

Hugh Jones - *personal profile*

September 1956-December 1963



I remember being a bit of a lout at Harlow. I was caned fairly regularly by both Dick Dames and Roy Purgavie. I got my act together in 1962. Believe it or not, I have still got all my reports from Harlow. (They started off badly then faded!)

Returned to Liverpool (just as the Beatles hit

the big time and moved to London!) and worked on a trade newspaper (The Corn Trade News).



I was in love with a girl in Harlow and moved back in early '65 to live with her and work on a trade paper in London (The Public Ledger). Left the paper and Roger Beck (Old Harlovian) and I started selling potatoes door to door. Great fun, rubbish business people.

Summoned back to Liverpool. Girlfriend dumped me and after mending my broken heart, I proceeded to catch up on girls!! I repped for Colgate - Palmolive for 3 years, then sold insurance for a year, worked in warehousing and distribution for 12 years and back in to insurance in 1982.

I am due to be made redundant from my job as Regional Development Manager with AMP UK Financial Services at the end of March 2003 and am in the process of starting my own management training/development company.



I have been married to Barbara for 33 years and have 2 daughters, (Victoria and Siobhan) and one son (Antony) and 3 lovely grandchildren.

I look forward to reading many more profiles as time goes on and to meeting up with old friends from the 60's era.

You can email me at [Hugh Jones](#)

Potted memories of HC - by Hugh Jones (56-63)

Early years

A Scouse lad from Garston in south Liverpool sent all the way to Essex - 200 miles from Mummy and Daddy. It was an adventure....until the third day when I had seen everything, met everyone in the under 11's and decided I wanted to go home!!

Cried my eyes out that night and remember the dorm prefect being quite kind to a snivelling nine year old with a

severe attack of homesickness - (can't remember his name though). Told me to "pull my socks up" and get on with it. I never cried through homesickness again.

Early names to remember: Tim and Anthony Pinney (**read Baldry on Pinney!**) - Malcolm Inskip (an unusually large penis on such a small chap!). We used to make him show it to all the new boys when they arrived.

Geoff Lyons (the king of the small boys, who now teaches golf in USA). Ian & Ralph Loader. Ralph was a great chap, but spat a lot when he got excited or annoyed, tended to froth at the mouth. So of course we would goad him to see how much he would slaver! Ian was his older brother who became a prefect.

I remember Ian Loader escorting me to Dick Dames' office for 6 of the cosh when I was about 13. The unusual thing about it - was the fact that it was the first night of the September term and he was waiting for me at the Lych Gate when I arrived back from hols to take me to Dick's office!

We had been to Montreux on a school trip and I was arrested with a boy called Oliver for trying to break into a car. (More of that tale in a later episode).

I should have confessed the crime to my Father on return, but was too much of a coward to do so. Roy Purgavie rang Father who gave me a good hiding and then Father rang Dames and asked him to do the same!

Early teachers:

Miss Stanley - Dora or Doris was her first name. Used to take us on nature walks and play the piano and have us singing all the time! I liked her though she was a good old stick.

Miss Perrin: Sexual fantasies of this one. See the photo (she wasn't that good - but to a 10 year old boy she was Marilyn Monroe). We used to throw erasers on the floor underneath her desk and try and look up her skirt to see if she was wearing any knickers. Of course we all swore that she didn't, but how would we know!!

Miss Haigh: Art teacher - nutty as a fruitcake. She used to take us on walks down by the cress beds to draw and paint pictures of trees and bushes, particularly in the summer. I remember once, she took off her blouse and sunbathed. Blast it! She left her bra on!

Another boy from '56/61: Brinsley Robert Gear: (My best pal) whose parents, (Betty and Bob) ran The Sir Winston Churchill pub in Debden (Nr Loughton). I used to go and stay with him occasionally on weekends, as he became a weekly boarder when they moved there.

His Dad used to pay us 1s/9d per hour to stack the shelves in the bar on Sat morning. They also employed a barmaid called Sheila, who was dark and mysterious and Bryn and I loved her. (We used to try and look up her skirt as well!)

We fell in love with Rock and Roll at that time (1958) Oh Boy! On TV - with Cliff, Adam, Billy, Marty, Joe Brown and the gorgeous Vernon's Girls. Elvis on Radio Luxembourg, Conway Twitty, Ricky Nelson, Neil Sedaka etc. etc. Happy Days indeed.

Then things got worse, but more of that again!

I soon realised that Harlow College was not the font of education, where learning was key. It was a failing public school with teaching staff that had either nowhere else to go or they were on their way somewhere else. It was not a school to aspire to.

The first impressions were of tradition and values, but it was all on the surface. It was full of misfits (I was one of them). A lad from Liverpool going to school in Essex? What was that all about Father? Too late now, Dad's dead, so is Mum. I guess they thought they were doing their best.

I was young, naïve and excited with life. I was soon to be hardened and running with the wolf pack. The dog eats dog mentality that showed all my weaknesses. I was drawn like a moth to a flame to the smoking, the breaking bounds and bullying. I thought if I was hard, I would be left alone.

My reports reflected the degeneration of a rather nice little boy into a surly youth. I craved attention and approval from my peers and therefore was always the one to do the silly dare, to be insolent, to be cavalier and not work hard. I privately felt aggrieved at being sent so far away from home.

In those days, it took almost a day to travel from Harlow to Liverpool. I remember the train journey from Euston seemed to take forever. More importantly however, I missed being away from my family and that dark satanic place called Liverpool, which I loved.

Boys came and went at the school. Now, many years later, I can hardly remember anyone except my contemporaries.

Events are now blurred and seven years of my life seem foggy and far away.

It was an endless stream of walking around the circular lawn, going to church, routine, regimentation and no time for individuality except at sport. If you were good at sport, you had a chance to express yourself and be yourself. Maybe the swots did that in their studies, express themselves by being brainier than everyone else.

It was like I wasn't there really. There was this rather unpleasant, angry young man who I watched from afar, who probably didn't add a lot to any one else's life in a positive way, but was someone to be watched carefully because you never knew when he was going to come at you.

The only time I really got beaten up at HC was by a town kid when I was out on exeat and he just wanted to duff up a "college boy" Even then it wasn't too bad, apart from the stinging nettles that he rubbed my face in!

The early years were all about "getting established" - You were either "in" or "out". There were the bigger lads who you steered clear of and maybe curried grace and favour with the hard cases.

Dave Daniels in particular, seemed to run things pretty much, although his brother Jack became head boy. Daniels and his cronies were a bad lot. I remember Dalziel and myself making a right mess of Dave Daniel's bed once in retribution for some humiliation or other that he bestowed on us. Apple pied it and filled it with a load of soil, if I remember correctly.

When we teamed up with Rodney Coe who was as hard as nails, we tried to rebel against Daniels and his gang, but they picked us off one by one. Rodney got the worst of it, but he was a match for any one of them individually and they knew it.

There was Rodney, Beck, Huntingdon 1 and 2, occasionally Brett (could smoke a fag in about 10 seconds could Brett) and myself. There were probably others, but I don't remember. Michael Dalziel and Bryn Gear, but they left in 1961, I think.

Bryn and I were pals from 1956 when I started at HC and I rather believe that he steered away from the gang a bit as he wasn't as stupid as me. (Mind you he did get a public flogging with Dalziel, whilst I had a lesser role in that particular crime and got caned by Purgavie, in private instead, which I think was worse!) I think it involved severely duffing up some poor boy and sticking his head down a toilet! We were always up to some stupid trick or another.

One night, Bryn, some others and myself, broke bounds and thought we were the masters of disguise by putting our blazers on inside out, so people wouldn't see the HC badge! That evening we removed all the diaphragms from the telephone mouthpieces in every public telephone box we could find. What fun! What idiots!

To all the boys who I may have terrified and been cruel to, I offer a sincere apology and hope that you will forgive me. I was lacking in direction and guidance and followed the pack, because it felt safer.

Perhaps I am being hard on myself. I don't think that I was malevolent, like some of the thugs who abounded at HC during my time there, but I was wayward and rebellious and easily led.

Still, you cannot alter the past, but only learn from it. I have recently enjoyed very much, seeing some of my old school pals at the annual reunions and to focus on the happier memories at HC.

The "round the table" games of table tennis. Football with a tennis ball in the quad. Playing fives, talking after lights out and dreaming of the future. Going to the pictures on Saturdays and to the swimming pool in Harlow New Town on Sundays.

So far away now, more than 42 years have gone by since I left that place and still it forms many hazy memories that come to haunt me every now and then.

Life changed drastically for me when I was about 14, having met a girl from Harlow New Town called Lynne. She was my first serious girlfriend and she became my first serious love. In fact, I returned to Harlow to live with her and her family in 1965 when I also spent a lot of time coming back to the school to see McCready, Christian, Bowman, Hardacre, Lehan, Williams and others.

When it was decided to close the school down, there was talk of relocating and I remember going to visit the new proposed school with Roy Purgavie and some of the other boys; nothing came of it though and HC closed down.

In January 1966, my sister got married and Lynne and I went to the wedding in Liverpool. My fortunes had deteriorated slightly as the potato business with Roger Beck was not going as well as expected and my income was next to nothing (so nothing changed there then!).

My Father took one look at this emaciated 18 year old, with long hair, a battered old Morris Minor, with 4 bald tyres and not a decent pair of shoes to his name and said: "You have got 3 weeks to sort yourself out and come home!" So that was that.

I returned home to Liverpool in February 1966. My relationship with Lynne lasted about one more week and I was dumped. Funnily enough, I met up with her and her 2nd husband in the early 90's and I am still occasionally in touch by e-mail with one of her daughters. Lynne is now on her third husband, so I guess I can consider myself lucky!