



In the second half of 1975 I was sent to Edinburgh Airport to complete the approach and radar practical training, having just completed the CATC training courses. After validating , I was asked if I would like to stay at Edinburgh as a first posting. I was made very welcome by everyone who was working there and I really enjoyed the varied and interesting work, so I didn't hesitate and said yes straight away. I trained in the VCR and had validated in all positions, before attending the June'76 graduation ceremony. It was a great unit to work at because of the variety of traffic. It had commercial aircraft ,various military activities, it was the main diversion airport for RAF Leuchars, whose aircraft were always going to be short on fuel. Plus helicopter training, Air Cadets (AEF/ UAS) and flying club training. We had a lot of NATO exercises, including American and Canadian aircraft staging through, there were three runways in use... So everyday was a different challenge and I never ever got bored of it.

Edinburgh was a great city with lots going on, so the social life was good too. During my 18 years there, I learnt to sail and bought a small 20 foot sailing yacht and spent a lot of time sailing on the Firth of Forth. I took up hillwalking and did a bit of skiing, badly.

I moved to Manchester Airport in 1994, as the unit grading took place. I was originally told that I would be doing Area and would be posted to NATS Swanwick, when the Manchester area sub-centre closed. Prior to this, I was sent to Bailbrook College, to do an Area Radar refresher course. Manchester was another very friendly and welcoming unit. Having done a "second" area course they told me that they were short of tower and approach controllers, so I was back in the VCR, which suited me fine.

At Manchester I was able to take advantage of the long haul flights and did various touring holidays, mainly in the US and Australia. I have continued sailing in the Ionian, on Flotillas and yacht charters from Oban, all around the Outer Hebrides , reaching St.Kilda on one occasion.

I retired from NATS in 2012 just as the new Manchester VCR became operational, after 42.5 years. Since retiring I have taken up Sea Kayaking, around Anglesey and walking the Welsh mountains.

Oh yes....and I got married (Karen has insisted she at least get a mention somewhere) !