple, approach a taxi, get in, go to destination. I walked up to one, doors locked, window comes down, "Where" one word only, so I responded accordingly, "City".  Window goes up and I am left talking to glass, sort of like a prison visit. The next guy was far more polite about saying no, but it was still no, "I will take your number and report you I say " Drives off at speed.

It was whilst I was giving him the single digit finger, that it came to me, "Digital Disruption", that's what I need, ride sharing I thought.

Udder, no that's a cow, Urban, no that's country music. I actually like Taxi Drivers more than country music, maybe Keith could take me on his horse.
And then it came to me Uber, find the app, sign up and get to that appointment. What's an app? Call an eight year old for help to sign up.

Car arrives within 3 minutes, guy is polite, I apologise for it being such a short ride, he says no problems and 10 minutes later I am in the city. $11.15 on my card. Done, dusted, digital.

I have left the best part for last, the first Taxi Driver was still sitting there when Mr Uber arrived.

If looks could kill, couldn't help myself had to give him just a little more "digital disruption " with my pinky.

**In Melbourne, Victoria, Australia**

# Don't worry Doc... I don't camp

The day had arrived "Relay for Life 2015" mid way through setting up a massive storm arrived, but it seemed to be avoiding us. All of a sudden it turned and the tent, electrical equipment, tables, banners all took off. There was no choice, I had to chase it in pouring rain. I got drenched, totally stressed, lost my breath but I didn't drop dead. Winning!

2 Weeks Earlier, at the Doctor.

Doc: Well Ron that was close, you had an 80 % blockage in the main artery to your brain. Great that we got it in time, and that stent I put in fixed it.

Me: But other than slight pains everything seemed fine.

Doc: Well you don't seem to lead a stressful life, so it would have been OK for a while and then if something happened, like (his words) you know, you get caught in a storm while camping and your tent blows away. If you chased it you probably would have dropped dead, but you don't seem like a camping kind of guy.

Me: Well Doc the chances of me chasing a tent in a storm are a million to one.
More likely to get hit by a UFO.

6 Weeks Earlier

John Flynn Hospital having an angiogram whilst awake.

Doc: well here is the problem, 80% blockage in your LAD

Me: So what's that mean?

Doc: Well in a stressful situation you would probably have a heart attack.

Me: Well that never going to be a problem Doc, I am so laid back, it's a bit like "Weekend at Bernie's"

Doc: Is that a fishing place you go to?

Me: No, a movie

Doc: OK

Lesson learned don't try and be funny in an operating theatre

8 Weeks Earlier

Doc: Well the test show about a 50% blockage, but they are really inaccurate

Me: Great!

Doc: No its usually much worse when we get in there.

Me: Oh Shit

10 weeks Earlier

That's a weird pain I get then I walk up those stairs and, so puffed, must be overeating. Bloody indigestion!

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# Thank You Fathers both real and surrogate

Of course we all have a father, but not all fathers are the fathers they should be.  Luckily for some there is often someone who steps in and takes this role.
I have seen mothers become better fathers than the real "long gone " father could have ever been. Older brothers, sisters ,friends uncles , aunts are always stepping up.

On Fathers Day 2014 let's thank all those people.

I am one of the lucky ones I had a great Dad and have two amazing Daughters who are a credit to their mum.

I think of my own dad most days in some little way , he was a true Aussie character, lots of sayings and stories. We had a working class background but myself and my 3 older brothers never went without. A little unknown fact is my Dad could actually sing in a 'Slim Dusty way' I often heard him when he thought no one could hear. Many will tell you I did not inherit this. He fought for his country and worked hard but sadly passed away at 71.

My own Daughters, Coby and Annelie have been amazing, talented, considerate and occasionally messy - maybe more than occasionally for Coby.
We have lots of fun in our household and like most families you go through tough times.  We had our share of this when Cancer had the cheek to visit our house.  Without our girls, Monica would not have come through this dark time.

So Fathers everywhere be the best you can and enjoy this day. I got the perfect present - a vacuum cleaner that does all the work for you. The cats aren't that keen though.

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# News Flash AC/DC earn $175 for gig

Yes it's true after working for peanuts AC/DC have hit the big time. I guess you are now thinking he has got this wrong , doesn't he mean their ticket price is now $175? It probably is.

Well the truth is this story is a little old, you see I recently found one of prized possessions stored away. I booked AC/DC to do a gig around 1975 and the contract, that I still have to this day has them being paid $175 for a one hour show.

At this gig they were the first band on, whoever headlined that night probably got paid around $600.

In those days AC/DC were one of the hardest working bands in the country, they probably did an afternoon gig and one after my show. Gigs were about paying the bills and keeping the band in front of the punters who bought the albums.

The band members lived very frugally earning around $60 a week, living in a share house and staying in some pretty dodgy places on the road. Most bands worked at this level until their first big hit and a successful album, then it all changed.

Around the same time I was paying Skyhooks up to $1500 a show after "Living in the 70's" came out. Of course history tells us that the hard slog paid off for AC/DC and now I can't even imagine how much they would earn from a gig.
40,000 people paying $100 to $150, huge expenses of course, but somehow I think the bottom line is a little more than $175.

**In Melbourne, Victoria, Australia**

# Relay for Life 2014

What makes 600 very normal people in teams walk for 18 hours around a circular track. Answer "They are very special people"

In 2004 my perfect family life was shattered by the news that so many Australian's get every day, one of your family members has cancer.

In our case it was my wife Monica, who was diagnosed with aggressive Breast Cancer.

The short  version of this story is extensive treatment by dedicated professionals has her 10 years down the track and in remission. Remission is the key word here because as it stands now you are never really cured, the symtoms are gone and you are healthy but the problem lurks in the background looking for a way out.

At this point you may be thinking "whats a relay got do with this"
Answer "Everything". Relay for Life is about raising money for research to get rid of this horrible disease, but more than that it's about celebrating life and remembering those who didn't make it. This is done by various events including a survivors walk and a candlelight ceremony.

Over the 18 hours we also try and have fun , celebrate life and in some cases make fools of ourselves all for a good cause.

In my role as Chairman of the Gold Coast Committee I get to work with a great group of people , all with a story of their own and all with a common goal,very simply eradicate cancer.

Relay for Life started in 1985 with one person walking around an oval for 20 hours. In Australia the first Relay was in 1999 and raised $75,000. Relay now runs in every state and territory and raises over $14 million dollars just in Australia.

So why did I write this story? Very simply to encourage more people to get involved and beat this hideous disease. For more information go to relayforlife.org.au

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# New Friends

All through my life I have been surrounded by family ,friends ,business associates etc , so I have never been short of company.

I am a really lucky person and I value all these people. Just two years ago I decided to have a go at performing stand-up comedy, it was just one of those things on my bucket list. I haven't set the world on fire and given that  I started at age 57, I probably never will. But getting involved in Comedy has bought so many other positives to my life, I have met an amazing group of people in the entertainment industry.

Comedians, actors ,promoters and most of all the people that come and see the shows. I have been introduced to the lives of so many interesting people and I have loved every minute of it. The page you are reading " Bytestories" wouldn't have been part of my life without comedy.

Most of these people are younger than my kids but they have all accepted me into what really is young person's industry, it's been pleasure to work with them.

So you may be wondering what the point of this story is. Simply, no matter how old you are you can get out there and do something different and meet new people, it might be comedy ,theatre or some sort volunteer work. Whatever you choose its going enlighten your life and the lives of those you meet.

Just do it!

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# Remembrance Day 2013

Today is Remembrance day so I am republishing the following story I wrote earlier in the year. I am proud to have relatives who have served in several wars and although they all survived the war, their lives were vastly shortened because of it.

My Grandfather William Arthur Hailes served in WW 2 and ended up a POW on the very tough Burma Railway, already in his 40's. My uncle George Hailes served in the Army in WW 2 in several campaigns.

My father Able Seaman William Hailes served on HMAS Arunta throughout the world and had the dubious job of being part of the occupation forces after the Atomic Bomb was dropped on Japan. My brother Brian Hailes was in the Army but luckily the Vietnam war ended before he had to go.

I am equally as proud of my father in law Gerhard Erdbrink who was basically on the other side during the war . As a young man of 15 he was forced to become part of "Hitler Youth" and sent to war, he doesn't talk about it but I know at the end of the war he got stuck in the East and had to escape to get home.

All the brave men and women who have served over the years have done so without regard for themselves to give us the life we have.

RIP Abel Seaman Hailes and  thank you for all you gave me to make me the person I am today.I am almost ashamed that I rarely remember to stop and think of our heroes at 11am, such shame that we don't give it more thought.

Lest we Forget 11/11/13

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# Things I don't get...a bit RIskaaaay

In a few short weeks I will turn 58 and every day the world changes at such an amazing pace I really have trouble understanding modern things.
Firstly what's sexting all about ,why not just meet up and get to know each other, if you are "sexting" and you push the send button before you finish, is that considered foreplay or premature ejaculation!

What about "selfies " what's that all about, kids are even taking selfies at funerals. Where will it end, pregnant women swallowing a camera and we get womb selfies. When I was a teenager a selfie was something you did in your room with a Playboy Magazine or if you were on a budget a National Geo nicked from the school library.

And what about newspapers, I don't even get one if them anymore, comes on the bloody iPad. So what do fish and chips get wrapped in and heaven forbid, if you get stuck in the outhouse with no paper, what APP do you use for that.

I am off to invent the Arsewipeapp.

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

## Work experience students

I work for a commercial Radio Station on the Gold Coast and quite often we get requests to host students for work experience.

This week we hosted a local girl who is currently in year 10. Radio stations can be a little out there  so the first benefit we got actually happened before she arrived when I had to tell the staff to tone down their language.

A swear box was promptly installed.

Jordyn arrived on Monday, keen and ready to learn. I think work experience is a great way for young people to get a taste of life in the workforce, the good, the bad and the ugly. It was a great week for Jordyn to be here, as we had a sales conference and a staff bonding day that included our version of "The Amazing Race" with various team building activities.

Another highlight of our week was an address by Andy Csabi the author of Bom Bali talking about his experience as a survivor of the Bali Bombing.
We were all enthralled and motivated by his will to survive and move forward.

I think it was great to expose a young person to these stories of guts and determination.

I think the main thing that came from this week is how quickly young people can grow by being exposed to different environments. If you own a business get involved in the "work experience" program, it will be good for your staff as well as giving a young person a chance to grow.

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# And I thought Stand Up was hard "Acting" the next challenge

When I decided to have a go at Stand Up Comedy I knew it would be hard, but 18 months on it's coming together. The likes of Adam Hills etc certainly don't need to worry about their jobs.

The next thing on the bucket list was "acting" so I scanned the net and found the perfect opportunity "On Air On Air" a very clever play about a radio station.

What makes it great, is both the writer, Peter Maden and the director Helen Maden (Mrs Peter) work for a large radio network and their inside knowledge of the industry makes this play really enjoyable.

I was cast in the role of Daryl Barnes a fairly negative copywriter who has had limited success at most things in life.

This acting stuff is easy, learn a few lines walk onstage, make the punters laugh, and walk off. The reality couldn't be more removed from this.

The task of putting on a play requires a huge amount of effort by all concerned and the creation is really fluid. Very fluid in my case because I have some shortcomings that couldn't be fixed! Helen our poor director has been very patient with me and very accommodating.

I have loved watching this thing grow, from our first read through, watching characters develop and seeing our set take shape its an amazing experience.

In 5 weeks time we open, I will have ticked another one off the bucket list and I hope that people are going to love it. It's a great play.

So what's next , who knows but the journey continues.

Check it out at Spotlight Theatre Gold Coast.

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# Our technology rules our lives

I haven't written a story for a couple of months , have I been to busy ,no ideas ,or just plain lazy .None of the above, I simply stood on my laptop and broke the screen . It would be fair to ask why I didn't just replace it straight away ? Surely I cant live without a laptop. The answer is no I cant ,but I chose to try and just use my IPAD which in fact can do 99% of the things I need to do.

That one thing I couldn't do was write texts that were more than just few words so my emails were very short and writng a 300 word Bytestory was never going to happen , it just doesn't work with no keyboard for me , so no laptop ,no writing.

It just made me realise how dependant  we are on our technical toys, we are so controlled by them that we have lost the ability and even the will to do things the old way . Who writes letters these days , even that amazing invention from the seventies ,the fax machine is redundant these days.

The pace of change is stunning and right now I feel that I am losing the battle, every day something new comes along that astounds me, the latest being 3 D printers. I cant even begin to work out how they work but apparently the Aston Martin cars used in Skyfall were nothing more that 3D printed models.

I just cant fathom it , I can make calls on my phone and use the Internet on it. My phone probably makes coffee I just can find the button.

On a postive note I am writing this on my new $400 laptop. It would have been $4000 just 10 years ago.

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# Drug Dealing on My Honeymoon

About 3 days into our honeymoon in New Zealand in 1977 I had a terrifying experience, which involved scenes straight from the movie "Midnight Express!"  On reflection Jail in Istanbul and Christchurch are probably vastly different.

The terror started when my half opened case fell off the bed in a Christchurch Hotel...or was it crack den. Read on!

I was picking up various items some of which had rolled under the bed and there I found the stash cleverly concealed in a pair of socks, were some seeds, clearly drugs either planted in our luggage or left by the previous occupant of this seedy crack den of a room. Panic set in, were the Cops about to bust down the door or worse still were New Zealand's most notorious drug dealers about to "give me concrete boots".

Whatever it was we had to leave and it had to be now, but what do I do with drugs, the only answer seemed to be the toilet, so down they went followed by the socks. We checked out straight away citing a family emergency and found another hotel, hoping we were not followed by the crims or the cops.
Phew! That was close.

The rest of the honeymoon went smoothly and when we arrived back at Melbourne Airport we were picked up by my late brother Brian.

His first words were, "did you find the split peas I put in your
Socks!" His idea of a honeymoon joke!

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# Bombing at a Stand Up Comedy Gig

About a year ago I started on my stand up journey and from day one my greatest fear, like all comedians was "bombing"

I have now performed 30 times ,had some great gigs and some average ones but nothing I would call a bomb, train wreck or crash and burn.

I guess it had to happen and last week it did, not a complete crash but enough to rock my confidence.

The hard thing was the week before I had my best gig ever with basically the same stuff, so what went wrong.

I put it down to a couple of things, lack of focus being the main one, this gig was at my own room so I was busy running the show . The food service was a disaster and to top it off the audience was full of workmates. The other thing is I am starting to get bored of my own material ,so I really need to get off my arse and write some new stuff . The lesson I have learnt from this is that Stand Up deserves respect and hard work, lose respect and you lose your way. Now I need to get back on the horse and have another crack.

Did you hear the one about....

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# Give me an Idea

This will be my shortest story ...

I find it easy to write about my life and times but much harder to write fiction...

So comment below with a subject of your choosing and I will try and write a story!!!

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# I managed the Bass Player in AC/DC. Pity he wasn't in the band at the time - Part 1

On my first day of high school in 1968 I met a short, long haired kid who would go on to be one of Prahran High Schools most famous students. He was a mad Carlton supporter and had an out there attitude to life. Even in the very early days when we were 13 or 14 he was a big hit with the girls who were clearly attracted to the kid with more hair than them.

He hailed from the infamous commission flats where men were men and boys grew up fast. In the early part of that year he had a secret that he kept to himself - his father was dying and he actually came to school on the day of his dads funeral. As the years passed his Mother started to go away at weekends and parties of legendary proportions were held at flat 56, otherwise know as the Prahran Hilton. He got into music, and because I had no talent at all, I was the Manager. He was joined by guitarist Graham Kennedy and Drummer Lincoln Judd and "Judd" was formed. Vocalist Paul Edwards joined later.

The band was getting a few gigs but not exactly reaching for the stars. I always wanted to manage bands so I was having a great time. By this time we were all out of school and all had various real jobs, he was working as a clerk and I was working in a bank.

In March 1975 I was living in Prahran around the corner from the house where AC/DC were based and Mark Evans knocked on my door and told me he was quitting the band because he was joining AC/DC.

So I guess for a few minutes I did manage the AC/DC bass player.

**In Melbourne, Victoria, Australia**

# The little things in business - Optometrists

I have a habit of having minor problems with my glasses all around the world. Without fail  whether it has been in Australia, Asia or Europe,

when I go in to get a screw tightened or an adjustment made the optometrist will never take any money.

It's like they have a creed  that they assist each others customers.

It’s a great concept and makes me respect the profession.

Do you have this sort attitude in your business or are you chasing every last couple of dollars without thinking about the outcome.

If you charge someone who is already a customer for something that takes a couple of minutes there is a good chance they won’t remain a customer.

Sometimes in business its the little things that make or break it.

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# AC/DC  A Teaser

The guys from Bytestories have thrown out a challenge - I get 25 subscribers and I have to share a few stories about a connection I have with the early days of AC/DC.

So what's it about... can't say until I get the subscribers but I can say that it goes back 41 years.

Whilst no scandal will be revealed I do have some nice tit bits.

So to get you thinking, try and guess how much AC/DC got for a gig around 1975?

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# Friday Funny # 8

I am always searching for new stories to tell at my comedy shows and everyday life just delivers them to me time after time.
I was driving down the freeway and saw this old Falcon ex taxi,engine smoking as it struggled down the highway. It had a sign on the back "Honk if your Horny"
Now  I am a big bloke and fill any car I am in, this day I was in a Nissan Micra rent a car!!
So I pulled up beside this car, which happened to be driven by a very meek and mild nerdy guy...and I hit the horn hard..

Well I have never seen a stuffed old Falcon turn into a V8 super car quicker in my life!!!!!!

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

## Lest We Forget

I am really happy that Anzac Day is so well supported by younger people, some who have never really been touched by war. I am proud to have relatives who have served in several wars and although they all survived the war, their lives were vastly shortened because of it.

My Grandfather William Arthur Hailes served in WW 2 and ended up a POW on the very tough Burma Railway, already in his 40's. My uncle George Hailes served in the Army in WW 2 in several campaigns .

My father Able Seaman William Hailes served on HMAS Arunta throughout the world and had the dubious job of being part of the occupation forces after the Atomic Bomb was dropped on Japan. My brother Brian Hailes was in the Army but luckily the Vietnam war ended before he had to go.

I am equally as proud of my father in law Gerhard Erdbrink who was basically on the other side during the war . As a young man of 15 he was forced to become part of "Hitler Youth" and sent to war, he doesn't talk about it but I know at the end of the war he got stuck in the East and had to escape to get home.

All the brave men and women who have served over the years have done so without regard for themselves to give us the life we have. I salute you all - Lest We Forget.

RIP Abel Seaman Hailes and thank you for all you gave me to make me the person I am today.

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# My Second Home - North Fitzroy - The Donald Mackay Connection

Somewhere around 1961 my father got a new job as Manager of the Melbourne Firearms Company and with this job came a house that was located behind one of their shops in North Fitzroy. This shop was managed by a man called George Joseph, it was a typical house behind a shop, nothing remarkable but a step up in comfort from my first home, at least the toilet was inside and connected to sewerage.

It was a funny building and if you are from Melbourne you may know that St Georges Road has funny intersections that come in at all angles, creating odd shapes houses.

By 1960 Melbourne was being flooded by new arrivals and the Italian's loved the Fitzroy/Carlton area, lots of great restaurants started to pop people up, mixed in with the pure Australian vibe of the Fitzroy Footy Ground. In the 60's Australia was changing and although I didn't know it at the time my time in this house would see me being touched by one of the biggest crimes in our short history.

Donald Mackay was an anti drugs campaigner from Griffith NSW who was murdered in July 1977. The man who was charged with the murder was James Bazley. History would reveal that long after we left North Fitzroy, George Joseph, by then an independent gun dealer, sold the gun to James Bazley that the police allege was used to murder Donald Mackay. George and James later had a lovely time as guests of Her Majesties Prisons.
Some close friends now live in North Fitzroy and I love to visit and remember my brush with crime!!

# Friday Funny #7 - Airline Jokes

Just a couple of quick airline jokes, not original but hopefully funny

I got off a plane the other day and my wife met me at the Airport and said "who did you fly with"

I said "I don't know they were all strangers"

I actually did answer her question - I flew Virgin

Lucky I arrived at all flying with an airline that doesn't go all the way

Boom Boom - enjoy your weekend

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# Story # 20 My "Bytestories" Challenge

I discovered 'Bytestories" almost by accident when a fellow comedian published a story, that was on Feb 28th 2013 only 7 weeks ago. I had only ever planned to write a couple of stories and only about comedy which is my current obsession. Of course it couldn't stop there, I have this addictive personality and once I started I couldn't stop.

To date I have written about, comedy, life events, concerts, business tips and even a story about "Hey Guys" the silliest Facebook post ever. I am thrilled that my stories have had nearly 1300 read's to date and I hope people continue to read my ramblings. I make people suffer through grammar that's not great and corny jokes, but its nice to see you are still reading.

I urge you to submit a story and grow this thing , it will reward you in so many ways , its even helping my comedy and grammar. Well maybe just my comedy. I have now challenged myself to write 100 stories in the next 52 weeks, if nothing else it will provide an excellent record of the stuff I did on this journey called life, maybe my first E Book.

So stand by for more jokes, more business tips and a lot more about the people and places who have been close to me.

To the founders of "Bytestories" well done!!!

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# The Zippy Board Kid

When I was about 10, I got called to the headmasters office, walked in and got introduced to two people. The Headmaster then asked me to leave which was all a bit strange at the time. That night my parents got a call from a casting agent offering me a part in a TV commercial. I was to become "The Zippy Board Kid"

Zippy boards are basically plastic kickboard's and I got to use the big one with fins!

On a very cold June morning we assembled at Elwood Beach and after a few rehearsals and running into the cold water my famous line was born - The big ones with fin's are for big kids like me. At this point I worked out that I was cast not for my acting ability but because I was the token fat kid for the ad.

Being the "Zippy Board Kid" didn't work out too well.  I got paid $28 which was quite a lot in 1966 but never lived it down. I was tormented and bullied over it  at school and it took years to go away. Of course I am sure I tormented kids about other stuff.

Every now and then I run into someone from school and they always remember me as "Zippy" these days it doesn't bother me. One thing I remember is that through the bullying one older kid looked after me, his name was Peter Lyons I don't know where you are now but thanks!

The moral to this story, I should have got more money.

**In Melbourne, Victoria, Australia**

# Black Sorrows -Surfers Paradise Beach April 7 2013

It has rained on the Gold Coast a bit more than usual in recent weeks ,so putting a concert on the beach at Surfers Paradise was always going to be risky.

The weather gods were very kind to us and after a lovely Thai meal in Surfers the six of us headed for the beach. I love live music, and I love The Black Sorrows but watching a band on a stage on the beach is just something else all together.

At 8 PM sharp the stage lit up, Joe thundered on stage with a great version of Hit and Run and for the next hour delivered hit after hit including Harley and Rose, Shape I am in, and many more. A new brass section made this show even hotter. One down side was the absence of Bass Player Joe Creighton not sure who filled in tonight but it just wasn't the same . I assume Joe is off doing his own stuff this weekend.

This man and his great bands never let us down. I recently saw one of Joe's other bands Jo Jo Zep and the Falcons on the bill with Elvis Costello and Jo Jo Zep stole the show.

The waves were crashing in the background and the effect of the flood lights over the water was breathtaking. Going to an event like this makes me realise that we don't do enough in our own backyard. I live 5 K's from Surfers Paradise so it's nice and close .

All in all a great night which ended with some great fireworks from a barge in the ocean. Can't wait to attend more events like this.

Well done Surfers Paradise

**In Surfers Paradise, Queensland, Australia**

# Friday Funny # 6

I accept that I am a big man, but the incident that happened to me the other day at the cricket was just to much!!

I decided to go to "The Gabba" to watch some cricket and went and stood in the outer. I know nothing about cricket but I tried to get into it and was actually starting to enjoy it.

So after about an hour the officials came over and asked me to move 3 metres to the left, I didn't know why but it didn't bother me so I moved.
Half an hour later the same thing happened and I duly complied.
After the fourth move I finally worked out what was happening...

They were using me as that big screen to keep the sun out of the player's eye's.

I hate cricket now

**In Brisbane, Queensland, Australia**

# The Rolling Stones - February 17 1973

Some days in your life you never forget. I will never forget my Wedding, the birth of my two daughters and the death of my father Bill and brother, Brian, 7 weeks apart.

When the Rolling Stones came to Melbourne in 1973 another unforgettable day was about to happen. It started some months earlier when I lined up for hours to buy 3 tickets for $18.00. Yes, $6 each. I bought one for myself, one for my best mate Graham Kennedy and the third one was for the date I was sure to get if I had a Stones ticket. My date turned out to be a new girl who moved to the city from the country whose name I can't remember. We arrived at Kooyong on a hot February day in my dad's lime green Charger and I was wearing matching lime green flares very cool in 73. Entering the stadium was mind boggling, the stage was totally white and looked amazing. Madder Lake were the support, what a tough gig for them. No one except their Mum's were there to see them.

The moment arrived, the opening notes of Brown Sugar and Miss "I am very shy from the country" stood on her seat and never sat down until the final notes of "Street Fighting Man" faded away with Mick throwing rose petals from the stage. The shy girl and I never dated again so I blew that $6 but it's a day I will never forget. I have seen the Rolling Stones 3 times since but nothing has even came close to this day. One final memory is the big black man on the stage who was "security" he just sat there with his huge hand tapping away to the music.

**In Kooyong Tennis Centre, Kooyong, Victoria, Australia**

# Byron Bay Bluesfest Day 1 2013

As much as I love live music I had never been to as festival before yesterday.

Thanks to a couple of friends making the suggestion I went along to Day 1 at Bluesfest. What a fantastic experience, the minute you arrive you feel the buzz in the air with the massive tents, food vendors, shops and thousands of people just wanting have fun. I was lucky to have my friend's Helen and Ian to guide me, as unlike me, they were far from Bluesfest virgins and we managed to see a lot of music in a short time.

First up, direct from New Orleans Trombone Shorty, yes he is short and he plays the trombone, what a power packed act. Next up Robert Cray who was amazing, I then took in a little of Joan Armatrading, managed to hear 3 hits before heading back to Robert Cray. Next up tried to have a look at Rodrguez but just to crowded to get in, so over to The Tedeschi Trucks Band, any band with two drummers get my vote. Jason Mraz wasn't on my list but I went and caught four or five songs and was glad I did. My day at Bluesfest was nearly over except for one act and that act was "Baby did a Bad Bad thing" Chris Isaak, my day could not have ended in a better way. I had a fantastic day and am feeling the pain in this old body today, but worth every bit of it.

**In Byron Bay, New South Wales, Australia**

# Friday Funny # 5

This is not an original joke, but I heard it this week and I liked it so I am going to share it .

A Scotsman passes away and gets up to the pearly gates and God says,
I have noticed that during your life you haven't been very generous and I don't think I can let you in.

He answered in desperation, but I once put 10 cents in a Salvation Army Tin, someone had dropped it near the tin, God said I don't think that's going to do it.

Getting more desperate, he said I once woke my brother up free of charge.
By this time God had given up, but giving him one more chance he said have you ever committed an act of bravery.

The Scotsman answered yes, I once saw a woman getting attacked in a laneway by a huge violent man so I rushed up to save her. God said that's great when did this happen.....Scotsman answers...about 3 minutes ago!!!

**In Up There**

## Mate and Buddy - Are these great sales openers?

I went to visit my Mum in Hospital recently and stopped by the café to grab a coffee for her on the way in.

The guy behind the counter dragged himself away from chatting to the girl working with him and said - Can I help you MATE I told him that I wasn't his mate and 2 cappuccinos to go would be great.

He just stared at me. Calling me mate wasn't such a huge problem, it was more I felt that I had interrupted his romantic endeavours.

It reminded me of a call I got a few weeks ago …I answered the phone and the voice said Hey Buddy…I want to tell you about...

I never heard any more because I hung up.
He wasn't my Buddy and I certainly wasn't going to give him any of my time.
Have you got staff in your business that talk like this to customers, or put their private life ahead of your business?

If so maybe its time they were ruining someone else's business.

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# Hong Kong part 2 - where to sleep

The title says it all, in Hong Kong you just need a hotel to sleep in because the other 16 hours of the day you will be busy. In Hong Kong you can find everything from a $10 a night boarding house such as the famous Chung King Mansions in Kowloon to the best 6 star hotels in the world. Most of us fit in the middle of these extremes and Hong Kong offers options galore, you only need to know two things. 1 Hotel Rooms are generally small so be prepared. 2 As long as you stay close to an MTR (underground station) you can get anywhere you need to go cheaply and quickly. If its your first time in Hong Kong and the budget will allow try and stay on the Harbour, its just one of those must do's in Hong Kong. If you cant afford to stay, just go and visit the hotels public areas and take in the view.

I have been to Hong Kong several times and recently found an absolute gem of a hotel, it goes against my earlier advice as its not on the MTR but its well located and on several bus routes. This Hotel is called The T Hotel "T" is for training, a hotel in a training college, 4.5 star hotel- 3 star price . I don't have enough room to tell you all about it here so just use Mr Google or Trip Advisor you will be amazed.

I just need you to promise me one thing, please keep this hotel a secret, its so good we need to keep it to ourselves.

**In Hong Kong**

# My First Home - Abbotsford

Abbotsford lies a few kilometres east of Melbourne. In the early sixties it was your typical working class suburb, although migrants had started to arrive in Australia they hadn't quite reached Abbotsford. This was home of the Aussie meat and 3 veg, the blue-collar worker. Today Abbotsford is as diverse as you can get with a huge multi-cultural population. The Thursday night banger's, mash and a "tallie" of beer has been replaced with pad prik and Sav Blanc.

Abbotsford was your old style suburb with "Strip Shopping" and the trams running down the middle of the road. Thankfully this strip remains although with vastly different shops.

You bought your groceries from Mitchell's, a shop the size of the Deli section in a modern supermarket. The biscuits came in big tins and were weighed out by Mr Mitchell. "Hey Mr Mitchell any broken biscuits today" I am sure there never was but Mr Mitchell always managed to find something for us.

There were no aisles, no checkout chicks and certainly no trolleys.

Our street, South Auderley Street ran off Church Street and consisted of single fronted terrace houses in rows of seven or eight. All the houses looked the same, all red brick with a slate roof, they had virtually no front yard.

In the early days we even had the "thunder box" out the back.

It was here we got our first TV and sang with the Salvation Army on a Sunday Night. Different times, but better times? Well I am not sure kid's of today would have liked the thunder box.

**In Abbotsford, Victoria, Australia**

# The Legend of "Hey Guys"

Back on December 7 2012 @ 10.57 am two words were posted on the Melbourne Comedy Rooms hub Facebook page by Nick Mason who may or may not be a real person or may be several people. These two words "Hey Guys" were the start of the longest Facebook thread I have ever seen reaching over 2000 posts a few days ago. So what is it about and what does it mean, honestly I have no idea. The contributors are a mixture of real people and fake people, some quite well known comedians and lots of unknown ones like me. The content ranges from funny to weird, although there been a few bust ups, it generally hasn't got to nasty. Someone calling himself Mike Brown often tells me to shut up but I can handle that because at least I am a real person. Venues are mentioned, Comedy @spleen gets a big run as does @@@@@, invented habits are talked about, even bus trips to the Westgate Bridge, as I said no idea!

There are lots of lurkers just hanging around the Hey Guys thread who don't post, others drop in and out to see where its heading, which is nowhere.

So this is the "Hey Guys" legend, what is it really about, well I think its just people expressing themselves, sometimes in a weird way but it doesn't matter after all its just "Hey Guys" nothing more than "Hey Guys"

There have even been new "Hey Guys "Threads but nothing has the power of the original ...."Hey Guys"

I don't know when it will end but "Hey Guys" I will keep you posted

**In Melbourne, Victoria, Australia**

# Friday Funny # 3

I am a late 50's guy with what could politely called a large build, big bones etc but I still scrub up alright in a suit. I am not the type of guy that young women swoon over, mainly because I don't have a Porsche or a Yacht which is fine by me because I have been very happily married for 36 years. However like any man I have an ego and on a recent trip on the Melbourne tourist tram that ego was deflated completely.

I got on the very crowded tram and was standing there hanging onto the leather strap when I noticed an attractive lady checking me out. I looked at her and nodded and mouthed "me" she mouthed back yes you
I was ready to walk over and tell her I was flattered beyond belief and then it happened the great ego collapse...

She offered me her seat!!!!!

**In Melbourne, Victoria, Australia**

# Hong Kong - Part 1

I am often asked why I like Hong Kong so much and really struggle to answer the question because its not just one thing, more a combination of many elements. Firstly I love big cities, so I guess given that there are millions of people living in an area about the size of an Australian shopping centre, is a good start.

Hong Kong provides so many different experiences from food to shopping to some great attractions. Lets start at the basics,firstly transport is efficient and incredibly cheap, even Taxis are cheap. The train (MTR) is nothing short of amazing. If you are not into silver service then food is cheap, lots of great food courts and local food, its possible to get a decent feed for under $A10 all over Hong Kong. I often refer to the Big Mac index as a way of assessing the cost of living in a big city. I think a Big Mac meal is around A$8 here. Last time I was in Hong Kong it was around A$2-50. Hard to work out how that can be but I am guessing its got a lot to do with the cost of labour, generally wages are about 30% of ours. Hong Kong is a really interesting economic model and I am still trying to work out how it works, but if it means I can go there and travel everywhere for a few dollars and have a Big Mac for $2-50, then who am I to question it. Next instalment hotels.

**In Hong Kong**

# Going the extra mile in your business

Recently I bought a new car and the dealer did all the right things – the car was full of petrol – and there was a nice bunch of flowers for my wife. The sale was seamless and it made me feel good about the company.
So good I have already referred someone to this company who also purchased a car.

Car dealers are good at this and many other businesses can learn from them – customers love the little extra things and sometimes these things cost very little – a phone call or a thank you letter may be all you need to do.
In this case they did it all, a follow up phone call, a letter and they even sent me a picture they took on the day of delivery.
Think about ways you can do something for your customers, as I said it need not cost a lot - as simple as a phone call.
The old adage it's the thought that counts certainly works here treat your customers well and they will return. I could write countless stories about bad experiences because I remember them, just as all your customers do.
There is is this crazy marketing hype that says its cost 9 times as much to get a new customer as it does to keep and old one. Its crazy because it wrong its more like 20 times as much.
Treat your customers well and you will reap the rewards.

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# Friday Funny # 2

Flying is always bit of an effort when you're a big guy. The seats are just not made for my ample bulk but I do the best I can. I was going down to Melbourne this week to do a couple of gigs and I got on the plane and headed straight for my aisle seat and got comfortable.

I was settling in checking the inflight magazine, actually that would be Addazine just ads and not much magging going on there. The other passengers start to board, all secretly hoping they are not sitting next to the big guy, I am tempted to jump up every time someone gets close and let them think they are sitting next to me... but I am just so comfortable in this 16 inch wide seat I resist. The truth is I was stuck!!

So then it happens this smartly dressed woman boards, about my age and starts checking her boarding pass, checking the numbers above, double checking the boarding pass. Then it dawns on her, she goes totally white screws her face up, she is going to be sandwiched next to me for the next 2 hours!!!!

MY WIFE CAN BE LIKE THAT

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# Deep Purple 32 Years On

I love live music, I have all my life and the first major concert I went to was at Festival Hall Melbourne in May 1971 I was 16. The bill was Free, Manfred Mann's Earth Band and Deep Purple. It was a long show full of technical glitches but was incredible, clearly a highlight of my life to that point.

So who could predict that some 32 years later I would again see Deep Purple in concert complete with three of the members who were there in 1971.

It was an amazing show and an interesting mix of people, from huge bikie's to 15 year old kids with their parents. This was the loudest show I have ever been to, the thump of the bass drum was directed through a separate system to boxes along the front of the stage.  I am sure if anyone had a heart attack that the night the thump would have restarted their heart.
One of the big differences at this show was that people around us were really chatty, talking about previous concerts and experiences. I was surprised to learn that 4 people sitting near us had all been to the same concert as me in 1971, what are the odds of that. Its really cool to be able to relive the past in this way, some people never look back, I always look back and relive these moments. Life is full of highs and lows and seeing Deep Purple live in concert 33 years apart was high. Not as good as the Rolling Stones in 1972 but that's a story for another day.

**In Brisbane, Queensland, Australia**

# The Stand Up Journey of a 57 Year Old- Part 2 The First Gig

If you didn't read my first story here is a quick refresh, at age 57 I decided to take up Stand Up and did a course with Robert Grayson for 6 weeks.

At the end of course we "graduated" by doing our first gig.

This is how mine went, in a word I was awesome and my new career had begun soon I would be headlining the Melbourne Comedy Festival.

Well maybe not. There was 10 of us who all got up and did our first gig that night and we were all bloody awesome, this comedy thing is really easy.

Well maybe not. We were awesome because the audience was full of our family and friends, so of course they laughed they had no choice. Its such a false audience and really isn't a good start to your career.  When you go and do your first real gig in front of real punters its  vastly different, they don't know you, they don't love you and worst of all they know you are new so there is a little part of them that wants you to die.

I didn't die at my first gig and 20 gigs later, 10 have been average, 5 have been very average and I have had 5 nights that matched that first night.

I love "standing up" I am far to old for it but I don't care - all my jokes and stories are original so I guess you are only as old as the joke you tell!

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# Whats going on in your Business - Do you know

I walked in to a clothes shop that caters for older, more mature guys today and the two shop assistants were bopping along to some mind boggling loud rap coming out of the roof mounted system.

Every customer in the shop was 40+ and we all had the same problem, the music was doing our heads in. Now the owner of this shop who doesn't work Saturdays is on the wrong side of 60, so this music wasn't his choice in any way.

In fact I know this because the owner is a big fan of the radio station I work for and we play Classic Hits, far more suited to this business and normally on in the shop.

This is clearly a case of when the cats away the mice play RAP. The owner will blow his top when he finds out, which is about now, as I know he reads my stories here. So as I write the phone is being dialled and about now the station changed.

Of course the moral of this story is make sure you know what's going on in your business or you won't have a business. I walked out of that shop today, I will come back another, more peaceful day but others might not.

I always know what's going on in my business - do you in yours?

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# Friday Funny

My first job was as a bank teller I was 18. I was totally unco and a disaster waiting to happen and it did.  First day I set off the alarm, cops came sirens blazing, red faces all around. Second and third time cops came sirens blazin guns drawn, more red faces.

The next time I did it, the cops just called and said has that silly kid done it again. My boss threatened to take away a very useful part of my body with a blunt knife.  So did I learn my lesson, of course I did, I was very fond of my
testicles...

However, when a few weeks later a man with a balaclava and a sawn off shotgun came to my counter and said...  Fill the bag up with money and make it Quick!!

I just simply smiled and said "no need to hurry mate" the cops aren't coming.

Suffice to say my career in the bank was somewhat short.

**In Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia**

# The Stand Up Journey of a 57 Year Old Part 1

What makes a sane 57 year old decide to become a Stand Up Comedian, madness, Mid life crisis, well more late than mid. The reason is simple, there is no greater joy than to entertain people and I can't sing, have no musical ability at all, so Stand Up it had to be.

I was convinced I was a real funny guy and although that was true, there is a major difference between being a funny guy and a comedian. The problem is sometimes you find this out at a really bad time - like your first gig.

Lucky for me I did a course with Robert Grayson and found out that although yes, I was funny I was miles away from being a great stand up comedian. In fact I am still miles away from being a great stand up, one year into my journey I class myself as just average... but with huge potential well that's my opinion and I am sticking to it. The course was with 12 other hopeful's for 6 weeks it was frightening, enlightening and straight out scary. We didn't all make it to graduation, some us just fell away. My journey in the course started off Ok and actually got worse - mid course I reverted to my Master of Ceremonies persona because it is something I am comfortable with and do a lot of. Robert wasn't happy, he sat me on a chair like a dunce and made me take control, embarrassing as it was, it was a massive turning point for me, as from that day forward it all clicked. So we all got ready for graduation the start of our massive rise to fame!! Next instalment  Graduation.

**In Queensland, Australia**

## About Author

# Ron Hailes

I am a sometimes writer, stand up comic ,MC and Radio Presenter- these are my passions but I normally travel throughout SE Asia training sales and management staff in the Auto Industry

**Why is the website called bytestories.com?**

This is a place for "byte-sized" stories and there is a 1500 character (about 250 words) limit for two main reasons. Firstly, we want you to know that "War and Peace" isn't required to leave your mark. Secondly, it takes about 2 minutes to read each story meaning you can head here whenever you want a quick (and entertaining) read.

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