

BUSINESS

How retirement in Australia will work in 2050

For many people, retirement is when they stop the commuting and the clockwatching and live a little.

Grandchildren, DIY projects and bucket-list holidays replace days once devoted to work.

But with more of us needing to self-fund longer lives, will retirement still be the same decades from now?

The short answer is “no”, according to Glide Outplacement and Career Coaching principal consultant Simon Bennett, who believes retirement will be a very different beast in 30 years’ time.

“I think there will be government rules preventing people accessing their superannuation and age-pension entitlements until they’re much older,” Mr Bennett says.

“I also think we won’t be able to take out large capital sums from super to spend on ourselves, and most people will receive an annuity payment.

“The Baby Boomers, I think it’s fair to say, have (retirement) about as good as it’s going to get.”

THE END OF RETIREMENT?

Business futurist Morris Miselowski agrees retirement will be different, but he doesn’t think that’s a bad thing.

“I don’t think retirement will exist and I don’t want it to,” Mr Miselowski says.

“Retirement came into being 120 years ago because it prevented people from working until they dropped, and that’s a good thing.

“But nor do I agree with this arbitrary age someone else sets for us as to when we’re no longer useful.”

Mr Miselowski argues that many of us will live to 100 in the future and will need ways of funding those 30 years while also staying mentally engaged.

“We’ll see people dipping into multiple roles, or what is known as contingency work,” he says.

“They may make clothes to sell on Etsy, do some Uber driving or a bit of sideline consultancy.

“People who keep working in their 80s or 90s will no longer be a news story because it will no longer be uncommon.”

HOW WE WILL LIVE

Retirement will also be a much more enjoyable experience for many, owing to the widespread uptake of wellness.

“In the past, retirees waited for something to break before addressing a health issue,” Mr Miselowski says.

“These days ... they’re taking care of themselves and exercising, so health becomes preventive rather than curative.”

Technology will also help independent retirees to live more comfortably.

“There will be gadgets that will tell people when they haven’t taken their medication, that will monitor their homes, and they will have groceries delivered when they’re about to run out,” he says.

“There will also be a greater number of people living in multigenerational homes, with a number of family members under one roof.

“It’s an Eastern philosophy that we have moved away from, but I think it will come back as people look to share housing costs.”

But the retiree’s enthusiasm for volunteering is one thing that won’t go out of style.

“We’re hardwired to be part of a herd and help others, and retirement gives people that time to do it,” Mr Miselowski says.