

No1! **TONY HADLEY**
Photo Chalkie Davies



EXCLUSIVE

THE SPANDAU Ballet



INTERVIEWS By Paul Simper

I was born on June 2, 1960. I grew up in the Angel, Islington, and I've lived there all my life.

I went to school just down the road from where I live at Clerkenwell Parochial School. It's a very old school.

When I was there we used to have outside loos and old coal boilers. The schoolkeeper used to come round all the classrooms shovelling the boilers.

I really enjoyed primary school but I didn't like my secondary school, Owen's, much. Primary's great because you're playing lots of games – with secondary there's too many pressures with exams.

I wasn't really prepared to work for exams. I was a bit of a rebel. I didn't get on with an awful lot of people at school. I went my own way at school but that's the way that I am. I do what I want and I think what I want.

We used to have lots of little gangs round our area and luckily I knew a few people from all of them. I did have a few run-ins with a gang from Euston called the Kromer gang but it was never serious.

At one time though I did start going round some flats in Packerham Square, where my best mate had moved, which was quite a hard area. I was about 13/14 then and things started getting a bit out of hand.

The others started getting involved with stealing and I didn't want any part of that.

It's a shame really. Most of the kids I knew when I was young have done time. They've got

Tony Hadley began his singing days in the choir at his Islington grammar school – a far cry from the dizzy heights of fame he has now reached with Spandau Ballet.

Here, in the final part of *No. 1's* series of interviews, Tony talks to Paul Simper about his life before the band.

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TONY HADLEY



Above, Tony Hadley at Clerkenwell Primary in Islington and right, in March 1980, reflecting nobly on Spandau's approaching journey to glory.

nothing. They have fights in pubs and all that and to me it's a total waste.

You don't have to prove yourself by fighting.

After that I started getting into ice-skating and horse riding. I used to go riding up in Hertfordshire.

Originally it was a school thing. For a year I opted out of football and did that instead.

I used to be really good at football at primary – I was centre forward in the Cup team – but unfortunately when I was ten I had a knee injury which landed me in hospital for two months.

I had an infection in the bone marrow in my leg – it started crumbling away – so I wasn't allowed to play football for two years.

Generally I'll have a go at anything. Stunt driving – which I did in the 'Communication' video – motorbike riding, anything.

That was how the horse riding

little surgeon's kit. I used to dissect things – I was really into it.

When I got to about 14 that wore off and I thought I was going to be a policeman, then I was going to join the army. I think a lot of it with me was just TV influence – all the glory.

It was actually only when I was 14 or 15 that I seriously became interested in singing. That's when I went in for a few talent competitions. I won every one I went in for so I was quite pleased.

I sang 'Young Girl' by Gary Puckett And The Union Gap, Stevie Wonder's 'You Are The Sunshine Of My Life' and the Joe Cocker version of 'With A Little Help From My Friends'.

It was after winning those few talent competitions that I began to think that I was going to make it one day. I became really determined – whether it took two years or ten years.



Photo: Graham Smith

started. People were going, 'Ooh, no – not horses. They're big and bite and kick you.' So it was a challenge.

The first thing I wanted to be when I was a kid was a doctor. When I was at primary school I got really interested in biology.

My mum and dad bought me a microscope and I used to have a

My mum and dad didn't think I'd have the courage to get up on a stage.

And believe me, singing on stage for the first time is the most frightening experience ever. I'd do anything else rather than go through that first time again.

I don't think my mum and dad

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ever thought I was going to take up singing seriously. But they were very good with me. They let me get on with what I wanted. Me dad Pat is an electrician but he never forced me to follow what he was doing.

When I left school I was going to get a job in a nightclub – I thought I'd be another Frank Sinatra. In the end though I decided I didn't want to be a cabaret singer so I just waited 'til the band came together in '79.

I've got one brother, Steve, who's an electrician like my dad, and a sister Lee. My sister's just got a group together – I can't believe it.

I didn't think my sister could sing but she can. She's been taking singing lessons from the same coach as I go to, Pamela Dodds. Pamela's turned my sister from someone who I thought would never be able to sing in tune into a girl with a really nice voice.

She's just gone in with her band to record a demo and it's got potential. They've got a lot of work ahead of them though.

They were called Sirius B but I told her it was an awful name – it sounded like a disease. So now they're looking for another one.

The one fear I've got is of beetles. I really can't stand them.



Photo: Graham Smith

I think that stems from the time when I was a kid that I was in my mum and dad's garden and I saw this massive beetle – it was about an inch long – going along. It really repulsed me and for some reason – you know how kids are really wicked – I deaded him.

And the smell that came from this beetle was really obnoxious, really terrible. That made me feel really sick and from then on I've had this terrible fear of beetles.

I didn't have that many pets when I was a kid but a friend of mine, Roy Harold, did give me

Hair greased back and with a healthy growth of stubble, Tony gets in the mood for the band's video for their second single, 'The Freeze'.

an albino guinea pig which he'd found in this block of buildings which was quite near us. It was just running wild.

I called him Tom – he was very old and very intelligent. One night though it was really really cold – I used to keep him in a hut I'd made him in the garden – and I came out and he was slumped in front of the grating. That was

it.

I panicked – gave him brandy, put him in front of the fire, rushed him to the RSPCA. But it was too late.

I was heartbroken.

After that I got two more, Tom The Second and Stogie, and I built this concrete complex for them against the garden wall.

One night though we had this really bad thunderstorm – really heavy winds – and I suddenly heard this dull thud. The whole of the garden wall had fallen down on top of them!

I rushed down with my dad. We could hear them squeaking as we pulled all the rubble off and we rescued them.

They were OK but then they died two weeks later from delayed shock.

Their brains were so slow that it took two weeks for it to sink in that the garden wall had just fallen on them.

I'm quite a private person. Everyone needs to be in this business, otherwise you go mad.

Potentially you're on call 24 hours a day – if I walk down the street and someone asks me for my autograph I'm not going to say no. Firstly I like meeting people and secondly you should expect to do that.

I like to have time to myself to read though. I love books that conjure up pictures. That sort of thing really fascinates me."



David Grant

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