

## Interview with Derek Gilder, 25 April 2013 ([SA733](#))

Derek: ...and that was behind where we lived in Grooms Lane was allotments, and there was two more fields before you come to the 'drome. And I sat there looking at this big plane. And unknown to me all of a sudden this American serviceman come along. And he talked to me, you know. He more or less said, you know, are you watching the planes? And I said, yes. And then he said, would you like to go in one? I couldn't believe it! Going in the plane. So I just said yes.

So I was on the perimeter, what they used to park on, and went to this plane. He lifted me up and said, you can sit in the cockpit, make out you're flying the plane. So I did, you know how kids do. And I was there about twenty minutes, twenty five minutes, and all of a sudden they put a covering over the top. The glass, or Perspex, at the front. He said that's in case there's a moonshine at night that reflects.

Well I sat there, and I sat there, and I sat there. And I got worried. I thought where has the man gone? And I looked to the place where I'd come up, and I thought well I can't get down there, because that was too high to the ground. So I walked down the plane and I got to the bomb doors. It was bombed, all ready to go. And I thought, well. And they'd written on there in chalk, well they used to, you know. And I got out by the bomb doors, and I run down the field as quick as I possibly could.

Interviewer: Do you think he'd forgotten you?

Derek: Yes, he'd forgotten me! He'd forgotten me all right!