



POSITIVE: Ann Kiernan believes that Irish people are more receptive of the contribution of older people than they were in the past. Photo: Gerry Mooney

'At 70 I don't need love, but I would like company'

ALISON O'RIORDAN

AT 70, retired teacher Ann Kiernan regards her age as an opportunity for new challenges and beginnings rather than an endgame.

Yet there is a void in her life.

"I am so happy but I feel lonely. I have a beautiful home, peace in my life, loving children, I love music, I play bridge, I love going out for meals but there are times when I miss sharing these events with somebody.

"When I paint a picture I have nobody to criticise it with me or when I occasionally win at bridge there is nobody to share that moment with," said

Ann who is originally from Kerry but now lives in Swords, Co Dublin.

Ann is a firm believer that ageing has changed in Ireland and that the contribution and potential of older people is getting a considerably better hearing than in the past.

"I feel age is only a number and what we all learned as children was that when we get to this age, life was over.

"I do not believe that anymore. Old people used to just sit in the corner — this has changed.

"I feel I can create a joyful and positive day by taking action, and one of the ways I took action was by meeting Jennifer Haskins of Two's

Company," said Ann. Two's Company is an Irish match-making agency founded by Jennifer Haskins and Bill Phelan.

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With 1.5 million single people living in Ireland between 30 and 85 years of age and more than 200,000 between 40 and 70, Ann decided to take her chances — and search for a soul mate.

"If you can be proactive, accept life changes, and take the time and energy to find potential partners, you are bound to succeed.

"No one is going to ride up to my door on a white horse so I decided to join this agency. We all have a choice to live one way or another and I choose to live actively.

"Most people who meet me cannot believe I am 70 years of age. How is it I feel so good about life?" she remarked.

Ann puts an emphasis on positive ageing, on ongoing social, physical and intellectual activity and life-long learning. "The ageing process of my body did not concern me that much over the years. I always took care of my body as I don't drink or smoke," she said. "I'm very much into staying active, I go to the gym in order for me to feel good. I

don't need the love of someone else because I love myself now but a companion would be nice," she added.

Jennifer Haskins of Two's Company said: "In real life love often gets better with age. One reason is that many of us learn from experience and mistakes.

"With maturity we also tend to learn to manage our emotions better and deal with conflict more positively. We develop a clearer sense of who we are, what we want, and how to try to achieve it."

For more information on positive dating call Bill or Jennifer at Two's Company on 1850241241 or visit the website www.twoscompany.ie