

Mark Fittall

Worked with EO	from 1994 to 2001
Age on joining EO	37
Nationality	UK
Role at EO	Leader/Driver, Workshop Manager
Expeditions/Brief Encounters etc. led or taken	After a training trip with Eddie and Janice Aldridge from Nairobi to Kathmandu I was let loose and did numerous back and forth trips between KTM – LON – KTM (around a dozen I think) etc with occasional side trips to Cairo. Also included in that time were the Egypt seasons and the India seasons. After that was a Trans Africa from London, then Capetown to Nairobi back and forths. After a break I returned, when Bill McMann left the workshop, to oversee the move out and stayed until the fateful day of closure.
Why did you want to work for EO?	I was looking for an adventure holiday and came across an EO brochure. At the time I was also disenchanted with the normal job/life. I saw a couple of pages in some of the square jawed, slim and fit leaders. I had a eureka moment and thought, "I could do that!", even though I wasn't square jawed and slim. But I was fit enough for sure. I sent off an application and waited. During a bad day at work I had a phone call from Eddie Edwards who wondered if I was actually now too old. Bigger that, I thought and had a few words that must have persuaded him as I was invited down for an interview. It started from there. I was initially offered a job as a workshop mechanic but said no to that without a thought.
Occupation before joining EO	Mechanic/fitter/driver, various night club jobs and policeman. And a paper round. That taught me how to get up early.
Occupation after leaving EO	Hotel booking call centre employee, Crisis Manager for a few months in the USA.
Now living in	I married a woman working for an International company which meant when we moved to different countries I was usually unable to get a work visa. So you could say I retired. Since leaving EO I've lived for several years each in the Philippines, Germany, Egypt, Jordan and now Zambia. The future is unsure, probably back to Germany in a couple of years for a while and then back out again somewhere. Asia, South America, no idea.

Then photo(s)	Now photo(s)

Memories or anecdotes

On one of those days where you seemed to be always a couple of hours behind where you wanted to be I was driving through Iran and was stopped at a checkpoint. Showed them the paperwork but they took issue with it and I had to be taken in their car to see the boss at an office in the town, luckily not far away, but I was still made to wait to see him. He accepted we had the right permits etc and the two plain clothes Police/Military who brought me told me to get in their car to get a lift back, a nice new Toyota pick-up.

What I didn't realise is that I'd just stood in a great pile of dog shit. The journey back was only ten minutes or so but after five we had to open the windows and wondering which one of us had had something crawl up his arse and die.

The stench just got worse and as we pulled up back at the truck they decided it must be me. I looked down as I got out and saw I'd smeared the shit all over their nice new carpets.

I hastily apologised and retreated.