

Hi Tim

I wrote a few weeks ago, just after the 'final' tour of my old school had taken place as I'd not realised closure was upon it. Not sure you got it, so am including relevant details for the website, which I was following again this evening.

I was an Islander born and bred, growing up just a stone's throw from the school in Priory Road. An easy commute daily.

I appear in some of the pictures you have on the site and I've included one from my collection of Eric Marsden's choir in 1965/6 year I believe. I'm right in the middle, back row, 5th in from either side. Two to my right is David Millmore, my lifelong friend, now in America. I can name some of the others, Melvyn Hatcher, artist extraordinaire and Trevor Salter, with whom I did my final years project on 'The Aircraft of the IoW'. Sadly, so many names will not come, but the faces I still recall.

It was great to see the pictures of some of the masters including Saunders, Boyland, Aldouss, Healing (appropriately of The St John's Ambulance Brigade) and Mr Boote, who used to administer punishment with a 'HOT' plimsoll I seem to remember!

Happy memories of a wonderful school at which we were so well educated and catered for in all it's wonderful assets, the sailing, the photography, pottery, car mechanics, wonderful sports fields and a swimming pool. A lot of my subsequent friends, when hearing me recount my school days have guessed that I went to some private boarding or high priced public school. They never believe that we had such wonderful facilities 'in a Secondary Modern'.

When I left the Island in 1971, I never returned, like so many (my brother being one) and some who have never left. I preferred to remember it as I'd known it in those halcyon days of the mid 50's to the beginning of the 70's. Family visits to Mum and Dad were the constant reminders of the change that the Island and Carisbrooke had suffered since I left. Now even that tie has been severed with Dad's passing.

The other photo attached is one which hung on Mum and Dad's wall (and now resides with one of my three children on her wall in Huddersfield. (Sorry about the quality I'm rubbish with a mobile, I'll get a better one with a camera sometime.) Anyway, it shows the Tech block as it was in my day, with Tech Drawing, pottery and art rooms and the car garage, plus the end of the sports hall. It also shows the encroaching developments along the old railway track through Mr Gates' fields. Of most interest to me are the houses that I grew up in, and those of my Grandparents are also encapsulated in this moment of history. It will be strange without the school any more I'm sure.

Priory Boys will always remain a fond memory of mine and this news is very sad. I'm hoping to get some pictures taken before the fateful day the wrecking ball begins it's final demise, but I hope you will be publishing some here before that happens.

Many thanks for keeping the memories alive.

Please add my details to your contacts list. You may use the contents of this e-mail on the site, along with the pictures if you wish.

I've just made a note in my diary for the Fentum reunion date to which I am hoping to come in September.

Kind regards

*Geoff*