

## David Rodgers



My first posting was to RAF Ballykelly. Initially on second line servicing in the RSF but after a few months I was promoted, sent on a manufacturers course to learn about torpedoes and then put in charge of Radio servicing on 203 Shackleton Squadron. Within a few weeks I travelled with the Shackletons to Cape Town the purpose of which was to sell the South Africans our torpedoes. During my time on the squadron I also travelled to Canada, Norway, the Far East via Aden and Gan and South Africa. I spent my 21st birthday in Kenya.

After 2 years I was posted to St Mawgan on 22 Whirlwind Squadron second line servicing and then to RAF Manston SAR. I spent many happy hours in the English Channel in a dingy waiting to be rescued on training flights followed by a tot of rum, as was the ration. Manston was an MDA and 22 Squadron detachment was the only permanent occupant. This gave me ample opportunity to race round the airfield on one of my three motorbikes but the inevitable happened with motor bikes and I landed up in Wroughton hospital not due to an accident on the airfield but somewhere near Bath. I was most surprised to see Pete Solis, Happy Hampstead and Ron McConkie one evening.

In 1964 I was posted to Kenya, first and second line servicing, first in RSF and then in the hangar working on Beverleys and Twin Pioneers with detachments to the Northern Frontier District at Wajir and Isiolo. From Kenya it was off to 30 MU Sealand third line as an AIS inspector on wireless and radar.

After 2 years at 30 MU I applied to go to CSDE Swanton Morley and spent the next three years in the ATE Study Cell



working on ATE for the F111, the TSR2 and the Nimrod and designing an environmental test schedule.

I was then seconded to the Education Branch as a teacher and after a teachers' training course at RAF Upwood was posted to RAF Cosford for three years to teach Maths and Electronics to Apprentices. This posting was the deciding factor in my choice of employment when I left the RAF.

After Cosford my next posting was to Gan Island in charge of Avionics aircraft of the RAF and Sri Lankan Air Force, marine craft and buoys.

I had signed on to complete 22 years but while out in Gan the RAF decided there were too many chiefs so after 14 years I left the RAF suitably recompensed and have been lucky receiving almost a full pension since I was 32. I think I have had more in pension from the RAF than they paid me during the whole time I was serving.

During my time in the RAF I took advantage of the Education system and attended the Technical College, Nottingham and Liverpool and Southampton Universities.

I left the RAF in 1972 and after a one year Technical Teachers' Training Course started teaching mathematics and physics in a comprehensive school before taking charge of the new IT and developing an electronics department.

After 20 years at the comprehensive school the opportunity arose to leave (escape). I was too expensive and, once again, I was financially suitably encouraged to leave. I didn't need too much encouragement. Standards were falling and discipline was non-existent. After a short spell 'resting' I went to teach part-time in a private school for 10 years then decided that enough was enough and retired once again, but not for long. After a few months I went to teach maths in Featherstone prison for five years and then to Shrewsbury prison for another year.

I finally retired in 2007 and enjoy my time gardening, walking, holidays and playing with radio control boats.

I have three children and six grandchildren.