

# Reminiscences

by

Hilary Tandy (née Watson) • Music • 1967-71

David Tandy • Drama • 1968-71



**Hilary & David c. 1973**



**Hilary – 2015  
with one of her twin grandchildren**



**David – 2015  
on the footplate**

## Hilary Watson - Music

At the *tender* age of eighteen, I arrived at Bretton with a suitcase of new clothes, several books that we'd been asked to read, my piano music and a certain amount of anxiety. And so started four significant years that stay in the memory.

- I soon found that no-one ever read the books.
- We were going to spend time (years) in one of the most beautiful estates in the country.
- The Music School was full of orchestral instruments I had never seen close up before – and people could play them.
- Friends were so easily made.
- Our creative senses were to be challenged.
- We were obliged to develop a taste for Blue Mountain coffee.
- Time didn't mean very much.
- Having a boyfriend with a car was a real bonus.
- Having a boyfriend with a car meant fish and chips from Franks.
- Meals were cooked by other people.
- Beds were made and rooms cleaned by other people.
- Albert came round with his dogs and locked all occupants in at 10.30 pm regardless.
- There was Dance and Movement for everybody once a week.
- The Drama department was much more interesting than the Music department – this is a personal observation and encouraged by the fact that my fiancé (now my husband) was a drama student.

Now at the *less tender* age of sixty-six, I realise the value of this experience may have been a little lost on a mere teenager. Now retired, I would love to walk round the lake or over to the Cherry Tree or to sit in hostel rooms with friends, drinking peppermint tea (sadly, not coffee any more) with the Beatles on the turntable, so sure we know how to put the education world right. I miss the thrill of the Greek plays at dawn, the new plays written by First Years in the Experimental Theatre, and the obligatory sessions in the hall dressed in a leotard being part of a volcanic eruption.

Having met David at Bretton, we experienced it together and it has formed the foundation for our marriage. Our children have visited Bretton and, who knows, our grandchildren may well do the same.

So maybe I can say, the experiences weren't all lost on a young eighteen year old after all.

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c. 1973

Hilary  
Watson

1967 - 71

Music



2015

## David Tandy – Drama

Some memories of Bretton after 40+ years –

- *Arriving at Bretton in my Mini with a complete Shakespeare and a Mini repair manual.* (The latter being the only text of any use to me over the next three years.)
- 19 February 1970, Kennel Block Coffee Bar, ‘stepping out’ with Hil for the first time and being inseparable thereafter.
- Being bowled over by the Experimental Theatre and the atmosphere that could be created in it.
- Wondering if I was the only (?) drama student to complete three years’ worth of productions without a named-part. But happily lit most of them! I think I can still just about recite the names of all those in D168.
- The excitement and sense of being so grown up in the First Year going to the bar and to whatever was going on upstairs.
- Living in a caravan in Cawthorne, next door to Paul Daniels and his then partner.
- Devouring sausage, egg and chips in the dining hall on Saturdays.
- Dr Davis breaking up a Men’s Main jam session at an early hour.
- Mr Hycock’s first week lecture on sex and contraception – relationship training as it’s now called.
- Meeting Dave Lodge and staying friends for far too short a time.
- The taste of hot pies and beans in the coffee bar.
- The convenient length of the bookshelves in Kings Head, where there were no bedroom door locks.
- Regretting not making more of my Outdoor Activities subsidiary.

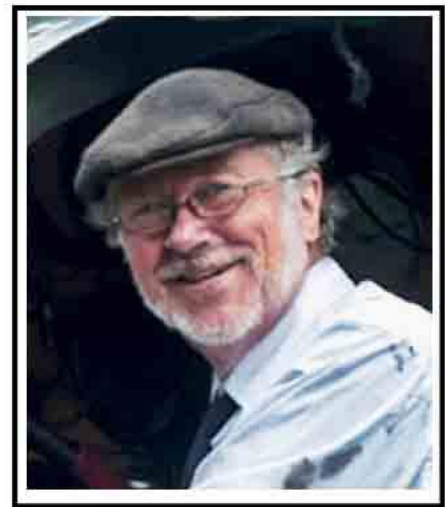
- Having to choose between affording petrol, beer or cigarettes – the cigarettes lost.
- The leading man in my final year production having gone AWOL as the lights went up.
- Moira dressed as a nun in my final year production.
- Final TP and realising that I had no aptitude for or interest in teaching and the surprising way in which a different career subsequently developed.
- ***Leaving Bretton in my Mini with a complete Shakespeare and a Mini repair manual*** - and a fiancée!
- Taking our children to Bretton years later and being surprised that no familiar faces appeared in the hostel room windows, offering coffee.
- Staying in touch with what are now some very old friends.

\*



c. 1973

David  
Tandy  
1968-71  
Drama



2015