

Alastair Montgomery (Monty)

EUAS: 1965-1969

I went to University, in 1965, under the delusion that the best thing in life for me would be a thrilling career as a history teacher. However, a visit to a Leuchars Air Show convinced me otherwise; and, the sly knowledge that a bunch of flowers in Kitty Tyson's direction might work wonders vis a vis a place in the UAS did the rest: I was IN!



After a couple of years of cavorting badly over the Fife skies, the piper called for payment and I joined the Royal Air Force in 1969 via Henlow and Cranwell – as the last- ever all UAS entry and a trial run for “real” graduates like the good Bill Rimmer mentioned elsewhere on this growing list of Ex EUAS worthies.

After dodging the ground and the chop (more than once) I joined the V-Force and spent almost 3 idyllic years on the Island of Cyprus..... Good grief.

Vulcans were followed by QFIing on Cambridge and Aberdeen UAS where I was still young enough to remember some of the things we got up to on EUAS. I then had a longish stint on the CFS staff, as a flt cdr, before returning to the V-Force in time to fail to deter the Argies. Consequently, I found out that *it was not only fighter pilots that could refuel in mid-air* and, suitably under-trained, set off for Ascension Island as Detachment Commander during that nasty little war.

Tours in Germany, Staff College, and the USA followed – where, although ostensibly on a “ground tour” the Americans foolishly allowed me to have a Lear Jet twice a week. I then commanded RAF Manston where I was reunited with the wonderful Chipmunk T10 (No 1 AEF).

I ended up as Group Captain Operations at HQ Strike Command during the aftermath of the first Gulf War (No Fly Zones and the like) and the dreadful conflicts in former Yugoslavia.

I took early retirement in 1997 and, after too long in the business side of a Further Education College, started a new life as Bursar of King William’s College on the Isle of Man (note: Britain’s best kept secret – the Island that is, not my bursaring).

Bad Joke but true story: The older amongst you will know that there used to be a bombing range at Jurby – adjacent to the said wonderful Island. We used this in 1982 - mainly round about 0300 and always, it seemed, in poor weather. During my interview at the School, the Chairman puffed:

“Ever been to the Island before Montgomery?”

“Yes, only once – but I didn’t stop!”

Now, Ingrid and I live in Wemyss Bay on the west coast of Scotland and wonder where all the years have gone. I was kindly given an MBE in 1983 and an upgrade in 1995 to OBE.



See, look older now! On the Falklands a few years ago.

Best Wishes

Monty