

Close your eyes and go back in time...

Let's go way back and remember...

Written by Andy Owen



Close your eyes and go back in time.... before the Internet or the Tablet: before Hybrid Cars, Bristle Marketers and Crack Cocaine. Before Mobile Phones or Social Media - yes, life did exist before all those...and it was BETTER...

Lets go way back...

I'm talking about Hide and Seek in the park. The corner shop. Hopscotch. Butterscotch. Skipping. Handstands. Football with an old can.

Fingerbobs. Beano. The Eagle. Twinkle. Roly Poly. Hula Hoops.

Jumping the stream. Building dams. The smell of the sun and fresh cut grass.

Bazooka Joe bubble gum.

An ice cream cone on a warm summer night from the van that plays a tune - chocolate, vanilla or strawberry or maybe neapolitan.

Wait...

Watching Saturday morning cartoons: short commercials: The Double Deckers, Road Runner, He-Man, Tiswas or Swapshop.

Why Don't You - or staying up for Star Trek.

When Roy of The Rovers & Blackie were the two best footballers on the planet.

For some of us, Robin Hood will always be Richard Greene...

Having our lives changed forever by those four incredible young men from Liverpool.

When around the corner seemed far away - and going into town seemed like going *somewhere*...

Earwigs, wasps and bee stings. Sticky fingers. Cops and Robbers, Cowboys and Indians.

The Lone Ranger and Tonto - and Roy Rogers and Trigger.

Zorro.

Climbing trees. Scrumping. Building igloos out of snow banks.

Walking to school, no matter what the weather.

Running till you were out of breath, laughing so hard that your stomach hurt.

Jumping on the bed. Pillow fights. Spinning around, getting dizzy and falling down was cause for giggles.

Being tired from playing. Remember that?

The worst embarrassment was being picked last for a team. Water balloons were the ultimate weapon.

Football cards in the spokes transformed any bike into a motorcycle.

The real taste of chips cooked in beef dripping.

I'm not finished just yet...remember these?

Eating raw jelly. Orange squash Jubbly's. Playing 'attack and defence' at football...

Sand dunes were the greatest place on earth.

There were two types of trainers - girls and boys, and Dunlop Green Flash - and the only time you wore them at school was for "gym".

You knew everyone in your street - and so did your parents.

It wasn't odd to have two or three "best" friends. You didn't sleep a wink on Christmas Eve.

When nobody owned a pure-bred dog. When 25p was a decent allowance.

When you'd reach into a muddy gutter for a penny. When nearly everyone's mum was at home when the kids got there.

It was magic when dad would "remove" his thumb. When it was considered a great privilege to be taken out to dinner at a real restaurant with your parents.

When any parent could discipline any child, or feed him or use him to carry groceries and nobody, not even the kid, thought a thing of it.

When being sent to the Headmaster's office was nothing compared to the fate that awaited a misbehaving student at home.

Basically, we were in fear for our lives, but it wasn't because of drive-by shootings, drugs, gangs etc. Our parents and grandparents were a much bigger threat!

Didn't that feel good? You bet your sweet life it did!

Here are a few more...

Decisions were made by going "Eeny- meeny- miney-mo." "Race issue" meant arguing about who ran the fastest.

Money issues were handled by whoever was the banker in "Monopoly". The worst thing you could catch from the opposite sex was germs.

It was unbelievable that British Bulldog wasn't an Olympic event. Having a weapon in school, meant being caught with a catapult.

Nobody was prettier than Mum. Scrapes and bruises were kissed and made better. Taking drugs meant orange-flavoured chewable aspirin.

Ice cream was considered a basic food group. Getting a foot of snow was a dream come true.

Older siblings were the worst tormentors, but also the fiercest protectors.

Getting the cane or strap at school and not holding a grudge.

When the ultimate party game was pass the parcel. When you could get Milk Tray in a bar rather than a box.

When completing three revolutions of your bike pedals without touching the floor, was the ultimate achievement

When you'd spend hours playing cats cradle with your girlfriends and an old piece of elastic you'd commandeered from your mum's sewing box.

When a fairy liquid bottle was the ultimate weapon in summer (and anyone who was anyone, had one).

When giving someone the bumps for their birthday was commonplace and no one grumbled about the safety issue, it was the higher the better.

When you never believed that you'd one day hear yourself saying 'it'll all end in tears'

35 to a side playing football at break time.

Creating great slides in the playground in the Winter - and watching the teachers from your classroom afterwards, melt them with salt.

School ties tied with huge knots and 2-inch tails.

Long car journeys listening to portable radios wired to temporary aerials, as there was no in-car stereo system. Being saluted by the RAC man on his bike as he passed.

8-track cassettes playing Andy Williams and Harry Nilsson.

Trying to get Dad to fill up at Esso, so that we could get the football coins.

V-neck jumpers with tartan hoops on the arms, high-waisted trousers and patch pockets.

Buying broken biscuits at Woolworths.

Champion the Wonder Horse and Casey Jones on children's TV.

Waiting for the TV to re-broadcast after the afternoon break.

Going to the neighbours to watch the first colour TV in the street, and staring in awe at the green colour of the grass.

Hoping that you got the bowl to lick and not the spoon, after cake mixing.

Peeking from behind a cushion as the Daleks chased Dr Who.

Making bows from hazel branches and arrows with playing card quivers.

Covering school books with Billy says "Stop Look and Listen" stickers

If you lived as a child in the 40's, 50's, 60's or 70's, looking back, it's hard to believe that we have lived as long as we have...

As children, we would ride in cars with no seat belts or air bags.

Our cots were covered with bright coloured lead-based paint.

We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors, or cupboards, and when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets.

We drank water from the garden hose and not from a bottle. Horrors.

We would spend hours building go-carts out of scraps and then ride down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. After running into the bushes a few times, we learned how to solve the problem.

We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the streetlights came on.

No one was able to reach us all day. No mobile phones. Unthinkable.

We got cut and broke bones and broke teeth, and there were no lawsuits from these accidents. They were accidents. No one was to blame, but us. Remember accidents?

We had fights and punched each other and got black and blue and learned to get over it.

We ate patty cakes, bread and butter, and drank cordial, but we were never overweight...we were always outside playing.

We loved beef dripping sandwiches. (Still do...)

We shared one drink with four friends, from one bottle and no one died from that all.

Golden Syrup - was wondrous.

We did not have Play Stations, Nintendo, X-Boxes, video games, 400 channels on pay TV, videos, streaming, surround sound, personal mobile phones, personal computers, internet chat rooms ... we had *friends*.

We went outside and found them. We rode bikes or walked to a friend's home and knocked on the door, or rung the bell, or just walked in and talked to them.

Imagine such a thing. Without asking a parent! By ourselves!

Out there in the cold cruel world! Without a guardian - how did we do it?

We made up games with sticks and tennis balls, and ate worms, and although we were told it would happen, we didn't put out very many eyes, nor did the worms live inside us forever.

Footy and netball had tryouts and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't, had to learn to deal with disappointment.

Some students weren't as smart as others so they failed a grade and were held back to repeat the same grade. Tests were not adjusted for any reason.

Our actions were our own.

Consequences were expected. No one to hide behind. The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke a law was unheard of. They actually sided with the authorities and the law - imagine that!

This generation has produced some of the best risk-takers and problem solvers and inventors, ever. The past 50 years has been an explosion of innovation and new ideas. We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned how to deal with it all.

And you're one of them. Congratulations!

If you can remember most or all of these, then you have LIVED.

Oh I almost forgot...

99's were the ultimate ice-cream treat.

There were Banana Splits and Cider Lollies.

Roller skates that grew with our feet!

Being allowed to drink Baby Cham! (at 7 years old!)

Condensed milk and Tripe and onions.

Jackie.

School discos - 'oops upside your head' and 'The Wigwam Bam'!
'Backies' - two on a bike - neither with helmets!

Dens - how exciting were they?

Mums who wore 'Youth Dew' and Baby Dolls!

When 'Crossroads' was the highest rated soap in the UK.

When we were really bothered about who won the Eurovision Song Contest.

'It's a knockout'! on a Saturday evening.

Lipgloss and 'Starsky' or 'Hutch'?

How we had never seen anything like Jayne Mansfield and how we stared...

Living in the country.

Having Tizer and Ginger Beer (in 'stone' flagons) delivered to your door, was the highlight of the week.

A regular mobile library that came every Wednesday, with the same books each time.

Having bread, fish, meat and fresh vegetables delivered by friendly drivers.

A cleaning lady to help my Mum that didn't just clean and polish properly) - but was a part time nanny as well.

Being allowed at age 7 to catch a bus and train by myself for a 45-minute journey to school, knowing the bus conductor would make sure I was alright and allow me on, even when I'd spent my bus fare on sweets.

Are we sad, boring - or the last of a kind.

No, we are SPECIAL!

LET'S SEE WHERE WE CAN TAKE THIS IN 2020/21.

MORE MEMORIES PLEASE! SEND THEM TO ME AND I WILL ADD THEM ON...