

**SCULTHORPE  
AND THE  
LOCAL ECONOMY**

**JIM BALDWIN**

With several thousand servicemen and their dependents attached to the 47th BW at Sculthorpe it goes without saying that it was a boost to the economy of the area. Many hundreds of local civilians worked on the Base as it was called. There were clerks, cleaners, cooks, storemen, maintenance engineers, motor engineers, landscape operatives, musician, Civil engineers and the local GPO ran the telephone system, Local Taxies and coaches were in demand and so was the local laundry. One enterprising family set up a business recycling the wooden packing cases which were delivered to the Base. Welcome income was made by renting out rooms and property until the Tobacco Houses were made available. Even then some families lived in caravans and some in holiday cottages at Hunstanton many of whom lost their lives in the floods of 1953. At the changeover of aircraft in 1957 a hotel in Cromer was brought in to use to house the extra personnel. For their part the Americans supported the local area in many ways. They supported the shops and pubs in Fakenham although there were often altercations in the pubs between them, the local lads and the RAF lads, usually over the rights to the local girls! They introduced 'Youth For Christ' into the town and would support local fairs and fetes. One Christmas they staged a variety show in Fakenham featuring the first electric guitar seen in the town. The Base would always send a squad of troops to take part in the annual Remembrance Sunday parade in Fakenham.



An American Officer and his two ladies patromnise a fete on Fakenham's Queens Road playing field in 1955.



Sculthorpe neede hairdressers too. This one retired after serving for 25 years!



*DIRECTING operations on South Beach, Hunstanton, is Col. Martindale of the U.S. Air Force at*

The Americans from Scuthorpe did sterling work at Hunstanton during the coastal floods of 1953 creating two heroes. 17 Americans who were living in holiday bungalows sadly lost their lives. The County awarded the 47BW with an award of a silver pheasant in recognition of their efforts.



Only the British could celebrate a defeat!. The Stars & Stripes fly on American Idependance Day.



The Silver Pheasant. The original was destroyed by fire at Norwich Library



One of the heroes, Reis LemingGM. I found him to be a gentleman and meeting his widow and son years later I found the equally as charming.





In 2002 many former airmen who had served at Sculthorpe came back for a reunion





Americans and civilians at Sculthorpe in the early 1990s by late 1992 all were gone.

The contribution that Sculthorpe made to the local economy has never been made known but considering the number of people it employed directly and indirectly the input must have been considerable