

Email addressed to contact@stpetersseaford.org.uk

Coming across your website has brought back memories - I will always remember St Peters.

Wing Commander Backwell Smith who wrote in a school report 'he is a charming boy and I love him dearly, but he is useless at French!' absolutely petrified of being in his form but ended up adoring him and Mrs Backwell Smith and being invited to 'Friston' for tea and to play croquet 'known as Friston's croquet' because of the very steep slope in the back garden! - never seen before or since a fully carpeted garage - complete with a pristine Jaguar sporting an IAM badge.

Mr Back who nurtured a love of painting (thank goodness something I could do as pretty useless at everything else) - extra art on Tuesdays and Thursdays (instead of Games!) propping up my latest 'splodge' next to one of his fabulous oils of navel battles (I still have two of his signed prints on the wall at home). Loved his stories about his life at sea and smuggling tobacco on Union Castle steamers from the Cape. A website had one of his originals come up for auction in America a few years back, sold for a huge amount of money - and to think I sat next to it on the bench as Mr Back was painting it.

Mr Jervis, who tried to teach me Geography (I have to say, on reflection, his control of the class was not the best - or maybe we were particularly horrible!) in charge of the projector, with films in the gym at weekends in the winter months, often see an old movie on TV and suddenly remember I first saw it sitting in the dark on the hard floor of the Gym at St Peters. Never understood why the lead in countdown on the films were upside down. In the Summer it was TV and I remember being dispatched to the staff room to collect the next Philips VCR cassette tape in sequence (the Bond Movie needed three tapes - and probably cost more than the price of a car to buy!)

Dear Mr Rodd who must have been quite ancient, I think he lived in Bishopston, taught my father science when he was a boy - amazing shapes one could make with Bic Biro's and Bunson Burners - like glass blowing! hated the mice staring at me out of the glass jars their stomachs wide open.

Andrew Worton Steward the music teacher dressed up like Tom Baker - big floppy hat and long scarf - just like Dr Who - what a lovely sweet man. I can still hear him and my 'big' sister playing ragtime on two piano's in the music room.

Mr Rideal who was constantly on the go so full of energy, a wonderful man, if you saw him stride out you had a feeling there was really no stopping him. I remember being in a production of A Christmas Carol (quoted in The St Peters Magazine at the time as a howling success), my main job was to gradually fall asleep on stage (no chance of making a mess of that) the sets and organisation was superb. I also played a policeman in some murder mystery or other that was my first and last taste of showbusiness stardom. I remember being quite horrible to him once and I do hope he forgave me.

Mr Baldwin who managed to get me up the 'mini Matterhorn' despite my wobbly knees and vertigo - my mother still has a wooden toolbox and a bowl so lovingly manufactured over many months in his workshop.

Mr Chappell, who probably never knew how grateful I was to be in the 3rd? team for Cricket - an old rubber ball was so much more civilised than a painful cricket ball! - And on the subject of sports, nobody, but nobody could direct a tug of war like Mr Steel - he would throw his whole body in a sweeping motion that was guaranteed to win Blue the tug of war on sports day. Talking of sports days, the agility race, having to crawl through the ladders (looking at my girth now, I am amazed I ever managed it) and over the frame - heart stopping right at the top - and could I get over that damn barrier at the end? .

I actually got to enjoy Rugby in the end, being quite tall I just held the ball above my head - trying to button up my Vyella House grey shirt with fingers numb with the cold after trying to play rugby in thick sea fog was a down side!

Dear Mr Sharpe who did try his best to help me with mathematics, but looking back on it there was really very little hope for me on that front.

MHF inviting me to Sunday breakfast - what a treat - first sight of those small variety pack cereals - opened with a bread knife - straight down the middle, and the Sunday papers - how grown up did I feel! I still have the menu from the leaving boys supper (and a couple of LP's produced by the School) Will scan in and send you some pictures - they are in a box in the garage somewhere.

First time I ever saw a Bang and Olufsen stereo (look liked a space ship had landed on MHF's sideboard) although I did things standards had dropped a bit when the big old Rover went to be replaced with an Austin Princess! - I remember the new car arrive and MHF getting out of looking so smart in a full length camel driving coat and gloves.

Gold and Blacks, and house cups and medals, If in need of a Gold (to offset the blacks!) Mrs Fairbrother could always find something useful for me to do, picking up leaves in the garden, that kind of thing, bless her. I remember sitting on her living room floor - shoes off! watching the football results coming in and wondering what all the fuss was about.

Hoping for news from home in letters fired airborne across morning assembly - one of my letters shot down the back of a notice board to be retrieved and handed to me about two years later during a re-furb! Was it Mr Jervis who fired the letters out - I seem to recall being amazed at his accuracy of shot.

Trying to learn Latin, Limebeer The Romans, Geese save the capital, Horatius Cocles holding the bridge and saving Rome (and all that!) evensong in the chapel, Clarkie the matron pouring salt on her porridge at breakfast (did we really have cold macaroni cheese at breakfast or was I dreaming!). My first dormitory, Nelson and the first night when I cried myself to sleep - dreadful home sickness in the early days. Wasn't there a cup said to be made out of the wood from HMS Victory, awarded for the tidiest clothes folded on chairs in the dormitory?

Heart still sinks when I need to catch a train from Victoria Station, platform tickets - and the cartoon cinema - long gone. I remember saying to my mother 'what if I refuse to get on this train' - poor mother little did I know she was as upset as I was. Leave Outs staying at the Mercury Motor Inn in Newhaven, or my dad would come down with the dog and stay at the Birling Gap Hotel opposite the houses falling into the sea.

Even now 30 years plus later I could navigate myself around the school quite easily, never been back since the auction - happy to remember the school and the people just as it was. I now have two little girls, the eldest goes to a school that immediately reminded me of the very best of St Peters.

I wish you and your website well.

SB.