

**Alan (Willie) Wythe—A311724—Instrument Fitter**

It was with great relief that I left Wagga. I can't say my stay there was enjoyable, although I have some good memories.

Enduring postings to 1AD, Laverton and East Sale for the next six years was a very mundane time in my life. I ran into many old Mango mates during this period.

My life changed considerably when I was finally posted to 10 Squadron, Townsville in 1962. It was like a breath of fresh air: glorious weather, a very enjoyable and exciting time including many overseas trips. It was here that I met my future wife, Ursula Dean and I was married at age twenty-six in 1965.

I settled down to a happy and contented lifestyle, rising to the rank of sergeant in 1966. All good things must come to an end, though. I was sad to be posted out to 481 Squadron, Williamtown after five wonderful years with 10 Squadron.

We soon settled in at 481 Squadron. We rented a house at Nelson Bay and enjoyed the lifestyle. Our first son was born there in 1968 which was a very joyous time. After about eighteen months we were allocated married quarters at Booragul near Toronto on Lake Macquarie. We enjoyed our stay there, making many lifelong friends. My five years at 481 Squadron were very challenging career-wise.

After considering discharge at my fifteen-year mark, I decided to sign on again and was promoted to flight sergeant in 1969. Our daughter was born in 1971 at Rathmines in the old RAAF medical section (then a private hospital). I could not have imagined this event occurring when, as apprentices, we stayed at the then RAAF Rathmines during our tour of Newcastle industries.

At the end of 1971 I was posted to ARDU, Laverton which was not very exciting. It seemed like a step backwards. We lived at Werribee during our time there and enjoyed the area. Thankfully after only ten months there I was posted to 478 Squadron Butterworth, Malaysia.

This was a happy and exciting time for the family and me. We thoroughly enjoyed the lifestyle living on Penang Island. One of the highlights was a holiday in Bangkok which we really enjoyed. After promotion to warrant officer in 1974 I was posted to Support Command, Melbourne.

I found Support Command very disappointing. We were allocated married quarters in Broadmeadows on the northern outskirts of Melbourne. The family and I were not very impressed with the area. The only glimmer of joy was the birth of our second son in 1975. I then took my discharge in August 1975.

The family and I moved to Hamilton, Victoria (my old home town). This was a bit of a culture shock, I had difficulty in adapting to civilian life. We built our first home there on a half-acre block overlooking Lake Hamilton. The family enjoyed the space and country life. I met up with old friends and was happy there (except for the weather).

There was not much in the way of employment, but I was never unemployed. I finally gained employment with the Adelaide branch of Rank Xerox as a sales technician. I was their representative for the whole of western Victoria and southeast South Australia. I found the job very enjoyable. There was a lot of travelling involved which I also enjoyed, as well as a company car and a good salary. There was plenty of time off as I was on call - no call/no work. I used my time off to landscape my half-acre as I worked out of my home. After nine years in Hamilton I was transferred to Adelaide with Rank Xerox. We bought our present home in Adelaide in 1985. After leaving Rank Xerox I worked in several part-time jobs which I really did not enjoy.

My wife and I attended the 1988 Apprentice reunion in Wagga, meeting up with many old RAAF friends - both Mangoes and others.

I finally retired in 1992. Our time in Adelaide has been a happy one for all the family. Our

Mango Stories

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three children all graduated from university and have good jobs. They all have their own homes and spouses in Adelaide.

I find retirement very enjoyable and my wife and I recently celebrated our thirty-eighth wedding anniversary. Being a granddad to two boys aged four and two is also fulfilling and consuming.

Looking back, I have had an interesting and enjoyable life since that day in 1954 when I wondered: “What the hell have I done”.

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Marriage to Ursula, Townsville 1965



Sightseeing in Bangkok 1973



Sergeants mess dining in night  
Butterworth 1974



In 2001 we are now Pop and Nana