

## Barton Writers - And Some Curious Links

Many will be aware of three notable Barton people who were writers: Schoolteacher Henry Treece, who wrote very many books; Doctor Tom Kirk, who penned a variety of manuscripts, and Ted Lewis, known for the novel 'Jack's Return Home'. Ted's gritty story, set in and around Scunthorpe, was eventually made into the classic film 'Get Carter', featuring Michael Caine and Britt Eklund.

There's another Barton - or to be more accurate - ex-Barton person who's a writer. His name is Dave Field, and he lives in Darwin, in the Northern Territory of Australia. Dave is a photojournalist and writer. Here's some potted history about him, with some curious links to Henry Treece, Tom Kirk and Ted Lewis.

Dave Field was born to Donald and Evelina Field (maiden name Smaller) in Barrow-on Humber in 1944. The family moved into a house in Grange Avenue, Barton, around five years later, and Dave eventually became a student at Barton Grammar School. Classmates whose names he can remember include Sandra Nurse, David Twidle, Geoffrey Codd, Keith Harvey, Terry Bontoft, David Peck, Angela Burridge, John Lacey and Robin Cox. He was enamoured of one Elsie Wilford, but too shy to do anything about it. John Lacey and Dave became close friends and occupied a great deal of time in cycling expeditions—both were members of Barton Wheelers.

Dave's first job was as a delivery boy, working for the Co-operative Wholesale Society's supermarket, then a major feature of Junction Square. Picture him as a sort of 'Granville'.

When Dave was approximately fifteen, his father secured a job in Stafford in the Midlands, and there Dave finished his schooling. Effectively by chance he took a position as a student medical laboratory technician, working in the local hospital for several years.

While medical work had its moments, it wasn't inspiring—and it was very poorly paid. Dave emigrated to Australia in the nineteen-sixties—with no idea whatever of what work he'd be doing. He knew he wanted to engage in technical work, preferably outside of a laboratory and, even better, at sea. Friends told him it couldn't be done.

Within three months Dave was working in a strange civil engineering laboratory in which huge scale models of the Victorian coastline were constructed to evaluate options for jetties, breakwaters and the like. It was necessary to collect data on site before the models could be built, and he learned to SCUBA dive and to work from boats.

“There was nothing,” observes Dave, “like being forced to walk along a beach collecting data, and having to step around beautiful tanned girls wearing only the bottom halves of their bikinis.”

Several years later he moved on to work in marine pollution research with another organization in the south of Australia. Then an opportunity came up for a move to tropical Australia—where he’d wanted to be from the outset—and he began water quality investigations in the river systems of the Northern Territory. River systems which are teeming with crocodiles. Most times the only way to access the rivers was by a combination of four-wheel-drive, boat and helicopter. Dave remembers thinking that everything he did seemed to be noisy, dirty and dangerous.

Around this time he decided it was time to do something about a career change, and so he engaged in several writing courses.

Dave Field is now an established novelist and journalist. He has two novels, ‘Profile Three’ and ‘Hurtling to Oblivion’ published, and several short stories. He’s working on the third novel, which is a sequel to the first.

As a journalist, Dave specialises in scientific/technical issues such as aquaculture, though he’ll write about most things. As an author?

“I write stuff that I’d like to read!”

His Mum thinks he’s crazy.

Some curious coincidences: Henry Treece was Dave’s English—and favourite—teacher at Barton Grammar School. Oddly, Dave only learned that Henry was a writer a couple of years ago. Dr Tom Kirk was the Field’s family doctor. Ted Lewis was a close personal friend of Dave’s uncle, builder Denis Field. Ted and Denis also went to Barton Grammar School. When the film ‘Get Carter’ was released, Denis drove Ted to London to attend the celebratory party.

You can read some of Dave’s writing, including excerpts from the novels, by going to <http://www.authorsden.com/daveffield>.