



Sedgley's

Diamond 60

*Sixty years, sixty people,
sixty stories about village
life*

1952

The Accession of Queen Elizabeth II

by Des Round

I entered the armed forces on May 18th 1950, when I was 18. I was posted to Honiton, Devon for eight weeks' basic training. After "passing out" from there I was posted to the 5th Battalion REME Radar Training Establishment at Arborfield near Reading.

I joined 14 other recruits for a six month course on radar techniques. At 18, I was the youngest on the course. After a lot of studying, with late nights poring over text books etc. we all passed out with 'Craftsman' status. All but three of us were transferred to other units throughout Europe and the Far East. I stayed at Arborfield on radar equipment maintenance.

Originally we were to stay in the army for 16 months - but someone thought it would be a good idea to keep us for a further six months. This meant that our release was moved to May 1952.

February 6th 1952 dawned and it was my 20th birthday, but something else happened that day to cut short my celebrations. Sadly, **King George VI** died and our present queen became **HRH Queen Elizabeth II**. Memories of that day are somewhat vague but I remember taking part in a hastily convened parade.

On May 20th I was demobbed out of the Regular Army and moved to West Bromwich TA for a further three and a half years.

60 years later, both the Queen and I celebrated something special. On Feb 6th 2012 she reached her Diamond Jubilee and I reached the grand old age of 80.



This photo of Des Round during his National Service was taken between February and May 1952.