

Am leaving my home in South London (Balham gateway to the South) to go Halton To join up as an Apprentice. On arrival at Wendover I meet up with other chaps Also on their way to Halton. On arrival we are assembled upstairs in 3 Wing Tank (NAAFI), where we are attested, given our Regimental No. plus the King's Shilling. From there we went to get our bedding and find our accommodation.

Two days in I upset Cpl Brice (DI) by saying he was a glorified RAF Cpl (wearing White belt, peak cap and carrying a pace stick). needless to say he was not very Happy.

Starting our drill on the square was no problem as I had already done quite a lot Whilst in the Air Cadets.

Life seemed quite good, pay not excessive (10 shillings a fortnight) but we managed. Three years seemed to pass quite quickly to pass out.

Next port of call was West Malling. First attached to 85 Squadron (night fighter Squadron) then into ASF on minor servicing, meeting other exbrats. After 2 years On a enjoyable station I am off on my travels to Singapore (Changi), flying via India, spending Christmas day in Calcutta where we were looked after very well. We were transported by a Airworks Hermes (G-ALDC) which was fairly Comfortable. The last time I saw this aircraft it was straddled across the railway Line at Southend Airport.

At Changi I joined Far East Communications Squadron (dealing mainly with VIP's). This squadron had various aircraft, a York, Valottas, a Hasting and Harvards. It was with this squadron that I got around Malaya quite a bit, recovering Aircraft that had gone unserviceable.. This tour lasted two and a half years, Unfortunately the trip home was not so good, travelling on the troop ship, Empire Orwell via Durban, Cape Town, Dakar (Senegal) to Southampton, but no trips Ashore as we had Asian flu onboard.

The next posting was to Feltell in Norfolk, No.3 FTS with Provosts, but luckily Only for 8 months as it closed down. Off to Little Rissington then Central Flying School, here I spent four and a half years working in ASF on a wide variety of Aircraft.

The next posting is to Wildenrath in Germany, again working in ASF, spending The last year of my tour on nights doing modifications on Canberras. From Wildenrath off to the dreaded factory (32 Maintenance Unit) at St. Athan, Working on Victors. Again this turns out to be four and half year stay, before I am off to Singapore (Changi) only this time everything has changed from Ordinary green jungle to a concrete one. However most of the Trades people In the village remembered me (even after 17 years). My C.O. in ASF here Eventually became the Station Commander at Halton. This tour was cut short As we pulled out of Singapore, lock stock and barrel.

From Singapore back to Colerne in Wiltshire. This time working on something different, making cable looms for Hercules (CISO) which I found very interesting. During this tour I was carted off to Wroughton as I changed colour, and looked Like a chinaman. Here I resided for three months, sometimes absconding at Weekends to join my family. After leaving Wroughton I was posted to St. Athan, but only stayed there for six months as I was made redundant under The Defense cuts.

During my service career of 26 years I met quite a few ex-brats, but only four from Our entry, Dave Williams, Vic Blake, Phil Small and John Horsfield.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time in the service, which stood me in good stead for Civilian life, working in similar circumstances, but on civil aircraft components.