

= Jane Harris (Neighbours) =

Jane Harris is a fictional character from the Australian Network Ten soap opera Neighbours , played by Annie Jones . She debuted on @-@ screen during the episode broadcast on 31 July 1986 and was created by writer Ray Kolle . Jones originally auditioned for the role of Charlene Mitchell (Kylie Minogue) , but she was not successful . This prompted Jones to telephone the producers for two months asking for a role in the show until she was cast . In 1989 , Jones decided to quit the serial in order to pursue other projects and the character departed on 9 September the same year . In 2005 , Jones was one of many ex @-@ cast members who agreed to return to the serial , marking the 20th anniversary of Neighbours . On @-@ screen she was featured making a cameo in Annalise Hartman 's (Kimberley Davies) documentary about Ramsay Street .

Throughout her duration she held a nickname " Plain Jane Superbrain " , for her early intelligent , yet geeky image , which she was referred to by other character and media alike . She is portrayed as a mousy type character , going on a journey of self @-@ discovery as she transformed into a heart breaker . Her most notable point in this storyline is her makeover in which she wears make @-@ up in place of her glasses , dresses sexy and acts thick in order to win Mike Young 's (Guy Pearce) heart . Her makeover has been well documented by critics and holds a place in popular culture , where she is often referred to in cases of extreme makeovers . However , some academic publications have criticised her makeover for conforming to the stereo type that females cannot be sexy and intelligent at the same time . Jones also received the Logie Award for Most Popular Actress while portraying Jane .

= = Casting = =

The creation of Jane developed a different way to the usual process and there was no regular audition sessions . Aspiring actress Annie Jones spent two months ringing the Neighbours production company asking for a role on the show . She said " I had appeared on several other Australian TV shows , but desperately wanted to get into Neighbours " . Jones originally auditioned for the role of Charlene Mitchell , before she was given the small role , for what was a planned six weeks of appearances . Jones was 19 when she landed the role and became a permanent cast member .

= = Development = =

= = = Characterisation = = =

Jane was originally portrayed as being dowdy , lonely and quiet . She was a bookworm and mousey , thus generating her nickname " Plain Jane the Superbrain " to which she was often referred at the beginning of her role . Jones describes her character as a " goody @-@ goody " . . Her clothing style was forced upon her by her mother who believed she should be dressed in " dowdy " clothing . Jane is very clever and was bullied because of this whilst at school . When she meets Charlene Mitchell (Kylie Minogue) , she begins to transform into a different person . With Charlene 's help , she began to dress differently and as she became more confident , she began drawing the attention of male characters , most notably Mike Young (Guy Pierce) and eventually was seen as a " heart @-@ breaker " . Jane 's grandmother Nell Mangel (Vivean Gray) does not approve of her change in personality , but Jane ignores her worries and becomes a model . Following her make over , she becomes more assertive and takes the initiative to end her relationship with Mike Young . She then begins an affair with an older man .

= = = Relationships = = =

In 1987 , producers cast actress Briony Behets to play Jane 's mother Amanda Harris to explore her

backstory . She arrives in Erinsborough to reconnect with her daughter after two years . She had abandoned her to start a new life in Hong Kong . She was billed as a " glamorous but ageing socialite " . But Amanda notices that Jane has become attractive and the " scheming " character decides to try and compete against her to get more attention . Behets soon left the show as Amanda was only intended to be a guest character .

The producers devised a romance storyline for the character alongside Mike Young (Guy Pearce) . Jane 's grandmother is not happy with the prospect of Jane and Mike forming a relationship . Jane decides not to pursue their relationship any further . Pearce told Patrice Fidgeon from TV Week that his character mainly shared a " platonic " relationship with Jane . But writers introduced a temporary love interest for Jane , pilot Glen Matheson (Richard Moss) who is much older than her . Nell disapproves of her new boyfriend because of the age difference . But Jane decides to end the romance , Pearce explained that " she realises this was not going to work out and calls it quits . " This wins Nell 's support of Jane 's involvement with Mike who is of a similar age . The pair had not been on good terms prior to working together on a photography assignment . They spend the day with Charlene and Scott Robinson (Jason Donovan) but after they leave the pair spend time alone and resolve their past problems . Pearce added that his character had been trying to charm Jane for some time . Eventually " she gives in " to Mike , Pearce believed that she felt sorry for Mike but over time comes to the realisation that she " really likes him " .

It was reported in June 1988 that Jones had signed a new contract to appear as Jane for another twelve months . But Jane and Mike 's relationship would not last as writers decided to pair her with another established character , Des Clarke (Paul Keane) . Their relationship is formed when Des decides to help Mike set up a photography dark room for a birthday gift . Jane offers to help but nearly electrocutes herself but Des manages to rescue her . Jane believes Des has saved her life and they develop a connection . Jones told TV Week 's Lawrie Masterson that " it builds towards a full on affair . Jane becomes virtually a stand @-@ in mother for little Jamie (Des ' son) and all those maternal instincts that girls have start to emerge . This results in the final break @-@ down of her relationship with Mike , Jones added " Mike gets the flick basically . "

Mike is hurt when new love interest Bronwyn Davies (Rachel Friend) chose to be with Henry Ramsay (Craig McLachlan) . He incorrectly believes he and Jane have a chance of reconciling because when Jane and Des share a meal to discuss Mike , but Jane believed Des had invited her with romantic intentions in mind . Des does feel drawn to Jane and Jones told Darren Devlyn from the magazine that her character is " really upset " when Des wants to discuss Mike . Jane is nearly hit by a car and this makes Des realise that he is in love with Jane and asks her to marry him . Mike is left feeling worse that both women in his life have chosen other men . Jones told Devlyn that Des ' friends still believe he is attached to the memory of his late wife Daphne Clarke (Elaine Smith) . She explained that because of Daphne " it 's natural that the proposal comes as a big shock . " Both characters had been left emotionally damaged from previous relationships but Jones believed the duo had no hesitations once they made the commitment . The actress added " it 's great that Des is finally over his mourning . " She was also looking forward to her character taking the role of step @-@ mother to Jamie . It was interesting for her to see how Jane copes with the responsibility of looking after a child . Keane was happy with the storyline because he believed it was time for Des to move on . He was also excited to work more closely alongside Jones on the storyline .

= = = Departure and return = = =

In 1989 , Jones decided to quit the serial in order to pursue other projects . Jones ' contract had been up for renewal but she chose not to proceed . Jones told Chrissie Camp (TV Week) that three years on a soap opera was long enough and the right time to leave . Jones filmed her final scenes with Neighbours in July that year . Camp revealed that Jane 's exit storyline would see her receiving bad news about Nell 's health and performing a " mercy dash overseas " . But her fiance Des pleads with her not to leave . She leaves regardless of Des ' request and their wedding plans are put on hold . Camp added that Jane 's departure comes as a " total shock " to the other residents of Ramsay Street . Jane departed during the episode broadcast on 4 September 1989 .

In 2005 , it was confirmed that Jones would be reprising her role to join the many ex @-@ cast members returning for the show 's 20th anniversary episode .

= = Storylines = =

Jane was born in Erinsborough , to Peter and Amanda Harris , in 1969 . Her parents were constantly busy and never really had time for her , but she could always count on her grandmother , Nell (who she went to live with at 16 , when her parents moved to Hong Kong) . She is teased at school for being somewhat clever , and is given the nickname " Plain Jane the Super @-@ brain " . This ends after her neighbours , Helen Daniels (Anne Haddy) and Daphne give her a makeover .

She gradually becomes friends with Charlene and Scott Robinson (Jason Donovan) . Jane later starts to date Mike . Nell bans her from seeing Mike after her love rival Sue Parker (Kate Gorman) begins to send Nell poison pen letters about Mike . She later allows them be together when Daphne finds out Sue is behind the letters . After becoming lost in the bush with Shane Ramsay (Peter O'Brien) , they strike up a friendship and share a bond , this makes Mike jealous . Her relationship with Mike gradually comes to an end after he cheats on her . Amanda comes back to Erinsborough , under the ruse of getting to know her daughter when in reality she is hiding from being fined for insurance fraud . Jane and Nell eventually tell her to leave .

Jane then starts working for Paul Robinson (Stefan Dennis) at the Robinson Corporation , Jane and Scott spend more time together as she is helping him revise for his HSC retakes , Jane always had a crush on him , they later kiss but Henry Ramsay (Craig McLachlan) witnesses it , he tells Charlene , who dumps Scott and refuses to talk to Jane , she eventually gets them back together when she pretends to pursue Scott , Charlene wants nothing more to do with her . Wanting to get away she is happy when Rosemary Daniels (Joy Chambers) then sees Jane 's potential and tries to get her to work for her in New York for the Daniels Corporation , but Jane later decides she is not willing to leave her friends and family behind . Her next love interest is Mark Granger (Colin Handley) who proposes to her on 25 December 1988 . While she accepts , the engagement does not last as Mark 's mother (Mary Ward) takes an instant dislike towards Jane . Tony Romeo (Nick Carrafa) later tries to pass Jane off as his fiance to his mother , when his mother arrives Jane is furious with Tony and reveals the truth when she finds out he also pursuing Sally Wells (Rowena Mohr) .

She falls in love with Des , Daphne 's widower and they became engaged . This engagement comes to an end when Nell suffers a heart attack and she goes to England to nurse her back to health . Des waits for his bride @-@ to @-@ be , but a few months later , Jane phones and tells Des that she can not go through with the wedding and settles down in England with her grandmother . Jane appears in Annalise Hartman 's (Kimberley Davies) documentary focusing on past residents of Ramsay Street , she reveals that she is still living with Nell .

= = Reception = =

For her portrayal of Jane , Jones won the ' Most Popular Actress ' award at the 1989 Logie Awards . The Times named her transformation as one of their top 15 most memorable Neighbours moments . They said " Again , a barely remembered moment , but long before the days of makeover television the momentous reveal of Jane ? previously memorable in her daggy blazer and terribly parted hair ? as super @-@ foxy , big haired balldress @-@ wearing lovely sent Mrs Mangel , and us , into shock " .

Comedy Central a satellite television station which airs in the UK , branded her the ' Original Lassiters girl ' . Also opining , Jones won Jane " a legion of male fans " , the author himself confessed his attraction to her . Neil Wallis and Dave Hogan in their book The Neighbours Factfile , comment on Jane stating : " Brought in to replace Kylie Minogue as the main love interest in the show , her character Jane Harris proves to be much raunchier and man @-@ hungry than Charlene ever was ! " Orange UK describe Jane 's style as " shy genius " and state she is famous for her " transformation from ugly duckling to beautiful swan " and obtained the serial 's " hottest spunks " .

Nick Harris of newspaper The Independent compared the Rangers Football Club 's makeover to hers . They said she was a " geeky girl wearing mumsy sweaters " before a " glamour puss " and joked she looked " knock @-@ down gorgeous ? At least by late 1980s Ramsay Street standards . " Entertainment website Lowculture published an article criticising various soap operas for using each other 's storyline , in which they brand Jane 's " geek makeover " as the most famous of all and that other storylines of the same nature , are repetitive .

Naomi Alderman of The Guardian branded her purposely failing her maths tests to get Mike 's attention as " ridiculous " , however she added : " As a teenager I remember having earnest discussions with other girls about it : was it really true ? Did men not like clever girls ? Ought we to try to appear less clever ? " Whilst Owen Gibson of the newspaper said she was the " school swot " before she turned into a " beauty queen " . Columnist Felicity Cloake compiled an advice guide to attending Christmas parties for the workplace , on style she advised her readers to look to Jane for inspiration if they want to " dress to impress " . Josh Burt of entertainment website Hecklerspray ran a make over feature inspired by Jane 's make over , he also branded Jane a whore and said he thought her make over was astonishing . He also stated : " Ever since Plain Jane the Superbrain took off her glasses , smeared some slutty red lipstick around her mouth , and rubbed ice cubes on her stupid nipples , the celebrity makeover has been a must for anyone hoping to increase their fame . For those unaware , the whole Plain Jane thing happened in the Australian drama serial , Neighbours . She went from geek to whore in a matter of moments . "

Leeds culture website , Leeds Confidential stated the " makeover genre " has always fascinated them and mentioned the makeover as their prime example . Europe 's leading drinks trade publication , The Drinks Business compared Jane to their brand of Antipodean beer commenting it 's not as bland as it first appears . However they said that Jane is " notoriously nerdy " . TV Cream refer to Jane as the " neighbourhood dag " and stated that she conformed to the " plain , bespectacled , bookish female " taking her glasses off and becoming the " ravishing beauty " , they also brand her a minx for her antics with Scott . Sky Showbiz brand Jane as the serial 's " super swot " . Rod McPhee of Yorkshire Evening Post , stated that she went from " ostracised bookworm , who one day went from mousey nobody to sought @-@ after siren , all because she lost the lenses " . Additionally , he was confused why popular culture feels the need downgrade or upgrade someone 's sex appeal because of the presence or absence of glasses . Geoff Dean also agrees with this point in his book " English for Gifted and Talented Students : 11 ? 18 Years " . However he added that able students seem to " lack a positive collective story or identity " , making an example of Jane .

Lorna Cooper a columnist of website MSN TV , branded Jane and Des one of " TV 's gruesome twosomes " . She has listed Jane as one of Soap Opera 's forgotten characters , claiming her as a favourite out of the golden era of Neighbours . Cooper once described her as " Seemingly mousey girl , who turned into a heartbreaker " and opines that she seemed to have liking for a " succession of older men " . Jane is referred to in Emily Barr 's fictitious novel " Out of My Depth " , in which character Amanda is watching her on Neighbours . Jane is mentioned in radio presenter Tony Horne tour guide book " Hornes Down Under " in which he states he was not excited about visiting the set of Neighbours because in his opinion nothing good happened after the departures of Jane and Mike .