

MY BIT FOR PATSY

Here I am tickling 70, and trying to cast my mind back to how I got here. The pathway's, (some planned but most by chance,) seem to belong to someone else as I sort them out in my mind, My mind is quite sharp, but 70 years?

As I remember, we as a family were split up at the departure of *Dad*. I was 3 at the time so no recollection of that. My first recollection was the time I joined Nev in the Broadstairs orphanage in Kent. Tried to tie a good Windsor knot in my tie but failed again and again. My first big disappointment, I got punished for that.

Getting together with all the siblings and Mum in High Green and my first smell of decent soap in the bath, it was Palmolive. I don't remember the primary school, in Chapletown where I went with Nev and Des except for the rough and tumble of our brotherly fights on the way home.

Kirk Balk secondary school days were more memorable. I showed a talent for art, thanks to my doodling during history lessons. Woodwork and football were my next highest achievements. I won an art prize every year. Mum died unexpectedly before my final year and Des, Christine and I were taken in by our big sis Audrey. I lasted 6 months in Cambridge and took my bike to the train and went back to finish school at Kirk Balk. I graduated only to be told there were no places for me at Sheffield Politecnic art college, and what was left as a job was ether the pit or steel foundry work, both too dirty for me

Ken always said "where there's muck there's brass" I was determined to find my own muck. Ken took me to Sheffield to talk to the army recruiting office people. After interviews tests and medical test, I was signed up to be a DRUMMER, In the KOYLI. Only trouble was, drummers in the KOYLI are really BUGGLERS/RIFLE MEN. I didn't enjoy that so when a vacancy came up for a drummer in the BAND I jumped at it. Then I had to read music, another language.

For 2 and a half years I had a ball even though the discipline was hard to take and further education was forced on me. Sport was great, cross country, football, cycling and outward bound stuff. I injured my right knee badly playing football.

After training I was sent out to Malaya and then Borneo, that was Jan' 1963. Nine months later it was back to UK and Andover where I met several nice girls and Married Yvonne on the 1st October 1966. Then it was posting time again. After 2 years in Tidworth the regiment was posted to Berlin in Jan 1967. Yvonne followed a year later. It was there that I formed a great little rock band called THE TAKE. We made a lot of spare cash playing in lots of clubs.

1968 we were posted back to UK and Colchester where I received a medical discharge due to my arthritic knee. Big sis Joan put Yvonne and I up in her already crowded house in Hoyland where Yvonne and I applied for immigration to OZ and off we went on Jan 14 1970.

They called us 10 pound poms and arrived in Freemantle 3 weeks later with only \$40 in our pockets. I scored a job in a cabaret band 3 days later. My first wage was \$150, I was on my way to stardom.

The bottom fell out of that in about 9 months so I applied and was accepted for the R.A.A.F Central band in Melbourne as a Percussionist. I landed on my feet again. We adopted Matthew Lloyd through a Church adoption agency. Yvonne and I returned to UK in 1975 after another medical discharge from the RAAF. We lasted 3 months in UK and with the little money we had left Flew back to Melbourne.

Life was going well. I started my teaching career in Melbourne as well as playing for a German restaurant. With all this night and day work Yvonne decided she needed someone with more time and security!. That was it for our marriage. We divorced in 1977 and I moved to Queensland in 1978 and married Kaye in 1979, August 11. Kaye has two lovely daughters, Belinda and Leanna. This was a major turning point in my life. I landed a job with the Qld Symphony Orchestra and later went back to teaching with some professional performances to boot.

Teaching young people to play instruments in bands and orchestras, has been very rewarding. Some of my students now teach and play in professional orchestras and bands such as London Symphony Orchestra, and many Australian Orchestras. It's been a great experience and the school bands I have conducted have toured all over Australia and Hawaii.

After studying part time for 4 years (nights, when not performing) I was awarded my Bachelor of Teaching from the University of Southern Queensland in September 1994.

After 35 years of teaching instrumental music with the Queensland education dep't and playing percussion with the Qld pops orchestra (23 years) I retired. I am now a self-funded retiree with a very small government pension. I spend some of my time making and selling RAIN WHEELS. They are like rain sticks but round for continuous sound. I also refurbish old drum kits.

Thankfully my beautiful wife Kaye has a thriving music and festival business that she works very hard at. I work for her as a highly qualified delivery boy.

That's about it. I left out a lot of gory details!

Hope this is enough, edit as you wish.