

## **ML.98.The way it was in the 55<sup>th</sup>**

Tom, with this photo you have touched some very tender and emotional memories. I reckon you know the history of the pool. The club members helped dig the hole which came as no surprise as finances to support or available from government funds were 'squat.'

Example: when I reported there in August '55 and appeared at the club cashiers cage to join I was advised we would be required to lend the club \$20 as part of our membership responsibilities, and there was no pool. \$20 for a 2/Lt was a significant amount, as our total monthly base pay was \$222.30, flight pay was \$100, subsistence, \$47.88 (the latter sufficient to cover eating in the Field Ration Mess – government issue rations – at the back of the club. Note no housing allowance, as bachelors were REQUIRED to live in the WW II BOQ's. Total monthly pay \$370.18, total annual \$4,442.16.

We also were required to report to the site of a proposed new base golf course where we were employed as physical laborers.

And we were engaged as truck drivers to pick up crews and deliver them to their aircraft before flight and pick up after. This was a 24-hour crew duty. I should document the details, at which I believe today's youngsters would shake their heads in disbelief and ask us if we're smoking 'wacky backy' with this foolishness.

- Reg

