

# Tony Huggins-Haig



The Journey Begins...

## Foreword

I would like to thank all the fantastic people who have helped me shaped my life and got me this far. Some of their names are listed below. It is not a complete list, as you meet great people all the time who could be added to it. I would like to single out my Mam, Glenda Jean who has the heart of a lion and with kindness to match.. The other lady In my life Yvonne, who has been by my side throughout my artistic journey, and my three fantastic brothers, family, friends and collectors who make everyday magical things able to happen.

### **Some of the People who have shaped my life:**

Big Bad Bob (Dad) and Elsie, Dave, Grandad, Rolf, Ian, Di, Mike, Smiths, Norman Padley, Bob Lowther, Olga, Billy & Anne, Chin, Cooky, Scotty, Doot, Olga, Wendy, Mad Mick, Elaine, John & Lily Burton, Trumpton, Rob, Phil the Sparky, Cpl Terry, Paul, Doug, Brendon, Glenda Jean, Jeff, Rab, Norman, Mike, Jur, Davey, Di, Kenny, Bev, Gran, John & Mhari, Volies, Ian Burton, Clive Birch, Phil & Heather, Andy, CSM Ray Cappelman, Brenda, Rona, Gordon, George, Rod, Margaret, Lisa, Phil, 2 Ronnies, Alex, Sarah, Malcolm, Andrew, Peter, Tony, Joanne, Albert, T C Tan, Nan, Gran, Mackenzie Thorpe, Dennis & Cathy, Roger, Alan, Dad, Colin, Tracey, Andy, Gran, Michelle, Jenny, Bobby, Sheila, Geoff, Ryan, Roonies, Ian & Margaret, Liz, Joanne, Norman Cornish, David, Colette, Mark, Goldie, Phil Gray, All my Art House friends and collectors and all the good people I'm yet to meet as I travelling through life.

# The Journey Begins...

## The Journey

*"We are all on a journey through life, it is not a dress rehearsal for a next time that we are here. So leave a mark, a positive one, and be as good a person as you can be. I treat people as I would like to be treated. I try to do at least one good thing a day whether that's holding a door open for an old lady or spending a little time with a stranger who is lost.*

*Despite what is reported in the news, I believe there is still more good in the world than bad and with your good deeds we can keep it that way. Enjoy your journey and good luck."*

*Tony Huggins-Haig*

## Life is a Journey

Looking back through time as far as my memory allows me to go, I remember as a young lad exploring and wondering as you do thinking that the world was a wonderful place to be and explore.

As a child growing up I began to explore more of our local environment with friends and family and learn about life. This plus listening to stories from my family, friends and people I would meet the world seemed to fall into two camps: That of good and evil.

I guess that simply put but I don't think it matters what colour of skin is or what religion you choose to follow. If you try to be as good a person as you can be and treat people the way you would like to be treated, then this philosophy if carried out by all would make for a far better world and place for us all to live.



## History

I was born in the small picturesque fishing village of Boulmer on the North East coast. This was a place where men and women worked hard and played hard. These people had little material wealth but what little they did have they would share. They had character, charm, warmth and community was at the heart of most things. My family lived together, at first in a one bedroom cottage with no electricity and an outside toilet, none of the mod cons as you would know them today. As time moved on and our family expanded, we moved 2 miles inland to a council house in the large village of Longhoughton. First to a 2 bed then eventually as one came up, to a 3 bedroom semi with all mod cons. It felt like we were rich and we would live here for the rest of my childhood.

The new surroundings streets were a little strange at first but we were accepted by the local families and fitted right in. As kids we ran in and out of each other's houses up and down the streets and didn't have a care in the world. In hindsight we had little money, but everyone looked out for each other, with a real sense of community and belonging. This was now the 70's - 3 day weeks, power cuts, low wages but my brothers and I knew nothing about this. Being sheltered by our parents, and family, fed sugar or jam sandwiches, washed down by dandelion and burdock pop from the travelling shop.

No Game boys here, playing with sticks and stones, imaginary guns, cowboy shoot outs. If it was your birthday or Christmas and you got a football as a present, with the addition of a couple jackets or jumpers for goal posts and a game was born. The streets were indeed our stage where we would learn to interact, to imagine and to dream. Imagine playing in a big match where with





a football, you could be scoring the winning goal and winning the world cup. And the streets would be the place you had your first kiss and girl friend. This world, when I think back to how things were, has gone a long way to shaping me the way I am today.

During these formative years I developed a love of initially drawing and recording things. At school I did ok at Art and really enjoyed the subject. However after a conversation with my granddad, one wet day, he explained that people like us don't become artists we have to get proper jobs.

Granddad was right, at this time it was not normal to become an artist from a start in life like I had, coming from a council estate. This peer pressure would steer me away from art as a career for 20 years. It's a shame my Gran and Granddad would not live to see it happen but I know they would have loved me proving the doubters wrong.

Leaving school in what some call the Thatcher years, when work places close by were closing and not taking on young men. Large organizations in ship building, coal and steel were closing down or laying people off. The dole was the only real long term option open to me this intermixed with Youth training schemes.

I realised that unless I found a career or long term working, then I would be on life's scrap heap at the age of only 18!

When I was 17 I joined the Territorial Army (good enough for Billy Connelly good enough for me). With no work available I took the only option open to me, passing a medical and joining the regular army. The army would take me to Germany, where we trained for the iron curtains threat sitting in a fox hole (trench) with a life expectancy of less than 2 minutes. Talk about short straw we were the furthest battalion the furthest company, the furthest platoon and yes the furthest section forward at the point waiting for the big bear to attack. Fortunately for me that attack never came, shame all that free vodka coming our way if it kicked off, but glad the way it's turned out with a thawing of relationships between east and west.

Next we were sent to Northern Ireland, out of the kettle and into the frying pan, a 2 year posting which would see us travel all over the province. When I stepped off the plane a Bob Huggins had been killed and thinking it was a relative they wanted to send me out of area.



This was not the case and I would patrol all over the place keeping the peace between the Catholic and Protestant communities. I walk the province trying at all times to have an open mind about threats posed to us and yet always trying to treat people we met out and about in their communities with civility, decency and humor.

I could not at the time understand really why two religions or peoples had as much hatred for each other, and us being in the middle of it. Religion was not as important in the North East, I had never asked a friend what religion he was. I can say I am glad



that the troubles seem to be over and that people in both communities in Ireland are getting on a lot better with each other. Hopefully democracy will continue to prevail, and one community will be built for all religions.

I have visited Ireland many times since, I love the people, full of crack and banter and have some great friends there. I think Geordies and the Irish have similar traits, hard workers and caring people.

Next we were posted to Cyprus a very hot place indeed, to play soldiers the ground was rock hard and digging in or running around in it you were ripped to shreds. I can only imagine how hard it is for the guys in Afghanistan and Iraq now. These very brave men and women, sent to what the army describe as a theatre of operations (not of their own asking).

Many once there, not knowing exactly the reason for them being there. But I'm sure they try their very best to make a difference to locals on all sides of the community divide while they are out there. What a shame we continue to send young soldiers at the scribble of a pen to places politicians would not walk themselves.

After six years the Army and I had a parting of the ways. I had, like others been bossed around at times by officers who although clever on paper, at times demonstrated unbelievable arrogance and poor leadership when it really counted. I decided that as officers had degrees, they were able to go and get commissioned. I would go into higher education and retrain and try to put my life on an even footing with the officer class, but always retaining a grounding, not an arrogance.

My first year after leaving the army was hard going. I had gone into the local technical college where to be fair they were trying to do their best but I could not write about my favorite pet I have never had one. I could write about my army experiences the cruelty and kindness I had experienced during my service. But the course was structured for young school leavers and not to flexible.

## A turning point

Well I popped up to Sunderland to visit my younger brother Paul a very clever lad indeed. Brothers Robert (older) and Michael, next one down were also in the army. Again it was that or the dole still little work in our area. Paul the youngest had gone to a different possibly better school. He had stuck in and got good exam passes and went to Sunderland University.



I had popped in to see him at the Benedict building where he was studying, to have a cuppa and a catch up. He had to go into a lecture so I waited for him. During this time I had a chance meeting with the head of year, and a lovely man, Clive Birch a senior lecturer. Clive (a Welshman) took me up to his office for a blether and we had a cuppa and cake!

I must have hit it off with Clive as when I got home 2 days later I had an unconditional offer to do a degree at Sunderland University.

Funding myself for the most part, cleaning windows and doing odd jobs during the holidays I had a fantastic time at Sunderland. It was hard being out of education for so long but with a great deal of hard work and the support of some great friends, I gained my degree. Sunderland is a fantastic place where I was treated very well. I will always have a soft spot for the place. Education had now opened doors for me which would eventually lead to a career in art.

## Yvonne Haig

In 2001 I met a lovely lady, Yvonne who seemed as mad as me, hard working very caring and we fell for each other in a big way. I arranged a meeting with her dad, taking everyone out for a Chinese meal. I did my home work and knew he liked chocolate eclaires. We got chatting and I said I would take Yvonne off his hands for a bag of chocolate éclairs, a fair swap! A deal was done, so I produced the sweets from below the table, to the amazement to all in the room. I later found out that Trumpton (Yvonne's dad's nickname) was poorly, so we decided to add our names together when we married so his surname would live on for another generation. We married within about 6 months of meeting and I moved up the Scottish Borders to live. We would also go on to build our own home, Hardens Hall.



Trumpton past away knowing she had married and was happy, as was his other daughter Louise, which is all a dad can expect, he told me.

## The Art House Gallery

In 2004 we finally found our first gallery location. After searching the length and breadth of the borders for a period of over two years, we had found a closed down, former book shop tucked away in the corner of the square in Kelso. This we believed was the right location to bring a modern contemporary art gallery to the borders. We wanted to create something very different, to the galleries that currently existed in and around the borders.



We took the plunge and within 12 days had ripped it out and refurbished it taking a lease for 5 years.

The gallery went from strength to strength and because of this in 2009 after spending a year (yes in the recession) fitting it out. In Dec 2009 we moved around 150 meters in a straight line from the old gallery to our new one at 22 Bridge St, Kelso. The new gallery space offered 5 distinct gallery rooms over two floors show casing some of the finest artist's works around today. Over the years we have built some great friendships with these artists with regular visits and exhibitions, of their works.

Once the gallery was going the way I wanted it to with Yvonne running front of house, I stepped back to focus on my own art space and work, which is housed in gallery 1. With 18 months delay (due to the local authorities inability to work closely with a supposed valued business partner) we eventually managed to open my gallery within the boat sculpture.

The big boat sculpture and entrance was my brain child of. The rear of the Art House gallery was a derelict sheet metal garage. By replacing the garage with a new gallery space the chance was created to do something completely different with the entrance. The space offered me the opportunity to continue my work with schools and disadvantaged community groups. Schools and community groups visiting the gallery



through the boat sculpture get a warm welcome and then almost step into another colourful world of wonder. They spend time in all the gallery rooms and interaction with the gallery team and Tony allow them to fully enjoy their visits.

The Art House Gallery can be found situated in the heart of the old historical borders town of Kelso. It has fast gaining a reputation as one of Scotland's leading privately owned modern contemporary art Galleries. As art collectors, gallery owner and artist and with Yvonne we have travelled far and wide, around the world to establish some great friendships with some of the leading artists of our generation. These relationships, allows us access and the ability to exhibit within our gallery some of the finest art work available today.





The Art House Gallery is located in a former dilapidated town house dating back to 1608, completely renovated in 2009 to form the 5 distinct galleries. The traditional feel you get from visiting the gallery is enhanced by both a state of the art computer generated lighting system backed up with an easy to use computer system for searching the web and the extensive gallery web site and database of art work. The Gallery ethos is to put back into your own community working with Schools, colleges and volunteer organisations to bring access to art for all.



## My Painting

Painting is a great way of communicating what I see and how I see it, painting in an honest simple way about what I feel about a subject or experience.

I try to recreate the way I saw things as a kid and indeed still do in the way I paint. Recording how every day folk went about their business and tried to make a difference, recording my personal journey through life and how family and friends shape us all.



I am often asked who or what inspires you, which trail blazing artist has given you direction or guidance? Well I am not sure how to answer that, like many other artists I have always known I just have to paint to record what I see, what I am looking at. I paint in a way that I remember as a youth, the colour and fun of life. Now as I travel through life I become aware of more artists, past and present and their work. I love most artists who have a go, a little different from the masses or the conventional. I try to keep community at the heart of my work where possible and bring in colour as much as possible to try to lift the spirit where you can.

Where possible I use bright bold colour and texture and a little nostalgia to produce work that can be serious and or compassionate, softening the miners' journey to and from work, or the fisherman who goes out most days to catch and earn a living in sometimes very poor weather.



## Ideas and inspiration

Life arms me with all the images I need. I can be walking along and 'POW' - there is a great idea for a picture. I am always armed with a sketch book or camera and the idea is captured and stored until a picture is born. I paint in acrylics; I find these quick and forgiving and allow me great range of colours.

Like Norman Cornish and L.S. Lowry and Mackenzie Thorpe I take pride in what we had and how we were. I am lucky enough to have two studio one in my home, and as resident artist at the Art House Gallery one there. Both of these affords me space and freedom as I'm a complete clutter merchant, and disordered with it, props everywhere. I like it that way, a freedom from organisation.





## A day in the life of

The Sleep Police (Yvonne) normally wakens me with a cuppa tea at around 7.00am, a quick bath then down to breakfast. After a light breakfast together, and going through commitments for the day I head into my studio which is my wonderfully disorganised but light and airy space to begin my painting day.

Normally I will have a canvas already primed and I go straight on with the image from my head. Mix some paint and then off we go, accompanied by CD's or the radio I do like Steve Wright and Chris Evans they make me laugh.



I find inspiration for my drawings and painting can strike at any time, whether through response to things I have seen, or heard about. Sometimes I will hear a phrase spoken by friends or strangers and can immediately visualise a painting, sometimes I will get a story or poem or a title for a picture in my head and the inspirations comes that way.

When I have an idea for a new work I need to scribble it down where ever I am. I'm now getting better at carrying a sketch book where ever I go. But I still occasionally get caught out and beg steel or borrow a pen or pencil and end up doodling on any scrap of paper handy. In my studio I have an old box file where I store photographs, sketches and doodles on all sorts of materials from scrap paper, old envelopes, name tags even paper towels from La Favorita my favourite pizzeria.



When I come to start work on something new, I refer to my box file for inspiration, once I'm happy with which idea to run with then off we go.

The work now starts to flow and I can get caught up in the painting this takes me through to at least lunch time. Lunch is normally a quick snack, washed down with a mug of tea (I hate cups) this can be eaten in the company of one of my visiting fellow artist friends who pop by from time to time.

We chew the fat and having a laugh about what we are up to, once they have gone I'll push on with the painting until around 6pm. I try to get at least 50 hours a week in painting, juggling this with the running of the gallery. Sometimes in the afternoons, 3ish I'll pop down to the gallery to meet with new or developing artists who want to show their work in the gallery.

Most evenings we will eat with suppliers, clients, collectors or artists colleagues in Kelso then head home. I normally finish around 10pm and relax on the sofa watching TV whilst replying to the days email.

Bath and Bed by midnight, then off to dream of the next potential piece of work.

## In the beginning (all tied up)

All tied up or so it seems, this is the stuff of many halted dreams. Do we stop where its cosy and safe, or do we push on in life's great race. If we do what will be our fate, where will we end up in life's great race.



## Race you to the boat

The industrial landscape is dark and covered in snow, we are all heading out off we go.

At this time of year the weather has turned cold, yet the kids still want to play out and about and be bold.

Some have gone sledging down the slope, ducking snow ball trying to cope.

Others build snowmen from snow on the ground and run in and out of doors in this town.



## Even Shearer has to eat

They are Newcastle United through and through, cut them and they would bleed black and white. Its a religion, their religion, they live for it and would die for, the mighty black and whites.

They Practice long and hard with the ball when and where ever they can, dreaming of being that shearer man. Playing and scoring in a packed St James park. Stepping up and scoring the winning penalty against old rival Sunderland.

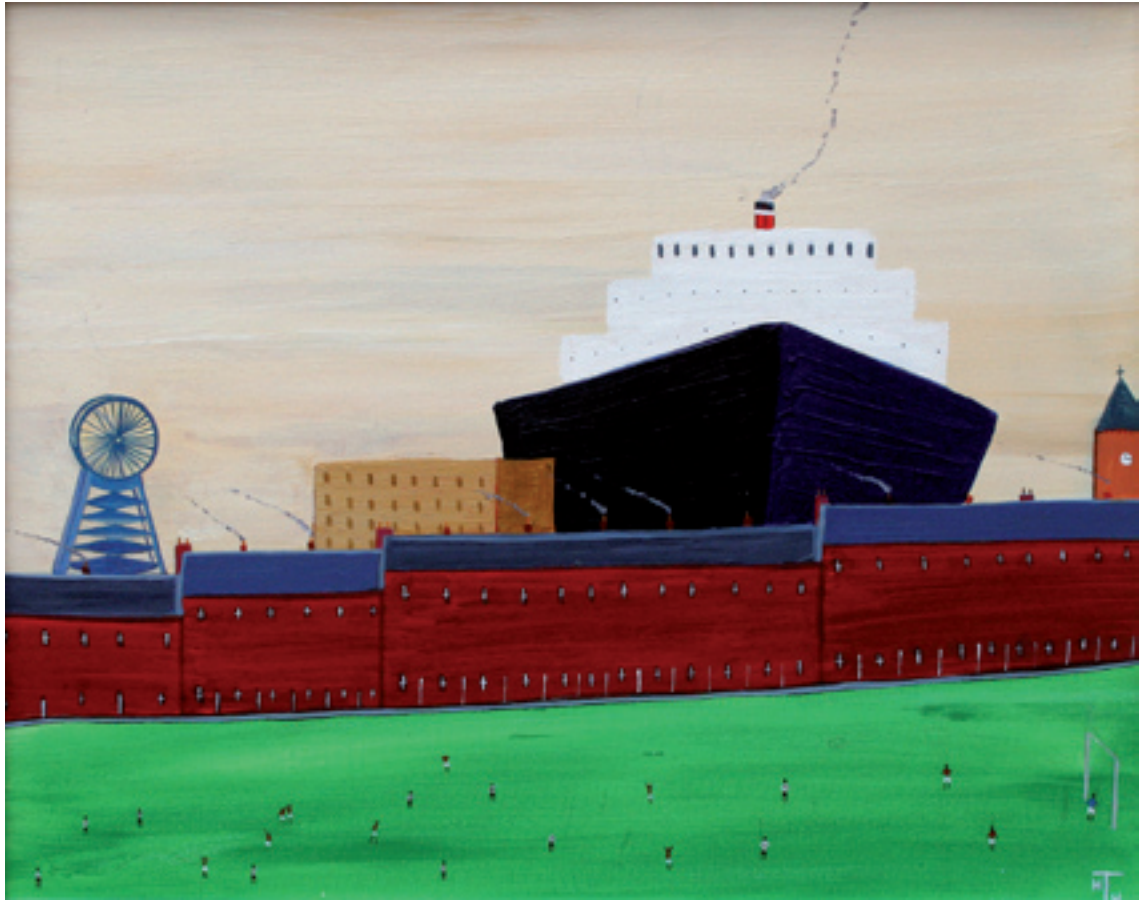




## Uphill and Down

Playing up and down the slope trying to impress so they will be lifted out of a world of industry and go and play in front of massive football crowds.

Of course this doesn't happen to often in reality they will huff and puff and be kicked up and down then a few bears and home and then back to work still dreaming of being plucked the next time they done there boots.



## Almost there

Steaming along making up lost time, through the lights crossing the Tyne  
Heading back to Middlesbrough through all the towns and smoke  
Soon be home again and a pint or two in the Duke of York.  
Thirsty work this shovelling coal but much better than the dole.



## Last Minute Winner

The clock is running down, just a minute or so to go, Time for one more attack. It's been a long hard game he's been kicked up and down. He jogs up the left hand side of the pitch there's little left his batteries are low, he's covered every blade of grass.

The ball is crossed over, more blown than crossed, missing intended targets and falling at his feet. He strikes the ball with all that he has left it loops over the keeper and into the net. No time to restart the game it has been won, with a last minute winner next to his name.





## The Farmer (is out on the drink)

The harvest is in, all safely put away, so he's headed out for a pint and a play today. Prices are higher than they have been for a long while, so on this farmers face a very large smile. I think with a taste for the beer he may be gone for a long while.



## The Bondager

The bondager lady Working hard in the ploughed field it was along the lines of slavery this lady will work till her hands bleed her bones ache filling baskets to improve the fields yield. All for enough food to eat and to keep a roof over her head, keeping her young family in some limited comfort. Times were very hard the price of labour very cheap a life was worth little.



## Riding the Belt

No one is allowed to ride on the belt, its for the coal and rock but some did, a way to get back at the bosses or just an easy way to your destination.

A bit of fun, a way to get passed the grime of work, this is a place where jokers are born, people like Bobby Thompson the little waster. The conditions at times were that hard you laughed or you would cry.





## The Cage

Up comes the cage carrying the men for the very last time this is the end. Sad times indeed not a dry eye in here. They have been to the depths of the earth toiled long and hard over centuries each man hoping to be able to make it out in one peace at the end of a shift. Looking comrades grafters friends bonds born of struggle now all looking at the notice board within the cage. All has been confirmed it's the dole queue now this is a very sad end to these warriors. The coal they have mined powered a nation and made the great in Britain how do we repay them by importing cheap coal they cannot compete with mined coal from far away, worked by amongst others children paying them very little. This is this pits last production day the dole beckons not a dry eye in the house.



## This Lady is for turning

The pits are closed theres no work here on lifes scrap heap the Iron lady won here. But theres a twist a scare crow with a likeness who can be turned to get the best of crops in these allotments. These men can laugh through the hardest of times.



## Home by the Sea (Sailing days)

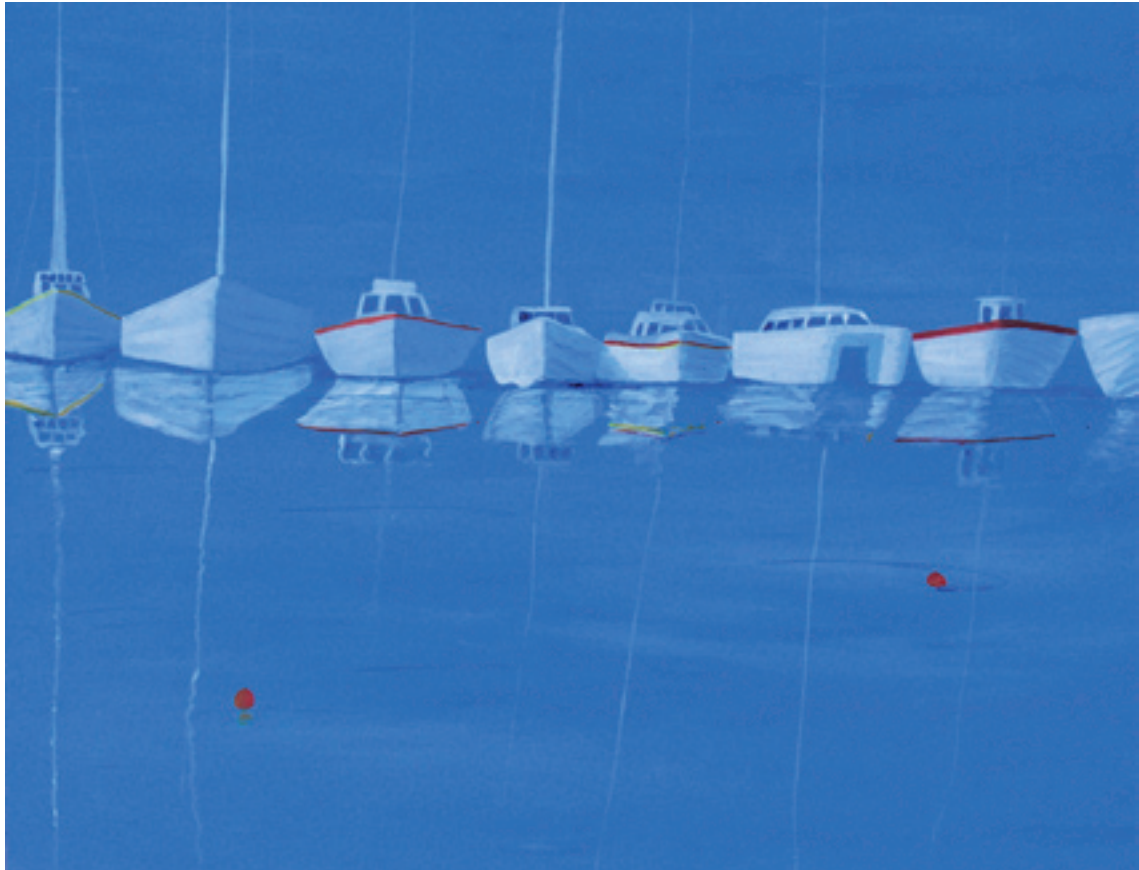
Sailing back in to Dover port, after a heck of a sail, they have been over to France, a great journey's tale. Pen, Woody and Toby sailing the lady P, travelling home after being at sea. They will get back to port and tie up for the day before leaving the harbour to go out to play you never stop learning any old day.



## Tranquil days

Never look back in sorrow as there's always tomorrow a calm tranquil day all sitting no play.  
Reflecting nice and calm no one this day coming to any harm.





## Racing Days

We have hoisted the main sail's and cast of the ropes, left the safety of the harbour and headed down the coast.

Wind is blowing harder now in open water leaving the field there getting no closer. Wind gusting and blowing us along, the finish line is coming closer, can we hang on. We sail past the lighthouse and further down the coast crossing the line but we won't boast.



## Crail Harbour – Quiet days

Sun going down now quickly, were at the end of this long fishing day.

All the boats are back safely in crail harbour now After a good days fishing out in the spray.

All the boats are tied up and all the gear is now stored away.

What the weather will bring for fishing tomorrow well we will just have to see

You see when you fish what will be will be.



## You got to have Faith

Fire up the engines and cast off the lines the crews on board just in time. Leaving the harbour engines on full, we off to help a friend to give them a pull. Distress message just came through let's hope we get there to help you.

Weather forecasters said gales, rain and a very heavy storm, that won't slow us down or send us home.





## Early Morning Starts

Early morning starts to go with the tides, long hour's, hard work yet ever present smiles.  
So fire up the engines and get ready for the day we are off out to help so let's sail away.



## Lazy Sunday Mornings

The tide is out, there will be no fishing today, as it is Sunday and a rest day.

No one is up and about , this indeed is going to be a lazy day. The boats are all tied up and squared away, later the men will be up and out to the pub to play.

Some of the crews will be off out to go for a pint and a crack at the end of the night before heading back.

Then tomorrow will come calling and they will sail back to sea, whatever the weather and how rough they maybe.



## One day all this could be yours

Bonding with his son sitting on the harbour wall, telling him what he can have,

And achieve when he grows up and is tall

A life at sea son could be yours if that is what your heart desires

It will be your decision alone my son not ours.

You could become a doctor, a pilot a Policeman or a judge it will be whatever you want my son  
there will be no shove.

It will be whatever you want my son that is the gift of our love.



## Lady in red

An always present in your life, a constant companion she won't ever let you down. Always there, caring, dependable and astute. Whatever the journey you are on in life she will be there with you right to the end.





## Coming for too carry me home

We all can feel a little under the weather from time to time and it's good to know where ever we are there's a helping hand available not too far away.

Sometimes in life's long journey all we need a little helping hand. Someone to listen, or a shoulder to cry on. Here the helping hand has arrived in the shape of two tugs it could be an old friend or lover.

Whoever it is that comes to your aid, remember the moment the assistance was given; it was a turning point, a crossroads where you made the right turn.



## Homeward Bound (home by the sea)

Heading home now, back on course, after a long hard journey, in the certainty that a warm welcome awaits. Everything is now calm and with the help of friends the anticipation of that warm welcome makes your heart beat like the loudest drum.



## Under Tow

Lines passed and fastened and secured tight ease on the power so there will be no fright. Steady goes it until we are under steam, heading away the end of this bad dream, saved by what can only be called the cream whatever the weather, these girls turn out to rescue the stricken without a doubt.





## Busy Harbour Days

Hustle and bustle, never standing still, in and out, you know the drill. Tight squeeze but we are through in the harbour all green and blue, time to tie up and stay for a while seeing all friends, having a smile.



## Snowy Days

The chimneys are smoking as the weather turns cold, down comes the snow flakes time to be bold. We have offloaded our cargo and passengers to, so fire up the engines it's off to pastures a new. Leaving this safe harbour to sail far away, to see what life has in store each and every day.



## Colmans Fish and Chips

A calm quiet day, time to reflect, a long walk along a beach, time to reconnect. At the end of our walk the harbour is here. Time for Fish and chips and a nice cup of tea. Finishing off the day in the best possible way.



## Heading Home for Christmas

Last to leave the Scottish office, now heading back up north and home. Rushing for the last train home, then back up to family and friends, that is when work will end. Once Home, again with his lovely ladies and family and friends a great Christmas will be had at home.





## Beam me up Scotty

You sometimes just get one of those days, where it doesn't matter what you do it will be wrong

You try your best you give one hundred percent but on this day nothing will go right.

Don't panic keep smiling and just get through this day. Tomorrow will be a much better day.



## Heading Home

In this world of snowmen he's been out for a while, met up with his friends had a crack and a smile. Now heading home, all on his own. Down comes the snow all most home.





## Collectors

It's a simple but very apt question to ask. Where would any artist be without the magical fantastic people who share their artistic journey and collect our works? Some of the collectors of my work are named below.



Mad Mick, David and Colette, Richard and Francis Colman, Peter and Margaret Hallam, David and Jane Barrie, Julia and David Moore, Mhairi and John Charlton, The Burton Gang, Mike and Di, Cathy and Dennis, Elaine Cockburn, , Alan and Marjorie, Glenda Jean, The Smiths, Darren, Angela Steven, the Proctors (Jack), Marlene, Eric and Sheena, the Pearsons, Gina Bell, The Gairs, The Jones. McGills, Richard Thomas, Jackie Griffith, The Sandie's , Dad and Elsie. Alan, Doris Manderson, Janet Cottrell, Colin Fleming, Linda Hislop, Mike and Terni Lewis, Derrick Lord, The Blair family, Alex Salmond, The Harris's, (Rolf what a great and lovely man) President Barack Obama, and The Moore's (Michael Ali and Ellie). The Sultan of Oman and Chris Evans but to name a few.

And a man called Oliver Dale from the Cambridge, who drove all the way up and down the country in the same day to purchase after seeing the image online that day.

Thank you to you, one and all, finally to those people who may collect a Huggins-Haig in the future. I hope whichever of my art works you may collect that it brings you much joy, and happiness as it did me in painting and creating the work.

## Tony Huggins-Haig – A Walk Through Time

- 1962 Robert the first of us brothers arrived at 3.50 pm, after 5 days of labour. Not sure planet earth was even then ready for him. (only joking top bloke)
- 1964 I arrived at 1.50 am (25 mins of labour) think the 2 pints of Mackeson's mam was on a night may have helped. slapped by Doctor (and I hadn't said a thing to him or had a drink)
- 1965 First hand me down
- 1966 Moved to larger house inland when Micheal (madmick) arrived. 6.15am. 4 hrs in labour
- 1968 Longhoughton First School
- 1969 Brother Christopher born and after a short while left us – heaven needed an Angel
- 1970 Paul was born the last of us lads. 6 pm after 3.Hrs.30 minutes labour.
- 1972 Burnside Rovers 22 – Lacey St 20 (Best football score ever!)
- 1973 First crush – Lynsey De Paul
- 1974 Broken arm – Mrs North was very nice about it all
- 1975 Moved to the Big School, Alnwick Secondary Modern, Form A1
- 1976 First motorcycle – Honda Step through and fist kiss – Anna Katrina Anderson – yippee
- 1977 Madness Baggy Trousers, two tone suits and mini skirts
- 1978 Longhoughton Football club NNFL
- 1979 Northumberland, Under 16's 5 aside champions winners Longhoughton B, scored 7 goals
- 1980 X1 50 cc Suzuki motorcycle (quicker than Davy Stanton's)
- 1982 Alnwick District Council Youth Training Scheme discovering drink and building bus shelters
- 1983 TA 5 RRF for beer money (that's why they call the blues – Elton John what a summer)
- 1984 HM Forces Army 1 RRF either this or the dole
- 1989 Parting of the ways – a civilian again, off to School to study
- 1991 1995 Sunderland University BSc(Hons) and MSc (PgDip) Waste Management
- 1996 Environmental Protection Officer with the Environment Agency
- 1997 Purchased my first Property £15,000. People said I was mad, it was far too much money.
- 1998 Set Up my first Company
- 2001 Bite the dust – Yvonne gets her Man (direct line to the big man, a white snowy wedding)
- 2003 Learnt to drive a JCB and Built Hardens Hall (finally my own studio to paint from.)
- 2004 Opened the Art House Gallery – 35 The Square, Kelso
- 2006 Washington Arts Centre – 3 Amigos exhibition
- 2007 Completed and delivered the painting "All roads lead to Trimdon" to Tony Blair
- 2008 Snap both Achilles tendons at same time! – Ouch, helped found Crossing Borders
- 2009 Alex Salmond painting "Independence Day" – New Art House Gallery opens
- 2010 Boat sculpture Launched, Michael Moore painting – heading home for Christmas.
- 2011 Rolf Harris visits the Boat gallery, his first ever visit to a Scottish Gallery what a fantastic man. Qualified as a pilot conquering the fear of heights.





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