Later Accomplishments

**They shall still bring forth fruit in old age;
they shall be fair and desirable.
*(Psalm 92:14)***

**Accomplished elders:
Mark Twain -- learned to ride bike, age 55
H. G. Wells -- doctoral dissertation, age 76
Mary Baker Eddy -- started Christian Science Monitor, age 88
Cornelius Vanderbilt -- bought first railroad stock, age 68
Elizabeth Arden -- did yoga handstands, age 75
Vladimir Horowitz -- finished last recording, age 86
Clara Barton -- learned Spanish, age 88; learned to type, age 90;
Arturo Toscanini -- conducted 3 1/2 hour rehearsals, age 87.
Frank Lloyd Wright -- finished Guggenheim, age 89
Laura Wilder -- started Little House books, age 65
B. Russell -- made international peace symbol, age 85
William Mayo -- founded his clinic, age 70
Auguste Rodin -- married life-long love, age 76. (they met when he was 23. *(World Features Syndicate)*
Many had major achievements after 60. Among them were John Forsythe, 75, who starred as Blake Carrington on TV’s Dynasty until age 71; David Brown, 77, producer of such hit films as Driving Miss Daisy, A Few Good Men and The Player; Julia Child, who is still writing cookbooks at 80; Dr. Jonas Salk, 78, who has been working on a prototype AIDS vaccine since 1984; Jessica Tandy, who won an Oscar at 80 for Driving Miss Daisy; and Cyrus Vance, 76, who has been a leading UN negotiator in war-torn Bosnia. *(Parade magazine, 1993)*
Konrad Adenauer rebuilt a defeated, morally disgraced West Germany after World War II, serving as chancellor until the age of 87. *(Shepard Nevel, in Rocky Mountain News)***

**Piper Cub airplane builder William Piper didn’t learn to fly until age 50, and the idea of building his own airplane came ever later. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**How many airplane pilots are still flying after age 80? Can only report the United Flying Octogenarians has 63 members. To belong, you need a good FAA license and must pilot a plan at least once after your 80th birthday. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Appreciating Age: Think you’re too old to try something new? Consider these examples:**

**\* Actor George Burns won his first Oscar at 80.**

**\* Golda Meir was 71 when she became prime minister of Israel.**

\* At age 96, playwright George Bernard Shaw broke his leg when he fell out of a tree he was trimming in his backyard.

**\* Painter Grandma Moses didn’t start painting until she was 80. She completed more than 1,500 paintings after that; 25% of those were produced when she was past 100.**

**\* Michelangelo was 71 when he painted the Sistine Chapel.**

**\* Physician and humanitarian Albert Schweitzer was still performing operations in his African hospital at 89.**

**\* Doc Counsilman, at 58, became the oldest person ever to swim the English Channel.**

**\* S. I. Hayakawa retired as president of San Francisco State University at 70, then was elected to the U.S. Senate.**

**\* Casey Stengel didn’t retire from managing the New York Mets until he was 75. *(Glenn Van Ekeron, in The Speaker’s Sourcebook)***

**Paul Gauguin “retired” as a stockbroker and became a world-famous artist. *(United Technologies Corporation, advertising message)***

**At 100, Grandma Moses was painting. At 94, Bertrand Russell was active in international peace drives. At 93, George Bernard Shaw wrote the play “Farfetched Fables.” At 91, Adolph Zukor was chairman of Paramount Pictures. At 90, Pablo Picasso was producing drawings and engravings. At 89, Mary Baker Eddy was directing the Christian Science Church. At 89, Arthur Rubinstein gave one of his greatest recitals in New York’s Carnegie Hall. At 89, Albert Schweitzer headed a hospital in Africa. At 88, Pablo Casals was giving cello concerts. At 88, Michelangelo did architectural plans for the Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli. At 85, Coco Chanel was the head of a fashion design firm. At 84, W. Somerset Maugham wrote “Points of View.” At 83, Aleksandr Kerensky wrote “Russia and History’s Turning Point.” At 82, Winston Churchill wrote “A History of the English-Speaking Peoples.” At 82, Leo Tolstoy wrote “I Cannot Be Silent.” At 81, Benjamin Franklin effected the compromise that led to the adoption of the U.S. Constitution. At 80, George Burns won an Academy Award for his performance in “The Sunshine Boys.” *(Wallechinsky/Wallace, in The Book of Lists, p. 3)***

**Planning early retirement? Consider writer Rex Stout, creator of Nero Wolfe. He died in 1975. In his last year he had more books in print than any other living American author. He didn’t start to write his mysteries until age 47. *(L. M. Boyd)*
“I was considering retiring this year and giving into bodybuilding with the thought in mind of becoming governor of California. But I decided to instead stay with the body I have and the job I have,” Bob Barker joked after CBS announced the 81-year-old Emmy-winning game-show host has agreed to continue as host of The Price Is Right for a record 34th season. *(Rocky Mountain News, January 6, 2005)*
Clara Barton was 60 when she founded the American Red Cross. *(Paul F. Levy, in National Enquirer)***

**Baseball: Steve Carlton didn’t know it, but he passed the torch in 1988. Carlton, until last week the career strikeout leader for left-handed pitchers at 4,136, retired early in the 1988 season. In September of that year, Randy Johnson was called up by the Montreal Expos from Indianapolis. While Carlton was an immediate success, winning 57 games by age 26, Johnson was not on the same path. He won only 10 games by that age, which more rivaled the route taken by Warren Spahn, who didn’t win any games until he was 25 but won 363 games in his career, a record for a lefthander. *(Rick Hummel, in St. Louis Poist-Dispatch, September 19, 2004)***

**At the age of 47 years and 240 days, Julio Franco of the New York Mets last week became the oldest Major League Baseball player to hit a home run. Franco credits his ability to play a decade beyond normal retirement age to a regimen of religion (he observes the Ten Commandments), exercise (he lifts weights six days a week), and especially diet. He eats up to 20 egg whites a day for protein, and drinks a blenderized concoction of cauliflower, celery, broccoli, beets, onions, garlic, and apples. “There is no magic pills,” he said. “The things I can control -- my diet, baseball, my interaction with friends, family, teammates -- that’s what I can control, and that’s what enriches my life. *(The Week magazine, May 5, 2006)***

**Not all scientific discoveries are made in a scientist’s flowering youth.  The American botanist Benjamin Minge Duggar reached the climax of his life’s work when, in 1948, he discovered and introduced the use of the broad-spectrum tetracycline antibiotics -- at the age of seventy-six.
*(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 231)***

**George Burns became a movie star at 79 and won an Oscar at 80. *(Maurice Zolotow, in Reader’s Digest)***

**George Burns, on his CBS special, “George Burns’s 95th Birthday Party”: “People are always asking me when I’m going to retire.  Why should I?  I’ve got it two ways -- I’m still making movies, and I’m a senior citizen so I can see myself at half price.” *(Reader’s Digest)***

**Famous cook Julia Child could barely cook until she was 34. After briefly attending a cooking school in Beverly Hills, California, she went to Paris where she learned the art of French cooking at the world-renowned Cordon Bleu cooking school. *(Ed Lucaire, in Celebrity Setbacks)***

**After Winston Churchill made his mark as a world statesman, he picked up his pen and won the Nobel Prize for Literature at age 79. *(United Technologies Corporation, advertising message)***

**Winston Churchill, who captured the hearts and minds of his countrymen with his prescient warnings about fascism and totalitarianism, retired as prime minister at the age of 81. *(Shepard Nevel, in Rocky Mountain News)***

**Congressman Claude Pepper of Florida was still actively championing the rights of the elderly and the poor at 88.  *(Bits & Pieces)***

**The father of modern astronomy, Copernicus, was 70 before he published his theory -- then revolutionary -- that the Earth revolved around the sun. *(Paul F. Levy, in National Enquirer)***

**S. I. Hayakawa retired as president of San Francisco State University at 70, then was elected to the U.S. Senate. *(Glenn Van Ekeren, in The Speaker’s Sourcebook)***

**Environmentalist Marjory Stoneman Douglas, credited with saving the Everglades, is still fighting for the cause at age 100. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Now, Charles Fillmore had the most amazing growth in the healing of his leg when he was past the age of 75.  Well, we think that at age 75 it’s pretty much over. We think we can’t heal ourselves any more. We think we can’t regenerate. But Charles Fillmore says to you that you are constantly replacing body parts. If you have a 1921 Ford out in the parking lot, but every moment you have replaced the parts of the car, is it really a 1921 Ford or is it a brand new Ford? I tell you, you are not your age. You are brand new. Your body is constantly rebuilding itself. And every cell listens to your direction. *(Christopher Ian Chenoweth)***

**Auto manufacturer Henry Ford was 40 years old when he put together the Ford Motor Company -- and he didn’t become sole owner of the firm until he was 56. *(Paul F. Levy, in National Enquirer)***

**Although he had already attained the advanced age of 70 when the Revolutionary War broke out in 1776, Benjamin Franklin’s guiding hand was felt everywhere during the struggle against the British. *(James Meyers, in Mammoth Book of Trivia, p. 209)***

Grandma Moses is proof positive that you’re never too old to learn something new. Take a look at the life of this celebrated folk artist who started a new career in her 70s. When she was 67, her husband, Thomas, passed away and she handed over the farm duties to her son and daughter-in-law. During her spare time, she embroidered pictures with yarn wool, which were much admired by family and friends. However, arthritis set in, forcing her to give up her needlework when it became too difficult to hold the needle. But she could hold a brush, and so turned to painting at age 76. Twenty-five paintings were done after she hit the century mark. Her art hangs in nine U.S. museums, and another hangs in the White House. *(Tidbits of the Foothills)*

William Henry Harrison was the oldest man ever to be elected to the presidency of the United States. He was sixty-eight. *(E. C. McKenzie, in Tantalizing Facts, p. 42)*

**For 90-year-old golf pro Harvey Penick, success has come late. His first golf book, Harvey Penick’s Little Red Book, has sold more than a million copies, which his publisher believes makes it one of the biggest things in the history of sport books. His second book, And If You Play Golf, You’re My Friend, has already sold nearly three-quarters of a million. But anyone who imagines that Penick wrote the book to make money doesn’t know the man. In the 1920s Penick bought a red spiral notebook and began jotting down observations about golf. He never showed the book to anyone except his son until 1991, when he shared it with a local writer and asked if he thought it was worth publishing. The man read it and told him yes. He left word with Penick’s wife the next evening that Simon & Schuster had agreed to an advance of $90.000. When the writer saw Penick later, the old man seemed troubled.  Finally Penick came clean. With all his medical bills, he said, there was no way he could advance Simon & Schuster that much money. The writer had to explain that Penick would be the one to receive the $90,000. *(Terry Todd, “Morning Edition,” National Public Radio)***

**I bought a Harley-Davidson the other day. And I went paragliding. I turned 61 and decided I was going to do all the things I never did before because I was too careful. *(Larry Hagman, actor)***

**The famed jurist Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. continued to write his eloquent, visionary U.S. Supreme Court opinions until the age of 91.
*(Shepard Nevel, in Rocky Mountain News)***

**Will Keith Kellogg was 46 when he started the Battle Creek Toasted Corn Flake Company and first offered his now-famous breakfast cereal for sale. *(Paul F. Levy, in National Enquirer)***

**200: Number of shows Blues master B. B. King will play this year. The 79-year-old laments he’s not averaging 250 shows a year anymore, or the 342 one-nighters he played in 1956. Though he has a place in Las Vegas, he still considers the road his home. *(Rocky Mountain News, September 7, 2004)***

**Have you done some serious planning about starting that business you always dreamed of? A few years back, a 53-year-old guy named Ray Kroc did. He called it McDonald’s. Golden arches, not fallen arches, for that oldster Kroc. *(Harvey Mackay, in Outswimming the Sharks)***

**President Nelson Mandela, at age 76, represents the best and most vibrant hope for South Africa’s still delicate democracy. *(Shepard Nevel, in Rocky Mountain News)***

**If elected in 2008 at the age of 72, John McCain would become the oldest man to win a first term as president. Ronald Reagan was 69 when he won his first term in 1980 and 73 when he was re-elected. *(Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, as it appeared in The Week magazine, September 15, 2006)***

**Loretta Corcoran’s put a new wrinkle in the modeling business--at 93 she’s the oldest model in America. She earns $75 an hour doing up to 25 modeling jobs a year, appears in commercials and makes public appearances. Incredibly, Loretta didn’t start modeling until she was 91. *(Chris Benton, in National Enquirer)*
Anna Mary Robertson was born in Greenwich, New York, September 7, 1860, some 75 years before she embarked on the painting career that made “Grandma Moses” a household name. A farm wife – she married Thomas Moses in 1887 – she started painting when arthritis put an end to her needlework. In 1938, her naive paintings of old-timey rural life, displayed in a drugstore window, caught a collector’s eye, and Moses was soon exhibiting in New York City. She painted some 1,600 works to popular acclaim before dying in 1961, at age 101. *(Alison McLean, in Smithsonian magazine)***

**No Kidding:**

**\* Frank Lloyd Wright – finished Guggenheim, age 89**

**\* Laura Wilder – started Little House books, age 65**

**\* B. Russell – made international peace symbol, at 85**

**\* Clara Barton – learned Spanish, age 88**

**\* William Mayo – founded his clinic, age 70**

**\* Auguste Rodin – married life-long love, age 76 (they met when he was 23). *(World Features Syndicate)***

**Satchel Paige, the oldest man in baseball and one of its most famous pitchers, didn’t break into the big leagues until 1949 when he was said to be 42 at least. He was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1971. (*Ripley’s Believe It or Not!: Book of Chance, p. 69)***

**Margaret Rudkin, founder of the multimillion-dollar Pepperidge Farm Baking Company, was 40 years old when she baked her first loaf of bread! *(Paul F. Levy, in National Enquirer)***

**Artist Pablo Picasso was still producing drawings at 90--and his painting became more innovative with the years. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Be like Ezio Pinza, an inspiration to millions when he starred in SouthPacific, reaching the peak of his career at an age when some people retire. Pinza was young when others his age force themselves to decay; he was far younger in spirit than some less fortunate people in their early twenties. *(Dr. Maxwell Maltz)***

**When someone told 89-year-old poet Dorothy Duncan that she had lived a full life, she responded tartly, “Don’t you past tense me!” In our youth-oriented society the message often sent to older adults is that their usefulness ends at 65 -- if not sooner. Many like Dorothy Duncan recognize this for the nonsense it is and go right on leading productive lives. *(Bits & Pieces)*In his 1983 State of the Union address, President Ronald Reagan opened by observing that the first such address was delivered by George Washington. “But,” he added, “it’s not true that I was there to hear it!” In view of all the gibes about Reagan’s age, his remark was funny, it fit the occasion -- and it was effective. *(John Wolfe, in Reader’s Digest)***

**More than 10,000 of the runners in the 1989 New York Marathon were over 40 years old. *(L. M. Boyd)*A 95-year-old Japanese man has set a new world record in the 100 meter dash for his age group. Kozo Haraguchi, who began running when he was 65, clocked in at 22.04 seconds, soundly beating the previous record of 24.01 seconds for the 95-to-99 bracket. Back in 2000, he set a world record of 18.08 seconds in the 90-94 age group. Haraguchi’s latest achievement took place on a wet outdoor track in the southern city of Miyazaki. “It was the first time for me to run in the rain, and as I was thinking to myself, I mustn’t fall, I mustn’t fall, I made it across the goal,” he recalled. His secret, he said, is taking an hour-long daily walk around his neighborhood. *(The Week magazine, July 1, 2005)*
Colonel Sanders formed Kentucky Fried Chicken in 1956 when he was a 66-year-old, $105-a-month beneficiary of Social Security. *(James Stewart-Gordon, in Reader’s Digest)*

Leroy “Satchel” Paige was born July 7, 1906, in Mobile, Alabama. The Negro League’s star pitcher, Paige became the oldest rookie in the Majors when he debuted with the Cleveland Indians July 9, 1948, at 42. The key to staying young, he said, is never looking back: “Something might be gaining on you.” The Indians took the 1948 pennant, and Paige made the Hall of Fame in 1971. *(Alison McLean, in Smithsonian magazine)***

**When he published his classic book on child rearing, “Baby and Child Care,” Dr. Benjamin Spock was already 43 years old. *(Paul F. Levy, in National Enquirer)***

**Stradivari made his first violin after the age of 60. *(Delia Sellers, in Abundant Living magazine)***

**Not until he was twenty-seven years old did Vincent van Gogh start to draw. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 52)***

**Goethe completed his masterpiece, Faust, at the age of 81. W. Somerset Maugham, Leo Tolstoy, and Michelangelo all were working at age 80. *(Denver P. Tarle, in A Treasury of Trivia, p. 160)***

**Planning early retirement? Consider writer Rex Stout, creator of Nero Wolfe. He died in 1975. In his last year he had more books in print than any other living American author. He didn’t start to write his mysteries until age 47. *(L. M. Boyd)***
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