

THE FREEDOM OF WESTON-SUPER-MARE

As a reflection of great credit on the Station and the high esteem in which the Borough holds Locking, confirmation of the offer for freedom of entry to the Borough was received on 29th June 1956. The actual ceremony took place on 12th October 1956. The parade comprised mainly the trainees of No. 1 Radio School.

The original offer to RAF Locking of the Freedom of Entry to the Borough. 29th June 1956



Over one year earlier an article had appeared in the 'Mercury' newspaper which suggested that RAF Locking be added to the roll of Honorary Freemen of the Borough. The article suggested that this was the highest honour that a town could confer and, in due course, would strengthen the bond between the Town and the School.

Part of the Freedom of Entry gives RAF Locking "the liberty, honour and distinction of marching through the streets of the Borough upon all ceremonial occasions with swords drawn, bayonets fixed, colours flying, drums beating and bands playing."

Warrant Officer Reid recalls that the early Freedom of Weston parades would form up outside the railway station. They would then march down Station Road past the Town Hall, left down Regent Street at the Odcon, right into the High Street (in the days before it was a precinct), up Lower Church Road past Grove Park, coming out on the sea front by the Marine Lake. Then it was along the sea front with the salute being taken at the Winter Gardens before returning to the railway station via Oxford Street. The whole thing was quite an endurance test as they had the Lee Enfield 303 rifle with an 18 inch bayonet (First World War vintage).



LEFT; Photographs from the first Freedom Ceremony. 12th October 1956



BELOW: Personnel from the present Station marching past the Town Hall on a recent Freedom Parade.

