

Poetry & Music

"Have ya got a light boy?" had me turning my head round more than I thought usual. Me thinking it was "Have ya got a light Boyd?". We hit the ground running.

The Stage (green it was, with a cream stripe) had dropped Anthony 'Tony' 'Olly' Oliver and myself off at the garage. The stage pulled awaysay to reveal our first posting after Cosford - RAF West Raynham (CFE) . . . a garage and an RAF camp in the wilds of Norfolk. 62/63 season.

The Stage had its own timetable and the lads soon found out how to get around it. Had to. Nearly 7 miles to the nearest pub (coffee bar!) and the Stage left for London every Friday afternoon after work. After a while Olly got a sports car and I went for motorbikes.

Getting to London from West Raynham to the folks in Essex (RAF Hornchurch) had me arriving in London at a different angle. Instead north West I'd end up North East on the Stage from West Raynham. With the folks moving to Earlsfield, my destination switched from East to South. I'd get off the Stage and mouch down Charing X Road, rummaging through bookshops on my way to the tube. when

Brian Power (38th), who'd taught me how to drink (and come face to face with death at the bottom of a bucket) suddenly came to mind when I had occasion to break off and partake of refreshments in a pub next to British Rail (Strand end) Charing Cross (the Eastern end) before toddling off down the hill to the Embankment tube.

Anyway – it was late one afternoon - must have been some late Sept/October time, the yellow-ish streetlamps further down the hill were lit and glowing in the mist. I'm not sure that this wasn't in the good ol' days of 'Smog'. When London had atmosphere!

However, I digress – I liked that pub. Gave a portal/mirror into civilian life. Few pints and I wandered outside and a (girl) young woman came running for all she could in high heels screaming up the hill, out of the mist with an extremely large and loud Cockney male in hot pursuit, shouting "Mary!"

I couldn't help thinking about 'Jack the Ripper'. Posted to Compton Bassett. Forgot about it until . . .

I'd got the band together and was looking for material. The incident from Charing Cross in 1963 came back to me and I wrote "The Ripper" (Mark Clark/e) as a performance piece.. I just changed names and moved it up river a bit.

My first Demo after Cosford had been at the LSE – the demo in Aylesford Park, Leicester in 1969 was in a similar vein (I think) and SOOP Poetry Band performed at it. Jim Gannon and Kip Trevor said they liked it and would very much like to put it to music. OK. Their version came out as *Black Widow - Mary Clarke*'. First on *Rockbuster* and then on *Black Widow – Black Widow*.

Tony Oliver had marshalled me into help building a station radio. It was great fun and I always think we should have been DJs. Once in a while the media reminded of those times and the BBC gave an opportunity to promote – helped by George McBeth at the Beeb – poetry, poetry in schools and the importance of enjoyment in poetry and music. BBC Radio Leicester, BBC Radios 1 & 2, 1970.

The memory all the more poignant after our 50th reunion I paid a visit to Clive Jones from Black Widow at his home Rubgy (June). The photograph of me holding the CD version is by him. He kept the CD! I did get a copy of the original recording and a version in Italian.



Boyd Lichfield by Clive Jones