

Colin Oliver Taylor - *personal profile*

I seem to remember when I arrived at Harlow College that it was the size of the place that surprised me. I had not been for a visit etc before joining, as I lived in West Africa with my parents, and apart from a brief time at Parndon Hall school, also at Harlow, I had hardly been in England.

My time at the school was very well punctuated by the cane, both from Mr Dames and Mr Purgavie, mainly for consistently scoring a zero in French!!

I do remember one time, just before bonfire night, when a group of us took fireworks to the old rectory and had a "war".. police were called, I made a home run to the school, but several others didn't.

I remember receiving the cane from Purgavie in the gym in front of two complete classes... hurt a bit I seem to remember too! I also received "six of the best" from Purgavie for getting someone else to do my "cubes" (remember them.. I eventually had a pretty full catalogue of all the main ones given out).. the guy I had paid was actually doing them in prep in the old TV room..... marvellous!!

I remember that room pretty well, trying to get a seat to watch the Beatles on the TV etc..... and remember the fives court and gravel playground... summer evenings playing "witches" etc....

Well I finally managed to learn enough to get into Merchant Navy college at Greenhithe..... must have learned something cos I came out of there as top of my year when I left....

I stayed at sea for a couple of years, then some fool invented the Jumbo jet, and the English merchant fleet was virtually scrapped overnight.

Having now gone back to the drawing board, I joined the London Fire Brigade. I served at several stations all over London, and eventually left in 1992, as an Assistant Divisional Officer, after having sadly failed a medical.

At that time my kids were still pretty young, so had to start again, and managed to join Sussex Police as a communications officer, where I still am today (sadly).

I have had a pretty interesting life in one way and the other. I married Liz in 1971, and we moved to Farnborough in Hampshire, tho I continued to work for London Fire Brigade.

In Nov 1972 I had an accident, fell almost 60ft from a ladder, and was in hospital(s) for 13 months.... somehow managed to recover and got back to work. Had three kids with Liz... eldest son Christopher is now 29 and lives in Melbourne, Oz, Nicholas aged 27 now a fireman in Eastbourne, and Katie,25, married in Eastbourne with one child.

Had another serious accident in 1981 whilst on a motorbike, resulting in another 6 months in hospital, and sadly this time a divorce!! Managed to get back to work again, and was steadily being promoted as I went.

Met my second wife, Jane, in 1982 and married in 1983, and still are thankfully. Have another four kids by that marriage, three boys and a girl. Matthew at Uni doing nursing, Tom in the Army Air Corps training to be a helicopter pilot, eldest James in London as a building

surveyor/site manager, and Gemma works as a nursery nurse... she's the youngest at 19 1/2 years.

Well that just about brings us up to date, hope to get to Oz in December as my son is getting married... had a really bad year health wise last year and wasn't expected to make it.. confounded the buggers tho!

Now play as much golf as my shifts will allow, so if we ever set up a golf tournament, let me know.

Funny reading thro this... that gawky kid in the photo's, who was mates with Pat Holland, Simpkins, the Sears etc, would go on to have 7 kids of his own, travel most of the world, but never return to Harlow since I left the College... must rectify that soon.

You can email me at [Colin Oliver Taylor](mailto:Colin.Oliver.Taylor@bt.com)