

6th July 2024

Swift

**“But the speed was power,
and the speed was joy,
and the speed was pure beauty.”**

Richard Bach, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*

Apparently, Taylor Swift is a modern-day phenomenon. The recent UK tour of this American singer-songwriter has played to huge, sell-out arenas and stadiums, attended by tens-of-thousands of adoring “Swifties”, as Taylor Swift fans are called. Her boyfriend is Travis Kelce, the all-star Tight End of the Kansas City Chiefs American Football Team. But that’s all I know ...

So, I Googled Taylor Swift ... and got news of “The Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication” (SWIFT), an RSPB story about “Swift Awareness Week”, 29th June to 7th July (only a day left, folks), technical details of “a safe and fast computer programming combining the best in modern language thinking with wisdom from a diverse open source community” called “Swift”, the stats for the Suzuki Swift motorcar, background to the “Swift Caravan Company” and pointers to a biography of Jonathan Swift ... before I got onto *anything* relating to Taylor Swift. Maybe she’s not *really* a modern-day phenomenon ...

Forever Young by Bob Dylan which I quoted recently has this verse:

*May your hands always be busy, may your feet always be swift,
May you have a strong foundation when the winds of changes shift.
May your heart always be joyful, may your song always be sung –
And may you stay forever young.*

My feet are not as swift as they were when I was a flying fullback for my college football team, or when I ran marathons. No one could say of me these days that his “speed was pure beauty”, like Jonathan Livingston Seagull. Does that mean I’m no use anymore, that I’ve failed to stay “forever young” as Dylan suggests? Am I no longer the phenomenon *I’d* like to be? Nah! It’s not an issue. Slower on my feet I may be, but I pray to God that I will always be swift to challenge injustice, swift to offer the hand of compassion, swift to say “thank you”, swift to work for peace, swift to praise my God. In these terms, I will *always* be, “forever young”.

I may know little or nothing about Taylor Swift, but I like to think that I really might be a Swiftie after all.

A prayer for today

Swift? Like tens-of-thousands of others, I may even be a phenomenon. Amen