

Richard Houghton, who graduated from Loughborough in 1981 with a BA (Hons) in English, has published his first book: 'You Had To Be There: The Rolling Stones Live 1962 – 69'. Richard, 55, has worked for more than thirty years in social housing, where he is now a director of Operations.

Richard said: 'My degree has been useful throughout my career because I have been writing reports and strategies in various roles that I've held. But the reason I chose Loughborough is because of the creative writing module on the course, and I've finally got something to show for those studies more than thirty years ago.'

The book, published by GottaHaveBooks, gives a front row perspective on the group's early live shows, as it contains over 500 first-hand accounts of the group's performances in towns up and down the UK in the early 1960s. It tells the story of the group's rise to fame beginning with their very first performances in pubs and clubs in and around London and taking in dancehalls and theatres across the country before culminating in their 1969 Hyde Park show.

The publication of Richard's book coincides with the recent announcement of a major Rolling Stones exhibition at the Saatchi Gallery in London next year. The group have been performing live for more than 50 years and interest in the group's early days is stronger than ever.

Richard said: 'I got the idea for the book last year when I went to see the Rolling Stones perform in Stockholm. Mick Jagger was about to turn 71 and it occurred to me that many of the people who saw the Stones when they were starting out would be of a similar vintage. 50 years ago they were teenagers and I thought it would be good to capture those memories of the early Stones shows before they fade.'

This book is not just about the Rolling Stones. It's also a window on the past, a look at what it was like to grow up in 1960s Britain. Teenagers hadn't really been invented until the Rolling Stones came along and they played a part in opening many people's eyes to what was possible. The Stones helped to make the Sixties swing.'

Richard stated: 'I've been lucky enough to capture some great anecdotes of people who saw The Stones on their journey to stardom. They started out as a group of rhythm and blues aficionados sometimes playing to a handful of people in a pub and became 'the greatest rock and roll band in the world.'

Richard did not see the Rolling Stones live in the 1960s himself, although his mum did take him to see The Beatles. He was four years old, and the Fab Four are the subject of his next book.

Richard said: 'I'd love to hear the memories of anyone who saw The Beatles in the 1960s, because they set the entertainment world alight when they came along and there will be lots of people out there who heard them or saw them and just thought "wow".' You can share your Beatle memories with Richard on [thebeatlesinthe60s@gmail.com](mailto:thebeatlesinthe60s@gmail.com)

You Had To Be There: The Rolling Stones Live 1962 – 69 can be ordered from <http://gottahavebooks.co.uk/> or via [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk).

