

Hi folks from "Down Under", thought I'd write a synopsis of my time on The Island, having seen a couple on this website.

I arrived on The Island in the winter of 1947, aged 2 ½, living in Freshwater until moving to Newport in 1953, where my father was Treasurer of the IWRDC, and going to the National School in West Street. We lived at 35 Watergate Road looking out over the Blackwater Valley to St George's Down and the chalk pit.

After failing to get into Node Hill Grammar, due to failing the 11+, I went to Priory Boys', must have been sometime in 1956/57, where I remained until the summer break in 1963. In those days Southern Vectis ran school buses from the Odeon cinema (on the corner of Pyle St and Medina Avenue?) and, of course back in the afternoons.

My memories of teachers are (correct me if I'm wrong) :-

Messrs (Harry) Flux, (SAS) Audis, (Brian) Lansley – Maths

Mr (Tom) Boyland – History

Mr (Shorty) Martin – Physics (Thanks for stirring my interest in Electronics)

Mr (Jock) Petrie – Metalwork

Mr (Don) House – Phys Ed

Mr Milton – Biology and Rural Science (gardening)

Mr Stanbrook – Technical Drawing

Mr (The Rev) Higgins – Religious Instruction

Mr (Ralph) Lambert – Geography

Mr (Ozzie) Saunders – English and English Lit

Mr (Peter) May-Miller – French and Rugby

Does anyone remember the trip to Switzerland about 1957, organised by Mr. Lambert? I returned there with my mother some 35 years later, staying in the same hotel – The Alpenrose, and the same family was running it.

When I left Priory Boys' in 1963 with 5 GCE O-levels I did a summer's stint with Southern Vectis as a conductor before joining Government Communications Headquarters as a trainee wireless operator. After this I joined the RAF for about 9 weeks before being discharged on medical grounds, the X-ray part of the entrance medical was not done until I had been enrolled and gone to the basic training unit, so they accommodated and fed me and tailored two uniforms to fit me for that time, all to no avail. I then returned to The Island and got a job as an Electronics Technician with a firm called Electronic Designs Limited at Northwood (?) near Plessy Radar.

In 1971 as my father had retired early we decided that as we no longer had any close family in the UK we would join my sister, Jean, and her husband in Australia. I had several jobs out here ending up working at the same firm for 32 years, through several name and ownership changes (the company not me), until retiring earlier this year at 69 years old.

In 2005 and 2010 (see Dave Smith's photos for the 2010 reunion) I was able to visit The Island for my 60th and 65th birthdays and caught up with quite a few friends and classmates taking loads of photographs, my other hobby after Electronics and Amateur Radio.

I now live in a place called Frankston some 25 miles southeast of the centre of Melbourne about 1 ½ miles inland from Port Phillip Bay (which could swallow The Island with room to spare) and at an elevation of about 150 feet so I'm not worried about tsunamis.

If anyone remembers me and wishes to get in contact my email address is jayem45@mail.com

All the best

John "Dusty" Miler