

Chris McCready RIP - *personal profile & memories*



My years at Harlow passed fairly uneventfully and, at this distance and with a softness of memory, fairly amicably.

Not overburdened with an ambition to do well academically, I bumbled along fairly nicely, trying to do enough to keep out of trouble but not too much so as to interfere with sport and extra curricular



activities! Actually managed to steer clear of the cane, although I once came very close because of an incident in Chewies prep!



Got thumped a few times... one memorable occasion by Brett because I "walked too close to him". Another time I decided to take on Alexander.... silly me. I twice survived being beaten up by the Townies, because I could run pretty fast in those days.

Girls became something of a distraction and I only managed to stop smoking 5 years ago! In the end, school closure or not, I had to move on as the old school had no 6th Form. I ended up in the Lower 6th in the Royal Naval School Tal Handaq, Malta... where I *really* discovered girls!

After a *very* eventful 2 years, my father (R.A.F.) was posted back to the UK and I entered the wonderful world of advertising and marketing.

I also joined a T.A. special forces regiment, but that's another story!

Some 30 years later, having worked in, around and out of marketing agencies and client companies, I am presently a consultant to a finance company, advising on their internet marketing strategy at the same time as running a joint venture company specialising in website development. I also run my own Finance website. (now shut down - Ed)

In my 'spare' time I am about to start turning a cow shed into a four bedroom house, in France. Took the plunge and moved last year and rented whilst we hunted for our *petite piece de France*. Virtually priced out of the market by other Brits with more money (which was why we were in France in the first place - priced out of the UK market!) , we finally found a small barn in a small hamlet, on a small hill, near a small town called **St. Céré** in the Lot, South West France.

Now we are renting whilst we come to terms with '*Le Projet*', starting with a new roof to replace the two-tone moth eaten one that is there! Watch this space!

Married early at 24 to a girl (Navy brat) I met at Tal Handaq, I had 2 children (one of each) and later divorced.

I am presently in a long term relationship and am enjoying a re-start... Edward was 3 years old in January 2004.

Chris passed away suddenly in France in 2014

Chris McCready's - Memories on the Prefects of '63.

By the time I got to Harlow College in 61/62, I knew the ropes. Constantly in fights in every RAF station between Ballykelly and Singapore, having to defend the fact that I was an "effing officers kid". Against the odds, because the 'effing' erks outnumbered the officers 100-to-1 and seemed to have more kids, the outcome of these skirmishes was often not in my favour.

Prep school taught me that to stand out in a crowd, courted trouble from all and sundry especially predatory prefects and bored housemasters.

Now having red hair, freckles an English accent in Northern Ireland AND a Singapore suntan, kind of made it difficult NOT to stand out in the crowd and the first couple of weeks at boarding school was like the running guerrilla warfare of the Malaya Emergency I had just escaped from! I am

convinced I only escaped inflicting severe injury and subsequent expulsion, by a stroke of good fortune.

One night someone in the dorm again attacked my school rug (the game was to cut off all the tassels in the middle of the night, flaunting them like scalps the next day... I kid you not!). Unfortunately for them, I was not asleep and was armed with my trusty autographed (Len Hutton) cricket bat.

Luckily for me the perfect hook shot executed with some difficulty in the pitch black whilst kneeling down, failed to contact properly with my assailant - merely badly bruising his arm (and ego) instead of crushing his head as intended.

Anyway, I digress.

Suffice to say, that by the time I got to Harlow College I considered myself a survivor. I did not smoke, thus pretty much protecting me from the masters and (joy of joys) guess what... the *prefects* stood out in the crowd (not me, for a change) because they were all very, very big thus exceedingly scary, wore different ties and had shiny shoes. Ergo, any fool could spot them... and, once seen, they could be avoided.

I pretty much stayed out of trouble for a while until the fateful double disaster-day that befell me.

I must have been distracted. In a trance... or having a brain haemorrhage. There I was, trotting along alone in the middle of the playground and Brett was loping (he even walked threateningly) toward me. To run was impossible (for an 'effing officers kid' anyway)... I just had to keep going.

BLANG. Ears ringing... cheek sore... tooth loose... gums bleeding. Brett had swung his big meaty fist straight into my passing (new boys) face. Picking myself up off the floor and

with the bravery of the doomed, I shouted at him what the f*** he did he do that for?
As you do.

Somewhat taken aback at being spoken to like that, or maybe just a bit stunned at the amount of blood that a freshly damaged new boy could spit at his double colours festooned expensive baratheon double breasted blazer, he answered (quite politely really) as he loped on about his business, that I had *looked* at him. LOOKED AT HIM. Jesus! Thank God I didn't SPEAK to him! Or (I quake even now) SMILE at him!

Deciding to beat a hasty retreat to the dormitory to clean up, no sooner had I done so than, out of the corner of my eye, I saw the fearful shape of DL quite literally flying through the door.

In mid-air he twisted toward me. Transfixed by this more than frightening airborne apparition, I watched in horror as DL, in slow motion, lent back his head seemingly gagging on something in his throat. Suddenly jerking into real-time-speed like a Spielberg movie, his head snapped forward and he looked me straight in the eye (still off the ground) ... his cheeks went hollow...

And that is exactly where it hit me. A big lump of yellow gob. Straight between the eyes.

Landing less than cat-like, he could not lunge at me to give me the beating he obviously intended. Sprawling with some loss of face, he screamed at me to get the f***k out of the dormitory. At least, I think that is what he said... I could not quite hear over the sound of my illegal feet taking the central staircase steps three at a time, discretion being by far the better part of valour on this occasion!

I hear Brett ended up in Kneisna, South Africa. I fear for his servants. Sorry Brett, I missed you when I was doing the Garden Route. Shame. We could have talked about the good old days.

Don't know where DL ended up.

I know where I would have *liked* him to end up!