

Gary Guy



After I left Locking we, Derek Orgill and I, were posted to RAF Cranwell. That was an eye opener. Derek had arrived from Dover to the cold lonely H block hours before me and really looked miserable, but we got to talking with the result that next morning we had to scramble to retrieve our best blues from our luggage and try to find out where the radio section was. How green we were - we could have strolled down that afternoon. But it was a bit of a humiliation cos the old pratt who was the o/c radio huts sent us back up to

clean our buttons. I still cannot believe it after 40 odd years. We all know the state of national service wallies. Life was a scream at Cranwell - Derek tells me he screamed a lot. Then Derek was posted to Seletar and 4-6 months later we went to Changi. I say we cos I was married to Sheila and Derek to Shirley. One last thing about Cranwell ... I did see Frank Milligan and John Nottingham marching past occasionally like the East German army but not a twitch of an eyeball (after all the times I had let Frank beat me at wrestling). In Singapore met up with Smudger Smith and in my first week Derek and Shirley came to the Pas a Ris hotel to see us, and Derek showed us how good he was at drinking Tiger beer. It was a good tour but I am sure that's when I became an alcoholic. Singapore ended on the last day of 1964. We must have left early cos we got back for The Bells.

My next posting was St. Athans where Pete Moore eventually came to. As you know Athans was an aircraft maintenance unit and I was in charge of 29 Hangar and Pete 30 Hangar.

My demob date was drawing near so I applied to sign on but it was a no go. Reason they said that there were too



many sergeants and not enough Indians and to re-apply, personally.....I think it was because I was Scots. That was August 1969.

Left the mob at the young age of 30, and joined Elliot Bros. as a post design service engineer. At that stage I had an HNC in electrical engineering and mathematics, but I tell you what - it was not an easy task getting employment in the type of work I had done in the RAF, or the type of job I wanted. However the company, who built simulators for the RAF, were situated in the Dunfermline area, Fife, which gave Sheila and I a chance to relocate to Scotland . Elliots became Marconi and then GEC, but still designing simulators, and my job was to commission the equipment aided by a wire man, fitter, and inspector. We visited most bomber command stations , where I met some of the lads, and Ray Thorne comes to mind. The biggest job was St Mawgan or was it St Eval - the one nearest the Bodmin jail. I did do a little designing, but when you are sitting in an office of young lads with BSc (hns). and my mate Jack Dempsey, who had a doctorate in electronics from Edinburgh University - one does feel a little inadequate. Walking round the factory in my first week and looking at pcbs with solid state "bugs" on them and little titchy amplifiers turned my stomach - not a pentode in sight. So, in mid 1973 I thought "Gary, THIS is not for you", so got out and sold double glazing for 6 months (commission only).

It was hard going at first, especially as I had a mortgage in a super large bungalow in Dalgety Bay, but after 3 months the company made me area manager and gave me a little Escort. Not quite my dream job, although the sales training I lapped up. This enabled me to apply to a small relay firm in Harlow, which meant that I had a salary without grafting night and day, and it was product selling with a monthly salary. My mother had hated when I told people I was a salesman. The next bit I love telling - ITT then head hunted and offered me a position as sales executive covering major accounts in Scotland, Ireland, down to Nottingham. At that time there were major accounts in Ireland ...DEC, STC, Giant, lots more that I cannot remember (see what happens when you have a fondness for the famous Grouse). It was necessary to spend one week a month in Ireland - north and south. The " troubles " did not bother me - I'm a Scotsman, and the money was good.

It turned out not a bad move, cos when Maggie Thatcher gave "System X" to Plessey and GEC Telecoms in the late 80's, ITT closed most of their factories including the ones I had been connected with.

Anyway, early 1984 , there I was in sunny Spain with my wife, daughter and boyfriend (my daughter's not mine). We did alright but working with family is taboo, and so is working sometimes 16 hours a day. 1996 ended in divorce with me alone in an empty bar cursing life and all that jazz. Luckily some idiots (sorry, nice people) wanted to rent it. You beaut! Working 14 -16 hours a day is not fun.

There I was 55 and retired after not a bad life. Not as cushy as some though, I guess. The worst part was halving our assets. Sheila deserved every penny she got but it is still painful. To pass the time I did 3/4 nights at karaoke in different bars. I had been hugely successful in my bar and as some of our ex-apps know when you are unemployed - there is no dinero coming in. Also the women threw themselves at me - unfortunately I could not catch them as they were all about 14 stones. A Mexican lady did invite me to Mexico dc. so I went there for 3 months but when I got back I could not be bothered with the Karaoke. Does anyone want to buy some good gear ? After that I did a bit of this and and a bit of that, but only to make money. For the last 5 years I have been with Sandra which means I have to spend half our time in the UK. Her choice,- not mine, but she is a good looking lass... used to be a good client in the bar. Also I worked and played hard during my life and it was time to relax. Sandra has done a lot of travelling and wants to continue so what the heck. Mind you being a salesman I know a good deal when I see one, and ones that are not so good, but she knows her way round brochures and is an astute women. Nuff said!

Now as I scribe this we are 1 year away from THE REUNION ...help! ... I have just had a nasty scare with a gangrenous appendix, but I am recovering well, so I'll probably be there . My biggest worry is that I will not recognise anyone. That's not quite true. I hope I am there - I mean everyone is only one heartbeat from not making it. Am I right or wrong - so I will not be rushing to book up.