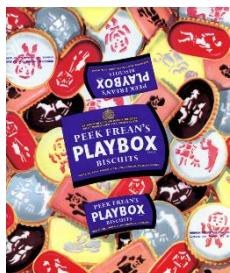


I read an article this week that sent me off down memory lane, it was about biscuits. I wonder what your favourite biscuit is and was, and has it changed?



My strongest memory that I hold is from my early childhood when a real treat was Playbox biscuits. These were different geometric shapes, iced in a variety of colours on which was stencilled a letter or picture. There were clowns, trains, yachts etc. and they were made by Peak Freans. This article set me thinking about the different biscuits I remember, although the article itself was a pictorial record of the familiar biscuits we still see today – custard creams, bourbons, nice, malted milk, digestives, jam sandwich, party rings (the closest we get today to Playbox) and pink wafers.

Also mentioned was Tunnocks Caramel Wafer, and the associated Tunnocks Snowballs and Tea Cakes, all very mallowy and later the Tunnocks Caramel Log covered in coconut and quite a favourite in my teens. We did not have Tunnocks caramel wafers, they are covered in chocolate, instead we had Gray Dunns Caramel Wafers which I remember referring to as the bacon and egg biscuits. This was because they were wafers biscuits with two layers of a brown caramel between wafers and between those two layers a layer of quite yellow 'vanilla cream', a sort of soft fondant which in my imagination I saw as egg, and the caramel became bacon, I am please to say they did not taste of either! Other fond memories relating to biscuits were the Jammy Dodger, which was often awaiting us on return from secondary school, and an Empire biscuit as a special treat, particular to Scotland. These were at quite opposite ends of the spectrum. The Jammy Dodger was not the round variety still available today, but two rectangles of ridged biscuit, definitely not sweet, sandwiched with a layer of generic sticky red jam just the thing to satisfy hunger pangs before commencing homework. The Empire biscuit on the other hand was two shortcake biscuits held together by jam but iced with a generous layer of soft glaze icing embellished with a small jelly sweet or a piece of glaze cherry in the centre. We used to make homemade Empire biscuits with another Scottish speciality the Royal Scot biscuit sandwiched with jam and topped the icing with a Jelly Tot as decoration.



So, I wonder, what are your particular biscuit memories? It is amazing how a simple article can trigger deeply held memories, often long forgotten. Reminiscing is spiritual, it is about identifying key markers in your story and exploring their significance. It may unearth deep feelings, some of which will need to be sorted but others act as moments of enlightenment shining on the history that makes us who we are. Spirituality is about identity and is more than our faith journey, it is the search to discover 'who am I', 'why am I here' and 'where am I going'. For people of faith that will be intrinsically related to a relationship with God and what we believe but we are all spiritual people and we are all on a quest, a journey of discovery and we never know when something will trigger a new path, it could be music, art, nature, or as simple as reading an article in a magazine. Taking time is what is important, time to allow yourself to reminisce and explore, and many of us have plenty of that at the moment.

So, why not sit in the garden, or in your favourite corner of the house, perhaps with a nice cup of tea and a biscuit, and allow yourself to listen to the sounds around and then think about a memory and explore its significance in your story? You might like to write something down; it could be the beginning of 'Your Story'. Sharing it may trigger memories for others and open up yet another story.

