

A Bombs at Sculthorpe

The second world war had only just finished when the Air Ministry decided to build what they termed a 'Special Building' at the recently extended RAF Sculthorpe. Although the American forces had left the UK there is anecdotal evidence that the Americans were involved in this building.

Conventional bombs detonate on impact or by delay whereas A Bombs detonate in the air, they have to be assembled before loading and armed in flight. Perhaps this was what the Special Building was for. SC B29s and B50s arrived in 1949 and there is no evidence that there were any A Bombs there although there is anecdotal evidence that a practice bomb was used.

Fast forward to 1958 and a troubled airman found himself in this building with a loaded gun, the place was put on lock-down and civilian works sent home not knowing why. The press soon picked up the story and a year later, in the House of Commons, a question was asked why they were shown the wrong building!

Back to the 1940s when SAC were using a practice A Bomb, a loading pit was available but aerial photos do not show any oil stains on this hardstanding which would suggest that it was no used.

When the 47th BW arrived they used Mark 5 A Bombs like those used on Japan, when the B45s were replaced by B66s they used Mark 28 A Bombs which were simpler to construct and use.

After the 47BW was deactivated in June 1962 their work was spread around various USAF and RAF units but, within three years, the USAF 48TFW moved out of France to East Anglia so there was, once again a Tactical unit in this part of the world.