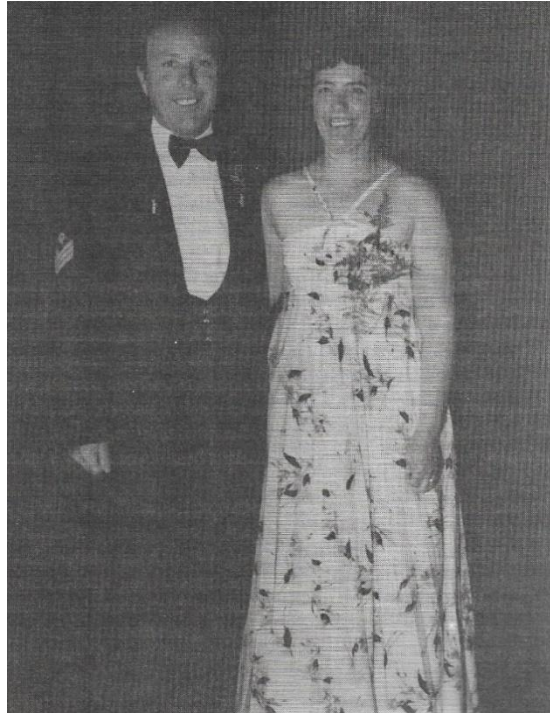


## RON TOMLINSON



Ron and his Wife Pauline 1981 Detmold Germany

Ron is from the old dart and did not want to lose the kind of comradery he found in his 22 years with the British RAF and REME, so he sought out an RSL Sub-Branch and came to North Beach in 1983.

Having lost his father in a mining accident in 1942, his mother remarried but died of cancer in 1950. Ron's step father allowed him to join the British RAF as a Boy Entrant in 1957. One and a half years later on the eve of his 18th birthday he was posted to RAF Gaydon in Warwickshire, England. There he pursued sports and joined the unit's Voluntary Brass Band in 1965 he went to Labuan (Borneo) for a year, returning to Gaydon for a further two years before going to Kuwait.

Returning in 1969 he was posted to RAF Leconfield in Yorkshire, England and lived at Beverley. Now a Sergeant his tasks changed and so did his spare time. There being no unit band Ron joined the Beverley Borough Band.

RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus was his next destination in December 1971. Fitting gearboxes to radar, his repairs tasks took him to Malta, Masira, Gan and Salala. With the Akrotiri Brass Band he played before Princess Margaret, Princess Alexandra and the Duke of Kent. The highlight of his tour was to play Hockey for the Near East Air Force. One weekend in June 1974 he took his family camping at Akrotiri beach, The Turkish and Greek Cypriots decided to have a shooting melee in Limasol and the weekend became a week. When the Turks invaded Northern Cyprus several weeks later his family were the first to be evacuated to RAF Finningly, near Doncaster, England. He joined them four months later.

On the twilight of his RAF career Ron transferred to the REME as a vehicle mechanic Retaining his rank of Sergeant after qualification training. On graduation, the chief clerk, with the usual smirch on his face said, "You are posted to 8 Field Workshops in Colchester, East Anglia, England and have 2 weeks to settle your family, then you will join your unit in Belfast, Northern Ireland". Ron did not think much of his first posting.

Back to Colchester in June 1976 he took on more sport, learning golf and tennis. It was 3 Years before he was posted to Minden in Germany with the Cheshire Regiment LAD. Leaving there for Detmold, Germany on promotion to Staff Sergeant in a REME Workshop he refined his golfing prowess and was selected as wicket keeper for REME BAOR to tour England. At Cologne he applied for emigration to

Australia, going through the usual red tape he arrived in Perth in September 1982 within weeks of his discharge.

Thanks to the encouragement and initial coaching by his friends at the North Beach Sub-Branch Ron became successful bowler at North beach and now Morley bowling club, the closest club to where he lives.

Ron's participation in sport and the brass band in relatively peaceful times was a way of solving one of the problems our defence commanders have had over the years. Didn't Sir Francis Drake play Bowls to occupy the idle hours?