



Gerald, second left, with Boro players (from left) Willie Maddren, Pat Cuff, Stuart Boam and Phil Boersma, during the team's 1977 visit to Australia, where Gerald then lived



On his wedding day

days. Regular bands to come to Middlesbrough from around the UK were Jimmy James and the Vagabonds, Gino Washington and the Ram Jam Band and The Alan Bown Set.

It was also the era of the Mods and Rockers. I was a mod, with a mod haircut from Foffer's - the barber of choice in Middlesbrough in those days.

I got a job as a trainee baker at Forbes Bakery and as soon as I could afford one, bought a Lambretta SX 200, with all of the mirrors, Union Jacks and chrome accessories, from Matt Newton's bike shop. Those were heady days for a newly-released 16-year-old school boy.

"You Will Never Amount To Anything" is the fourth book I have written and is a biography. I am not the only person in this

world told he wouldn't amount to anything, or words to that effect, by their teacher - in fact, we are quite an elite club, including the likes of Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook), Albert Einstein (physicist and Nobel prize winner), Winston Churchill (British Prime Minister), John Lennon (The Beatles singer and songwriter), Ludwig van Beethoven (composer) and Richard Branson.

In writing the book, I was not trying to compare myself, or the average life

that I've led, to the great people in that list - I was simply saying that teachers can get it wrong, just the same as any other profession.

What teachers must remember is they are dealing with young, vulnerable adolescents. When they say things like "you will never amount to anything" it can either spur a person on to greatness, or it could go the other way and make that young person believe they are inferior and give up trying.

Luckily Mr Bagley's words spurred me on, and made me determined to prove him wrong. What I lacked in education and being born poor, I made up for in hard work, determination and never giving up. I've had a great life.

• Gerald's autobiography, You Will Never Amount To Anything, is available on Amazon, along with several of his "retiree" books.



At the Reef's Beach Club in Bermuda (Gerald second left)

Readers' letters

I AM writing to you about my mother, who appeared in the photo on the beach with the aeroplane (RW 174).

My mother was Mrs Harrison and I think the baby was my sister Dorothy, who now lives in Australia with her daughter Karen.

I always wondered about planes but now we know there were planes using the beach at Redcar.

My mother lived in Stowe Street, Faraday Street and finally Surrey Street, where I was born.

Thanks for your article.
W Harrison, Essex Street, Middlesbrough

I LOVED the image on RW174, p15, of "The Ultimate Photobomb" and notice you are trying to narrow down when and where it was taken. You have the attribution for the mum and grandma backwards - Dorothy Harrison née Gray is the grandma and Dorothy Roberts is the little girl (she was my gran's cousin). Little Dorothy was born 1930 so the photo must have been taken around 1931. The photo is probably Marske as the family often went on day trips there and a lot of such photos taken there survive - although admittedly without low-flying planes!

Regards, Dan Hall



HOW wonderful to see The Riverside Stadium well supported to watch the England v Brazil football match in October. I wonder how many of the original pioneers of Middlesbrough Ladies Football Team of the 1970s and 80s attended or watched it on TV. I know my daughter, Lisa Lawton née McDonald, and her husband were at the stadium, as she was one of the original players.

Nigel Empson was manager/coach along with John Simms and ex-Boro players Alec Smith and Charlie Bell, who were assistant coaches. They were a great pioneering team and at least they played at Ayresome Park once to entertain during the interval, taking penalties.

Lisa was thrilled - she scored her penalty in the same net Kevin Keegan had scored in for Newcastle just before half-time. He was her idol, and still is. I wonder what the other pioneers of the Ladies' team are doing now? As Lisa said, they were "born too soon" - they never even had a changing room!

Betty McDonald (Lisa's mum), Northallerton