

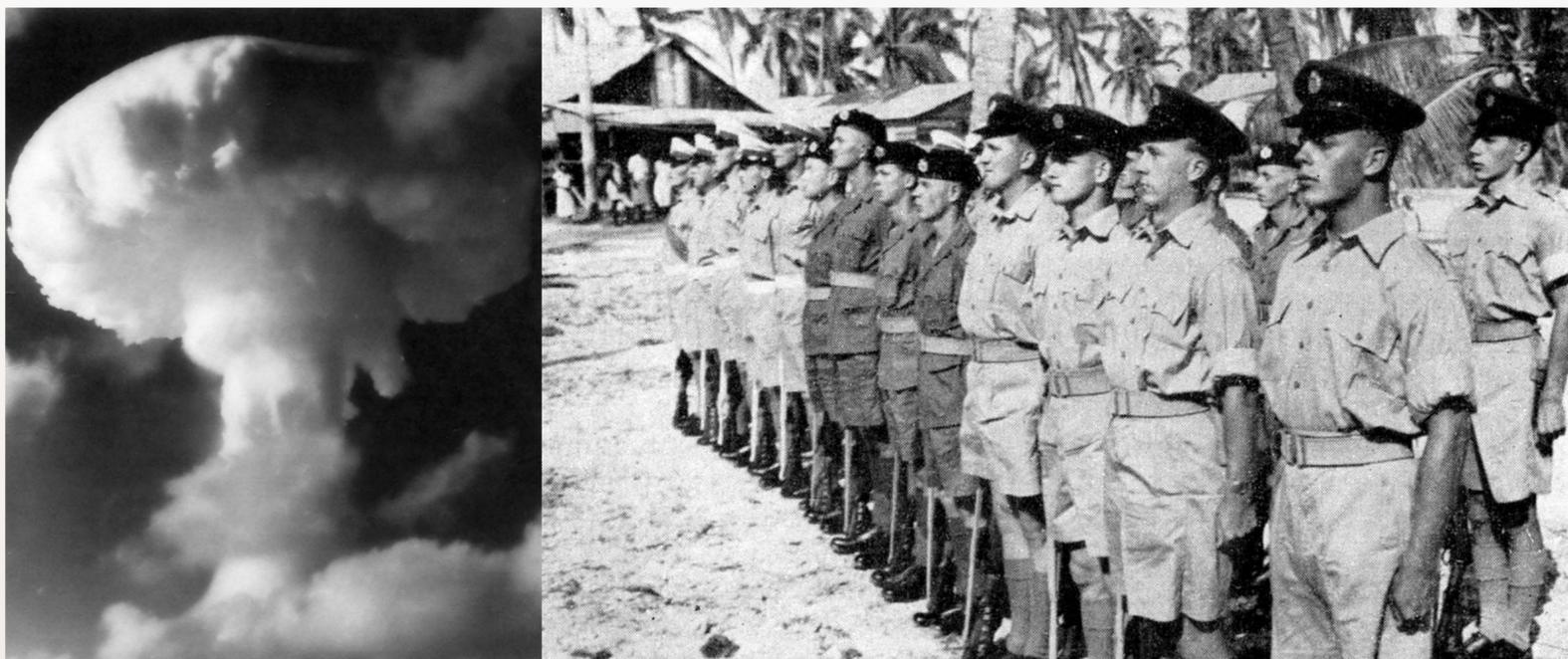


MILTON KEYNES AT WAR

CRUSADES, CAMPAIGNS AND CONFLICTS

CHRISTMAS ISLAND H-BOMB TESTS 1957

– or Posting with a Bang!



'We were to test Britain's first Hydrogen Bomb – equivalent to 1 million tons of TNT. I was an RAF Electrical Mechanic, posted to Christmas Island in the Central Pacific – the world's largest, remotest coral atoll, 24 miles by 15, 11¹/₂ metres above sea level, over 30° C degrees, a peaceful and beautiful island with 400 indigenous people living in a village called 'London'. The main military camp was a tented city for 2500 men.

'The first of the series was on 15th May 1957. The island was alive with activity – the Islanders evacuated on RN ships; aircraft checking the exclusion zone; parades at evacuation points. The Camberras were airborne for photos and to 'collect dust samples'. Two Valiants of 49 Squadron carried their deadly load to Ground Zero - the island of Maldon. This was to be a 'clean bomb' – detonating at a high altitude to limit radioactive fall-out...

'Shortly after 1000 hours, it was Bomb Gone! And the aircraft were returning to the island. There was a great feeling of relief. Now the Scientists had to evaluate the data. Three more H-Bombs were detonated, one just a few miles away. Later, the island was used as a Test Site for many Nuclear Bomb Tests, both British and American.'



Patrick Hurley of Old Stratford in Milton Keynes

From a collection of stories and memories written by a group of learners on a creative IT course on www.mywebpage.org.uk . All made their own web pages using their life experiences, memories or hobbies as an inspiration, a project made possible with funding from The Learning and Skills Council and presented by Living Archive Milton Keynes

DISCOVER
MILTON KEYNES