

EXCLUSIVE: 1D STAR'S STEPDAAD ON PAIN AT LOSING TOUCH

Harry's first show was pub karaoke with me... I'd love him to say hello, let's go for a drink



KARAOKE HARRY
Singer belting out the hits on stage with One Direction

Picture: FOX VIA GETTY IMAGES



HIS HAIR STYLES
As boy with spiky thatch



ONE GLEE Harry and mum Anne



UP ALL NIGHT
Harry in bed lark

“ Harry never said ‘look, you’re not my dad’... we got on great and I missed him like crazy

JOHN COX ON HIS BOND WITH BOYBAND STAR



MUM DIRECTION
Harry with his ma Anne, John's ex

BY SHARON FEINSTEIN
FRANK Sinatra's New York, New York belted out across the pub lounge on karaoke night... and a star was born.

Standing alongside John Cox was stepson Harry Styles, then just nine and giving his first singing performance.

The memory triggers proud and painful memories for John, who was to split up from Harry's mum and says he has had no contact with the One Direction star in 10 long years.

John, 55, was a second father to the pop heartthrob for six years during his relationship with Anne Twist, mum to Harry and his sister Gemma.

Now former pub landlord John talks of his burning wish to see 22-year-old Harry again and even share a pint.

He said: "Losing Harry was the worst thing in my life, having my little family broken up. It took me eight years to get over it. It devastated me."

ONE DIREC-SON
John Cox longs to see stepson Harry

I got really attached to him. I just thought the world of him."

In an exclusive interview, John reveals his pride at the singer's career and gives a fascinating insight into his childhood.

Harry was just seven when John fell in love with Anne. They wed in 2003, two years after she and Harry's dad, Des Styles, divorced. Harry spent

nearly five years living at the Antrobus Arms in Northwich, Cheshire, where he would run around the bar area and was adored by customers.

John said: "I fell madly in love with Anne, she got me. I was a dad to Harry for six years and brought him up in his important years."

"I bonded with him straight away - and Gemma as well. I loved the kids."

"Harry loved living in a pub and he was the centre of attention."

"He was really lively and would run around the pub, with all the customers fussing over him. He used to sit beside me

all day, sit at the bar and chat. He is a down to earth kid and always has been. I didn't really need to tell him off much, he was just a real delight. Brilliant at school too, superb."

"His only fault was that he was dead untidy. But I'd tell him: 'Clean up Harry!' and he'd do it."

"He was always very polite. He never once said: 'Look, you're not my dad.'"

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One of John's most precious memories is of singing with Harry at The Elms pub in Pickmere, Cheshire.

He said: "I was getting up to sing and he wanted to get up with me, which he did, and that was it."

"We sang New York, New York by Sinatra. That was the first time he sang in front of people, it was Harry Styles' first ever performance. He sounded very similar to now - he had a deep voice even as a young lad."

Devoted John told how Harry was a huge football fan, with posters of Manchester United players lining his

bedroom walls. He added: "He was a man's man if you know what I mean, he liked his sport and football. I took him to play football on Sundays. He was rubbish, though. That's why I told him to become a singer."

"Sometimes I told him he played all right and other times I'd say 'You were a bit bad today Harry, weren't you?' He never got upset, he thought the world of me. We just got on great."

Movingly, John told of his agony that he and his family no longer saw Harry and Gemma. Contact ended after he and Anne - who has a new partner - split in 2006.

John, who still lives in Northwich, said: "I missed Harry like crazy. He saw my mother in Tesco's in Northwich about 18 months ago and just ran up to her and put his arms around her."

"He used to stay with her - she was his gran for a bit. She was chuffed as anything when he ran up to

her. She was crying her eyes out. They got very close when he was a lad, she just loves him."

Harry hit the big time after auditioning for The X Factor in 2010. He failed to make it through as a solo act but joined up with fellow hopefuls Louis Tomlinson, Liam Payne, Zayn Malik and Niall Horan to form a boyband. The rest, as they say, is history.

The band - currently on a break while the lads pursue individual projects - hit the big time with debut album Up All Night. They have had four UK number one singles and sold 20million albums worldwide. Despite being pleased for Harry, John, who is now a noise and vibration

patrol engineer, joked that he wasn't a fan of One Direction's music.

He said: "I'm chuffed for Harry and the success he's had. I didn't think he'd go as far as he did but he was always cocky enough to do so. Up until now I think Harry's just done what he's been told with his music."

"But I'm sure he will prove himself now he has gone on his own."

And John dearly hopes that Harry will come back into his life one day.

He added: "Maybe one day Harry will have a drink with me. I'd like him to come to me and say 'John, how are you?'"

"When a child's in your life for that many years the bond doesn't go away. And hopefully it hasn't for him."

scoops@sundaymirror.co.uk



WE'LL BE FAMOUS ONE D Harry, far right, and pals as band started out