

# Squeeze your lemon

New Year greetings seem to be going the way of Christmas sales in that they get earlier and earlier each year. Social media is full of Happy New Year messages today even though the new year hasn't arrived yet. I'm not sure whether it's a case of 'getting in first' or just general over-exuberance for the celebrations. Or maybe some people think that they may not be capable of selecting the correct characters

in the early hours of 2018. I'm prepared to give people the benefit of the doubt though and be happy that they want me to be happy.



Don't get me wrong, it's not that

I don't appreciate your sentiments but to be honest; this coming year, 2018, would have to throw something pretty unexpected and unpleasant at me to make it anything other than a happy one. I know I am probably tempting fate saying that but really I am truly optimistic about what lies ahead.

I'm going to a party tonight, the first New Year's Eve party I have been to for some years and Gill tells me we are "staying to see the New Year in". Something else I haven't done for a while. The party is a home made affair

arranged by the residents of the marina and it will be another chance to meet a few more fellow boaters and to reinforce the feeling that what we are doing, moving permanently onto the boat is the right thing for us. I can't ever recall making such a significant, life changing move at the precise moment that we move from one calendar year to another and although the date shouldn't make any difference logically, it does. It feels very much like a new beginning in every sense.

As I type, Gill is working her

last shift in Lytham and later today we will go back to the boat and leave our old life behind. I'm looking forward so much to this new adventure. The chance to learn new skills maintaining and driving the boat, making new friends on the marina and further afield and learning to live a completely new way of life from anything that has gone before. It's really exciting and it reinforces my belief that whilst we are all either alive or dead there are so many shades of living in between. We all owe it to ourselves to find the most fulfilling and rewarding life we

can and not to settle for second best.

I reached into the fridge the other week and found half a lemon going soft and showing signs of mould. I tossed it into the bin (compost of course) but giving it a second thought I realised what a great metaphor for life it offered. I realised how sad it was that it had only half fulfilled it's role. I can't remember whether the used half contributed to a G and T or added zest to a lemon drizzle cake but I was sad that half of it had been wasted.

Life's a bit like that isn't it?  
It's so easy to let half of your  
life go unused, only to find it  
lying at the back of the  
proverbial fridge when you reach  
the end of your days.

I wish all of you the best of life  
in 2018 and urge you to go out and  
squeeze that lemon as hard as you  
possibly can.

Happy New Year.