



Confound & Destroy

The magazine of RAF 100 Group Association

 **Autumn 2012** 



100 Group Association Chairman Wing Cdr John Stubbington: 

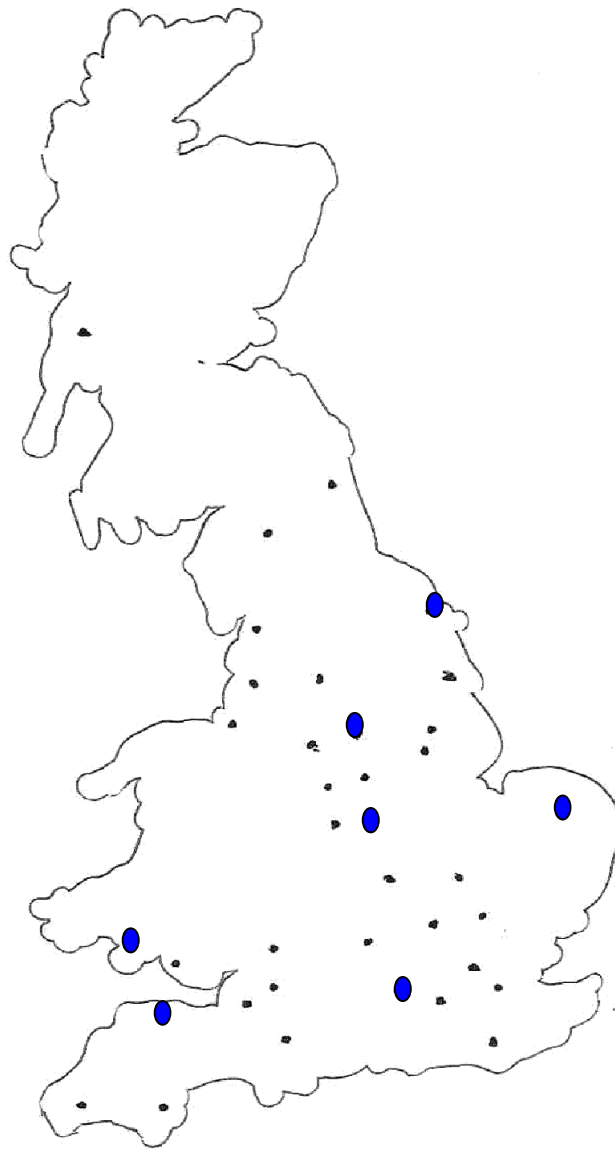
100 Group Association Secretary Janine Harrington: 

Home to RAF 100 Group Association
City of Norwich Aviation Museum
Old Norwich Road, Horsham St Faith, Norwich, Norfolk NR10 3JF
Telephone: 

www.cnam.co.uk

RAF 100 Group Association

Membership Areas



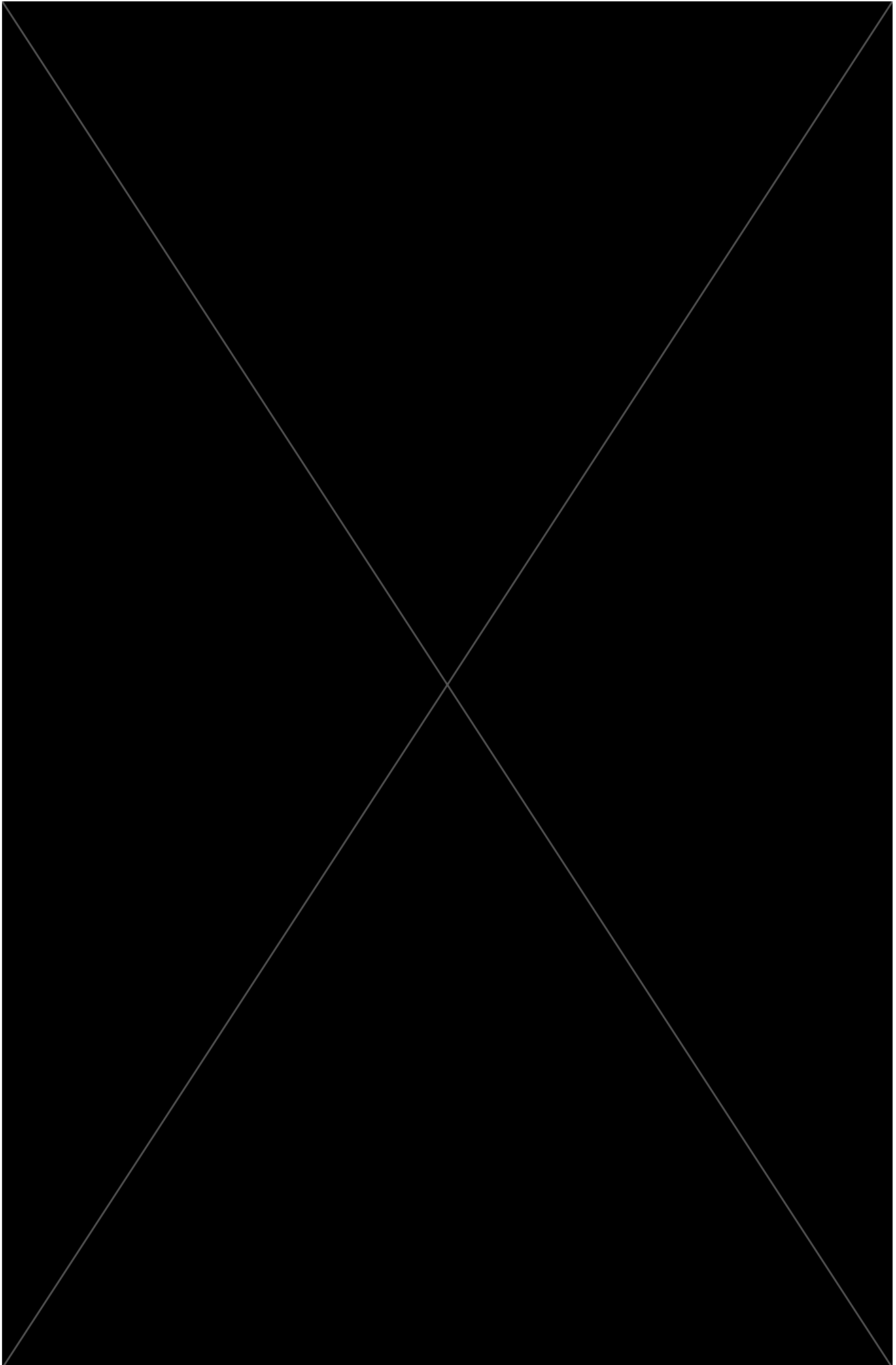
Each dot represents an area where there is a cluster of members
Big dots show where members of the RAF 100 Group Association Committee live

Members who live abroad are in the following countries:

Northern Ireland
Canada
Austria
China
Germany
Australia
USA
South Africa
Thailand

RAF 100 Group Association

Committee



Editor's Page



Dear Friends,

Thank you for all your phone calls, letters, cards and emails with such a wealth of information, knowledge and shared experience. As always, each and every one is valued. Thanks Bob (Belton) for additional photographs of our May Reunion, much appreciated. Letters and pictures continue to show how important it is to have this time when we come together to talk, to share, to remember.

Since the Reunion and Summer magazine, the world seems to have been dominated by the London Olympics, putting the Great back into Britain. We watched the Opening Ceremony with a real sense of history unfolding before our eyes. The Closing Ceremony was equally special, although perhaps not to everyone's taste in music ... with a huge concert going on until midnight. Great Britain succeeded beyond its wildest dreams ... 29 Gold, 17 Silver, 19 Bronze medals. But it was the stories of the people and their journey to get there that highlighted so many achievements.

The Queen's Jubilee Year has become a time for ceremonies and celebrations. I don't know how many of you made it to London's Green Park on 28th June for the unveiling of the Bomber Command Memorial. For weeks, the media picked up the story, testing people's reactions, putting all kinds of theories forward as to why it had been such a long time coming. But it's here now! That's what matters. And the sharing of experiences and personal interest stories has been valued.

Recently, I shared a long and interesting phone conversation with Leslie Temple, 101 Squadron; a Special Duties Officer during the war. He attended the Green Park ceremony and was one of those featured on television shaking hands with royalty as one of Bomber Command Association. In the following pages, he shares his thoughts on coming together for the first time in 57 years with his old skipper Erik Nielson and Rear Gunner Jimmy Rooke.

Air Vice Marshall Grahame Jones together with Phil and Vera James also attended. Thanks Phil, for the wonderful viewing of the DVD that your son-in-law put together of this very special day. The DVD includes archive material from the war. And again it illustrates why a commemorative plaque is so vital. The wonderful sculpture of a crew returning from a mission is a fitting tribute, so much bigger than we imagined. It means there is finally a place where families of those who didn't return can reflect and remember. It also creates a wider awareness of the debt we as a nation owe to so many who gave their lives for the freedom we enjoy today.

Finally, I don't know how many of you might have seen the feature entitled '*Oh, What a Lovely War, Darlings*' in 5th August Sunday Times magazine? It shows a full page picture of Wing Commander David Donaldson with a co-pilot at RAF Mildenhall, Suffolk, 1941. It is one of a lost wartime collection of photographs about to re-surface in a new exhibition of Cecil Beaton's portraits and work. Cecil Beaton made it his business to show the real images of war, wandering through bombed-out London, capturing surreal scenes of damage and destruction. '*Theatre of War*' will be at the Imperial War Museum, London SE1 from 6th September – January 1st. A book of the same name will be out on September 6th, published by Jonathan Cape (£35).

Janine
xx

Items for the magazine should be sent to:

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Chairman's Report



THE 100 (BOMBER SUPPORT) GROUP ASSOCIATION

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN, SEPTEMBER 2012

Dear Members,

I believe that the most important recent event towards the history of Bomber Command has been the unveiling of the Memorial in Green Park. What a wonderful spectacle that was and how relieved we must all have been to have had such good weather on that day. Although I could not be



present on the Day, it had been my great pleasure to meet the architect Liam O'Connor a couple of days before in the Reform Club, Pall Mall, where we were attending a talk about Bomber Command. We had the opportunity for half an hour of one-to-one conversation, not only about the architectural design, but also the message that the Memorial conveys to this and future generations.

I did notice from the television presentation several members of the Association who were there and it was a privilege for me to be able to identify with those veterans. Your achievements will last for ever.

Through these difficult economic times, many individuals and companies large and small are struggling. I suspect that some of you may be feeling that pressure and I most seriously wish you the very best of outcomes. It is in that context that I would like to reinforce the powerful contribution that the Association and the Newsletter can make, and indeed have made for many years, to our collective companionship. As a 'younger member' I respect the value that has for members who may have increasing difficulty both with contacts and mobility. Your Committee has the task of preserving the Association and I take this opportunity of reminding you all that it is in fact a collective task, shared between the Committee and all members. Please do not forget that we are all readily available whenever the need arises.

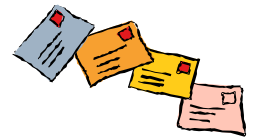
With my most sincere best wishes to all members,

John Stubbington

John Stubbington, Wing Commander, Chairman

On a personal note, I would like to record the sympathy of the Association towards Rod Vowler on the death of his wife Gillian, after her long battle with illness. Len Witts and I were able to attend the funeral on 27th July on behalf of the Committee.

LETTERS PAGES



Dear Janine & Tony

I was sorry you were unable to come to the Reunion ... Everything went off as arranged and it was, as usual, an excellent weekend. I hope by now you have recovered and are feeling well again ... I hope the enclosed photographs might give you a flavour of the whole event ...

Sincerely,

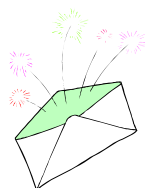
Bob Belton



Bob (left) enjoying afternoon tea at Oulton village



Phil James MBE (left) presenting this beautiful glass plaque (right) which he designed to Richard Bryan, Chairman of Oulton Parish Council. It is in recognition and gratitude for all the wonderful teas the villagers have created for us through the years.



Dear Janine

I have a copy of the photograph of the Special Signals Section that appeared in the Summer edition of Confound & Destroy (page 33). In fact I am on the picture but did not write the date on the back. I can only guess it was taken in 1944 or 1945.



Special Signals Section: 192 Squadron, RAF Foulsham: 1943-1945

Whilst I remember most the faces I can only put a name to one other and that is Jim Everton who is 2nd from left and I (Joe Sayers) 3rd from left on the back row.

Most of the airmen are, as one would expect; Radio Fitters or Mechanics and actually worked in the Nissan hut. Some are Carpenters and there is one Blacksmith who worked in the Station Workshop together with a Sheet Metal Worker. Jim Everton and I first worked from the Mod (Modification) Section which was mostly concerned with Bomber Command Modifications which had to be done to all aircraft from time to time. It will be recalled that 192 Squadron had three types of aircraft - Wellington, Halifax and Mosquito. Later Jim Everton and I with Gordon Ashton (who is not on the picture as he was away at the time) worked from a Nissan hut nearby the Special Signals Section, but across the road which, to the left, went past the church down to Foulsham village. Jim, Gordon and I were by trade Fitter II A's (Airframe Fitters) where we worked solely for the main section. The Blacksmith is sitting directly in front of me.

The carpenters were involved in the manufacture and fitting of tables for the various electronic boxes in Wellington and Halifax aircraft. They also had certain work to do on Mosquitoes. The Blacksmith and Sheet Metal worker would do specialist work that airframe fitters required from time to time.

By the very nature of the work carried out by the Squadron, the aircraft needed extra aerials fitted and this was done by the three airframe fitters. Most aerials were common to all Wellington and Halifax aircraft and were assembled from manufactured parts, although we did make the elements ourselves in such a way that they could be changed when necessary. Some aerials were completely made in the Section and were covered by a Perspex blister. Sometimes we were required to fit a special aerial on particular aircraft.

I was the airframe fitter that was sent to RAF Deptford referred to on page 47 in the book by William & John Rees Espionage in the Ether. I actually made and fitted a waveguide to an H2S scanner. I also fitted the aerial in the nose of a Mosquito referred to on page 55 and later removed.

Joe Sayers

joseph.sayers@ntlworld.com



Dear Janine

Happy to report that I eventually received 2 tickets for the Bomber Command Memorial after writing two pathetic letters tugging at the heart strings – veteran gunner, 30 missions, three comrades killed, sob, sob, sob, you can imagine ... although I think it was more likely due to the adverse publicity drummed up by The Mail. They got hold of a 91 year old Air Gunner with a string of medals from several tours who had not been allocated a ticket even though he had applied in time.

Anyway, I had a wonderful day and it was a very moving experience. We were in the Salute Area which I thought was better than being at the actual Memorial, but we were able to view the building later on and see the magnificent statue of a crew which was absolutely lifelike even to the expressions on their faces. Definitely a lump in the throat moment!

One odd thing. I spoke to someone at Bomber Command Association originally and they claimed to have no knowledge of RAF 100 Group Association ...

Best wishes

Derek Wilshaw



Dear Janine & Tony,

I found this touching reader's letter in The Telegraph:

'As a Bomber Command veteran, I attended the dedication of the Memorial, which meant a series of black cabs around London. Not one of the drivers would accept any payment!'

Gerry Abrahams, Birchingtton, Kent'

Gerhard Heilig



Dear Janine,

Further to our recent telephone conversations I have pleasure in enclosing some copies of relevant photographs appertaining to my RAF service in Bomber Command, which included a period of a few weeks at Sculthorpe in April/May 1943, on Fortresses prior to being posted to Lindholme for Lancaster familiarisation.



I attended the Bomber Command Memorial ceremony in Green Park, and

it was my pleasure to meet in person the royal family and Prince Charles. However, prior to that event my pleasure was in meeting, after 57 years, my old skipper and Rear Gunner in 2001.

On the weekend of ½ September I met again my skipper Erik Nielson and my Rear Gunner Jimmy Rooke at the 101 Squadron Reunion at Lincoln Assembly Rooms. The feeling cannot be described when I met the man whose professionalism had given me life; especially recalling the mission we made to Kiel in July 1944 and being coned in searchlights coming back on two engines and nearly 100 holes in our Lanc. F/O E Nielsen must be one of the most eminent men ever to serve in the RAF and is in fact The Honourable Erik H Nielsen, P.C; DFC, QC, LLB, F.C.S.M (Hon). Erik served the Government in Canada in many capacities, eventually to be appointed Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Queens Privy Council for Canada, in September 1984 and Minister of National Defence in February 1985. Many will know that 101 Squadron suffered more casualties than any other Bomber Command Squadron during WWII, losing 1100 aircrew. We flew from



Ludford Magna and our Lancasters operated Airborne Cigar Equipment which interfered with the German Night Fighter transmissions from their controllers. Each Lanc carried a crew of eight. I was the 'ABC Operator' of Erik Neilsen's crew, each operator having knowledge of the German language. I feel very fortunate in having survived 30 missions, completing my tour in October 1944. It is always very difficult to explain to people and even RAF personnel, the emotion that one feels for members of their crew, especially when one has flown seriously on Ops together. In our particular case we know that our Bomb Aimer, Taffy Morgan was killed whilst flying on Liberators in the Far East, but the rest of our crew completely disappeared, and it would be a delight to track them down. My final departure from my skipper Erik and Jimmy, my Rear Gunner, still remains a blur, but I can remember the everlasting words 'Till we meet again'.

Sgt Temple, Special Duties Op, 101
Les Temple, Tel: 0208 220 3461



Flight Engineer
Sgt James

Navigator
F/Sgt Hall

Bomb Aimer
Sgt Morgan

Mid Upper Gunner
Sgt Ross

Rear Gunner
Sgt Rooke

Special Duties Op
Sgt Temple

Radio Operator
Sgt Bailey

Skipper/Pilot
F/O Nielsen



57 years on: Erik Nielsen, Les Temple and Jimmy Rooke

Dear Janine



I am doing research on my late uncle, [Pilot Officer William Searle Vale \(RAAF\), 401553](#), (seen left) who flew for the RAF and was killed, along with his Navigator F/L A. E. Ashcroft (RAF) DFC, when their Mosquito aircraft MM678 crashed at Drieslinter, Belgium on October 6th 1944.

William was serving with [157 Squadron, based at Swannington](#), under RAF 100 Group in support of Bomber Command as an intruder night fighter.

On the night of the tragedy he failed to return and nothing was heard from the aircraft after take-off. William's Logbook final entry states 'High Level Intruder Ruhr area'.

Both men are buried in Brussels, Belgium.



[157 Squadron at Predannack Dec 1943](#)

I found you on the CNAM website and to my disappointment, discovered at the end of your newsletter that a person I was going to contact in regards to 157 Squadron was listed in the names of people who had passed away. His name was Bryan Gale and I was saddened to find this.

I am wondering if you can help me in my research for information about my uncle and 157 Squadron. I have searched many online pages, but felt that your newsletter may be an excellent way of reaching others who may have known of Bill - as he is known to my family.

Any information you can give me would be greatly appreciated. I would especially love to see photos that anyone may have or any stories that your readers may be able to share. Bill was in Squadrons 456 and 600 prior to joining 157 Squadron at Predannack in December 1943.

A photo of the MM678 aircraft would be excellent.

I am also very keen to find a photo or information about his navigator **F/L A. E. Ashcroft (RAF DFC)**. A photo of him would be wonderful as the family has never known anything about Ashcroft.



157 Squadron at RAF Swannington Officers Mess

I have included three pictures for your newsletter: one of William, known as Bill; one of 157 Squadron at Predannack Dec 1943 and one of 157 Squadron on the steps of Swannington Officer's Mess 1944. I presume that F/L Ashcroft is in this picture. Confirmation of his identity would be fantastic. (William Searle Vale is 4th from the left in second back row.)

I am also being assisted in my research by a Belgian man whose mother is a witness to the accident on that fateful day. He is also researching the crash of MM 678 for the recording of local history, so anything I can find out will be also very much appreciated by him.

Contact - 1210 FELTRIM RD, EARLSTON, VICTORIA 3669, AUSTRALIA

chrankin@activ8.net.au

Yours faithfully

Helen Rankin

NOTE:

Helen is grateful for Richard Forder's help. We now know that Mosquito MM678 took off from RAF Swannington at 1807 hours on 6th October 1944, detailed to carry out an intruder support sortie of targets being Bremen and Dortmund. Nothing was heard from the aircraft after take off and it failed to return to base. The crew were -

RAAF 401553 P/O Vale, W S Captain (Pilot)

RAF Flt Lt Ashcroft, A E DFC (Navigator/Radio)

Dear Janine,

Last weekend I visited the Norwich Aviation Museum for the second time. The RAF 100 Group display has my special interest. I do historical research trying to find more information about two RAF crew members KIA 22nd March 1945, flying with 23 Squadron, Little Snoring. One of the employees of the Museum did a quick search in their database, but told me he was not the specialist. He could find a name but not the related pictures/documents.

My request to you is: Is it possible for me to add 'a request for more information' in the RAF 100 Group Magazine? What I am hoping for is that some members of the RAF 100 Group Association are in possession of pictures with one or both crew members.

The crewmembers are:

Michael (Mike) O'BRIEN - Pilot, Squadron Leader, 69497

SQUADRON	DATES of SERVICE	AIRFIELD	OUTCOME
139 Squadron	October 1943 – January 1944	RAF Wyton	
192 Squadron	January 1944 – August 1944	RAF Foulsham	
1692 BSTU	August 1944 – February 1945	Great Massingham	
23 Squadron	February 1945 – March 1945	RAF Little Snoring	Killed in Action

Philip DISNEY - Navigator, Flight Lieutenant, 139616

SQUADRON	DATES of SERVICE	AIRFIELD	OUTCOME
169 Squadron	???? – February 1945	Great Massingham	
23 Squadron	February 1945 – March 1945	Little Snoring	Killed in Action

It would be great to have some pictures for my archive but also for the relatives/families I traced. Thank you for your time and effort.

Best wishes,

Egbert Theune

Engweg 21, 6741 CX Lunteren, The Netherlands. Email: egbert61@gmail.com



Dear Ms Harrington,

Sadly my father, Bruce Drinkwater died of bowel cancer two years ago on the 2nd May at 92 years of age. I'm sorry this letter is so late in letting you know ... He will no longer require a copy of your wonderful magazine to be sent which he so enjoyed reading. It was always a great source of interest to him.

Kind regards

Heather Murphy

NOTE: Bruce Drinkwater was Peter Witts' Skipper on 462 Squadron and Peter always held him in such high esteem he continued to pay for a magazine to be sent to him. Sadly, he was not to know that a couple of years ago his friend and Skipper passed away.

Dear Janine Harrington,

I found your Associations details on the City of Norwich Aviation Museum website.

I am writing about my Grandfather Frederick Collins, who served as aircraft ground crew with 515 Squadron throughout much of the Second World War.

He joined up to the RAF early in the war, and looks to have been with 515 Squadron throughout its entire existence, while it was both a Fighter Command and subsequently a Bomber Command Squadron.

RAF Notholt - BP Defiant I-II

RAF Heston - BP Defiant I-II

RAF Hunsdon - Bristol Beaufighters IIF /DH Mosquito II

RAF Little Snoring - 100 Group DH Mosquito FBIV

Frederick passed away in 1990, so we never got to quiz him much about his experiences, but I wonder if any of your members, or archives would have information about him or photo's relating to RAF Little Snoring?

Yours Sincerely

David Collins

dh103hornet@hotmail.co.uk



Hi Janine,

My Grandfather, JOHN E NICHOLLS was in RAF 100 Group, 223 Squadron during the war and sadly passed away in 2004. My father recently purchased Richard Forder's book '*Special Ops Liberators*' after reading about it in your magazine. When he received it, he discovered that my Grandfather is actually on the cover of the book (second from right). The whole family was shocked and very proud to see this as we have very little photographs of him during his time in the war.

I am writing to possibly get some information regarding the picture on the cover of the book and if possible to find out where we could get a copy or print of it? Any information on the picture such as the owner of it would be greatly appreciated.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Many Thanks

Adam Nicholls

nicholls133@gmail.com

NOTE: Adam is now in touch with Richard Forder direct and has been delighted to discover so much more about his family's heritage, together with the photograph from the book cover.



Dear John (Stubbington),

A name on the Memorial at the former RAF Hunsdon here is Wing Commander C M Miller, DFC**. As a pilot at Hunsdon he flew Havoc 'Turbinlite' with 530 Squadron. This was the aircraft with a multi-million candle power searchlight in the nose (see right)

His son, with whom we are in contact, has recently given us copies of his log book, his combat reports, some photos and his flying boots - all of which I have in my possession before they are placed in our village Museum.

On looking through his Record of Service I now realise he was also CO of 85 Squadron from 22nd January 1943 (at West Malling) to 1st November 1944 (at Swannington), ie he was in 100 Group.

I have attached copies of a photo, a combat report and a celebratory dinner menu – all from Swannington. Do you know of anyone in the Association who may be interested?

Best regards,

David Kitching



Flt Cdr Air David Kitching with W/Cdr C M Miller standing by W/Cdr Miller's Mosquito of 85 Sqn



Dear David

My records suggest that 85 first operated within 100 Group during June 1944 - - BUT there was considerable argument between Air Ministry, Deputy Supreme Cdr (Tedder), HQBC, ADGB and 100 Group about the continued use of 85 and 157 against V-1s. One of the elements of this was the use of 150 Grade fuel with 25lbs boost in the Merlin engines, which basically knackered them in quick time. When the Squadrons

subsequently operated with 100 Group on Intruder Missions they were suffering repeated engine failures - over enemy territory. Single-engined return from ops was a frequent event; and a good number of aircraft and crews were lost.

I have a bunch of hard copy archive that illuminates some of this - most of it is within Air 14/738 and I attach an extract from one of my databases (??), in Excel. This could become an interesting story in itself?

John Stubbington

Tel: 01420 562722/email: john.stubbington@btinternet.com

* * * *

Dear John,

Thank you for this - very interesting. Another 'untold' story, about which I suspect most operational aircrew were unaware.

Disagreement about the control and use of 'support' assets was still around in the 1980s. As Flt Cdr Air on 57 Squadron (Victor K2) based at RAF Marham, my war role was as tanker commander of all UK tankers, reporting direct to HQ STC, not the station commander or HQ 1 Group. We also had two Tornado squadrons (27 and 617) at Marham. The administrative chain of command was unchanged.

A fully loaded Tornado from Marham could not operate beyond Brussels without tanker support, unless they refuelled in Germany. On the other hand, HQ UKADGE had priority for the use of tankers for fighter support. At about 2am one night during a 'live' Taceval in 1984, I had to decline HQ 1 Group's and my Station Commander's request for two tankers for Tornado support since all available assets had, at that time, been assigned to UKADGE for the defence of the UK. The Tornados stayed on the ground and Group Captain Peter Norris was not amused!

David Kitching davidjkitching@aol.com

NOTE: If any member is interested in knowing more about this exchange of mail between John and David please contact them direct. They will be more than happy to hear from you.



Dear Members,

We in Oulton are currently fighting a proposal by Bernard Matthews (Turkey Empire) to erect a 50 metre Wind turbine on Oulton Airfield, not far from the site of the old control tower.

Whilst we all accept that we all need to seek a source of renewable energy, this will dominate our relatively undisturbed village. It will be seen from wherever you are in the village particularly from the street and what is more, it is a totally unproven source of green energy. There is only one beneficiary and that is Bernard Matthews who will reap the financial rewards in rental income. There is absolutely no benefit to the village, only anxiety and stress as to what this could mean for us all.

It is ironic that the airfield was built to fight a dictatorship and preserve our freedom, yet here are 67 years on fighting a dictator of a different kind a large corporate bully who wants to use the airfield for their financial benefit only without any consideration for us, the villagers.

I will keep you posted.

Best regards to all

Chris Lambert

Oulton Representative/RAF 100 Group Association Committee

Shared Experiences

Flight Lieutenant L D Gregory DFC

1332765 172248 (ACA 12986)



'Doug' Gregory was born on 13th January 1923, in Southampton. He left elementary school at the age of fourteen and worked in a local solicitor's office.

He volunteered for the RAF as soon as he was eighteen and joined at Uxbridge on the 3rd February 1941. After completing his initial training at No 8 LT.W at Newquay, Cornwall, he sailed as an LAC in August 1941, for pilot training in Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe.

He trained at No 25 E.F.T.S at Belvedere, Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, flying Tiger Moths, then on to No 20 S.F.T.S., flying Harvards, followed by advanced S.F.T.S at Cranborne, Salisbury, where he won his wings on the 23rd March 1942. Twin engine training on Oxfords followed at No 23 S.F.T.S. at Heany, Bulawayo from May 1942. Because of the forthcoming great expansion of Bomber Command, he returned to the UK.

Now a Sergeant Pilot, he flew at No 6 Pilot Advanced Flying Unit at Little Rissington, Gloucestershire where overseas-trained pilots were brought up to the standards required in a theatre of war. A posting to No 54 O.T.U. at Charterhall, Scotland and its satellite at Winfield followed, where he trained as a night fighter pilot, flying Blenheims Mk 1, 4 and 5s and also Beaufighters Mk II. Here he crewed up with his [Navigator/Radar Operator Sergeant D.H. Stephens \(Steve\)](#) seen on right. They were to remain together until the end of WW2.



In February they were both posted to No 141 Squadron at Ford in Sussex.

The Commanding Officer was W/Cdr J.R.D. Braham D.S.O**, D.F.C**, A.F.C., Croix de Guerre. The Squadron moved to Predannack in Cornwall where they started operations in Beaufighters Mk Is. While there, Doug and Steve carried out 'Instep' operations over the Bay of Biscay and 'Ranger' operations over Brittany. They also carried out several air/sea rescue searches, providing cover in case of E boat attacks.

In April 1943 the Squadron (141) moved to Wittering, Northants and after being trained on 'Serrate' radar operations at Drem, in Scotland, the two of them started on their long, consecutive, double tour of operations with 141 Squadron on 'Serrate Bomber Support' over Germany and occupied Europe.

They started on Beaufighters Mk 1 and Mk 6. However, 141 Squadron went on to change to Mosquitoes and moved to West Raynham, Norfolk in December 1943. The Squadron became the first in 100 Group, Bomber Command. Doug was commissioned with Steve as Pilot Officers in January 1944. During this time they did photographic research into radar jamming while on raids over Germany.

Later that year, Doug and Steve, shot down in Northern France a JU 88 and another near Metz. On 4th of August both were awarded the D.F.C. and promoted to Flying Officers in September. They completed their consecutive double tour of operations with 141 Squadron in October 1944, having operated continuously since March 1943, chalking up 69 operational sorties.

On 13th October, 1944 they were both posted as Instructors to 51 O.T.U, a night fighter training unit at Cranfield and Twinwood Farm, Bedfordshire. Five months later, in February 1945, they were posted overseas to the Royal Naval Air Station at Gibraltar, where, with their Mosquito, they carried out various forms of attack, high level bombing, dive bombing, torpedo and low level strafing, all simulated attacks on the new Battle Class destroyer H.M.S. Barfleur. This was to test the destroyer's radar defences for its forthcoming part in the war against Japan. It was in Gibraltar that Doug had the opportunity to fly the Swordfish and the Seafire.

In July 1945 he and Steve finally parted. Doug was posted to No 306 M.U. Allahabad in India to help sort out the trouble that Mosquitoes were having with the unkind tropical atmosphere. It was there he tested a wide range of aircraft, including Beaufighters and Mosquitoes of different Mk's, also Spitfires and Hurricanes.

In February 1946 he was promoted to Flight Lieutenant and posted to No 307 M.U. at Lahore to be in charge of the Test Flight. Here he tested Mosquitoes, Beaufighters, Dakotas, Spitfires, Austers, Vengeances, Dominies, Expeditors and Arguses. It was at Lahore that he flew Professor P.S. Gill, who was researching into the behaviour of cosmic rays. This required flying to almost the maximum height of the Mosquito.

Doug returned to the U.K in September 1946 in an unusual manner. He delivered, from Jodhpur, an Expeditor, to the American Air Force in Germany in Munich. He was released from the Royal Air Force in September 1946.

After Teacher Training College, he joined the teaching profession and for many years was Head of Faculty of Creative Arts in a comprehensive school. Doug returned to flying, for pleasure only this time, in light aircraft and when he retired in 1983, at the age of 60, he started to build a replica of an S.E.5a, World War I fighter biplane. This took four years to complete. He now flies with a group of World War I enthusiasts with their aircraft, and performs at most Air Shows around the South of England. Doug lives near the coast in Hampshire with his wife Liz, who is his helpmate and very enthusiastic partner. In spite of his heavy flying commitments he still manages 12 months of the year, to turn up at all the Southampton Air Crew Association meetings.

Is there any member in the Association that remembers or knows Doug Gregory and Steve Stephens? If so, we would welcome contact from you. The two photographs were left with Martin Staunton (Founder of the Association) and we continue to go through the boxes filled with letters, photographs and information after his death.

Thanks

Kelvin Sloper

Committee: City of Norwich Aviation Museum
(contact details on front of this magazine)

Shared Experiences

That Was A Long Time Ago

by the late John Eggert aka 'Shorty'

192 Squadron, Foulsham



Some years ago, with my family, I was on a motoring holiday in Norfolk. Acting on impulse, I deviated from the intended route to pull up outside a farmhouse on the outskirts of Great Ryburgh. I rang the doorbell and, when the lady of the house opened the door, I introduced myself. The response was a blank look. I continued: *"When you last saw me I was running down the hill at the rear of your house"*. *"Were you in the Halifax bomber that crash landed on our land?"* the lady enquired. Yes, I certainly was. I was the Flight Engineer. The other crew members were Australian.

Suddenly the years rolled back and it all happened again.

We were normally engaged on night operations from our base at Foulsham, but this trip was different. It was to be a daylight raid, our first and, for me, the last. The target was Munster. Take-off was scheduled for 14.00 hours on 18th November 1944. It was a beautiful day, but it started badly. Our usual aircraft (U for Uncle) proved unserviceable, so we transferred to another Halifax (V for Victor). This was usually flown by our Squadron Leader, who happened to be on Leave at the time. It was rather unusual, as it was rigged up with special equipment that jammed the wavelengths the Buzz-Bombs operated on, causing them to crash into the sea.

We commenced the take-off at the planned time, the Bomb-aimer acting as Co-Pilot. He had two prime duties during take-off. His left hand was placed behind the throttle levers and, as the Pilot opened them up, his hand followed behind until take-off speed was reached. The Pilot then removed his hand, leaving the Co-Pilot to push the throttle levers fully forward to obtain maximum power. His other job was to watch the four engine rev counters. He had to watch for a tell-tale flick of a temporary drop in revs. This would signify a sudden failure of power on an engine. After a failure, the engine revs would pick up to the original speed as the propeller 'windmilled'. It was important to spot this flick so the correct engine could be 'feathered' (stopped). This had to be done without delay otherwise a tremendous drag effect would be caused.

Sure enough, we had an engine failure on the starboard side, just as take-off speed was reached. The Pilot knew on which side the failure was, but not which engine. Unfortunately the Co-Pilot had not been watching as closely as he should and, as the Pilot shouted *'Engine failure on starboard side, which one?'* he noticed the Starboard Inner engine was not giving the normal full power take-off revs of 2800. Normally this was nothing to worry about. *'Starboard Inner'* he reported incorrectly, and shut it down. So there we were, about twenty feet off the ground, with one engine 'feathered' (stopped) and the other, on the same side not giving any power at all, but windmilling and causing drag. The skipper realised he couldn't gain height, nor dare he attempt to turn the aircraft to land, as it would have spun into the ground. Just to cheer us up, I realised that as well as full fuel tanks in the wings we also had three long range tanks in the bomb bay just under my feet. The order came over the intercom *'Crash - Crash - Crash'*. This was the order

we dreaded, and the signal for all except the Pilot to leave their normal positions and proceed without delay to Crash Positions in the strongest part of the aircraft, rear of the rear spar. The escape hatches opened, we took up our positions on the floor of the aircraft and awaited results.

We travelled about six miles in a straight line, and lobbed into the first open space that turned up. This happened to be a field planted with turnips. Our Pilot's name was Field, so you can guess what his nickname was from then on! The aircraft roared up a hill, over the top, and stopped halfway down the other slope. As we slowed down to a stop the starboard wing broke off and caught fire. For some never explained reason the bomb doors had been ripped open, the long range tanks torn out, and the bomb doors closed again. The rear entrance/escape hatch burst open and the bottom edge acted as a scythe. As the aircraft slewed round, it chopped up about half a ton of turnips. They piled up in the rear of the plane, about two feet deep. Needless to say we all shot out of the top escape hatches without delay. We ran downhill to the farm where the skipper telephoned our base. Fire engines arrived and the fire was extinguished. This was not accomplished without humour as three thousand gallons of hundred octane fuel ran down the hill, setting fire to the firemen's hoses with which they were attempting to put out the fire.



Later in the day it occurred to me how very lucky I had been. Many, many times we had practiced the crash landing procedure in an aircraft on the ground. My position was rear of the rear spar, hard up against the

starboard side of the aircraft. However, when I arrived at my position on this particular day I found the Mid-Upper Gunner occupying it. I didn't argue, but sat next to him. When the wing broke off, the rear of it lanced through the fuselage just below the gunner's feet. As he was considerably less than my six feet three inches, his act probably saved my feet being chopped off. He had never sat in my place before, and still cannot think why he did on this occasion. This was the farmhouse my family and I had called at – I remembered it well!

John Eggert aka Shorty, Flight Sergeant (2202199)

192 Squadron – 100 Group (Special Duties)

Passed away at Oadby, Lincs, on 28th April 2006. Most of his life spent in Sunderland.

Father of *Anne Blair-Vincent*

blair-vincent@virginmedia.com

Anne is a new member of our Association and would love to share any memories of her father that anyone might have. She can be contacted at:

Anne Blair-Vincent, 89 Windsor Street, Wolverton, Milton Keynes, MK12 5AN. Tel: 01908 313007



Flight Engineers of 192 Squadron - Foulsham
 F/Lt Howard DFC – Officer in charge is 3rd from the right, front row
 F/Sgt Eggert – extreme left in rear row

* * * *

Shared Experiences

ONLY FIFTEEN MINUTES MORE

by S/Sgt Jack Hope, Tail Gunner with the 36th Bomb Squadron



You know the old 'Murphy's Law' thing – *'If anything can go wrong, it will'?* I might add, *'But sometimes it works out OK in the end, however sometimes it does not.'*

I flew as the Tail Gunner on a B-24 Liberator with the 36th Bomb Squadron. We flew out of England over the North Sea and much of Western Europe. We were not actually a 'bomb' Squadron since we did not carry bombs. We were a Radar Countermeasures activity that flew several different types of electronic warfare 'jamming' missions that were designed to counter the German's radar capabilities and confuse their operations against the British Isles and all Allied Forces during World War II.

The 'powers that be' were uncertain about what they should do to define the combat tour duty limits of our Squadron. At that time, the regular bombardment groups were flying thirty-five missions to complete a tour. Our missions were so diverse that they could not be compared logically to those of the regular bomb groups.

Under the direction of the British Royal Air Force (RAF) 100 Group, our first operational missions were in support of the RAF night operations against German targets. The darkness offered protection from visual detection by the German defence systems, and the radar countermeasures efforts offered added defence against German electronic detection and destroy measures.

After we started daylight operations in support of the 8th and 9th US Air Forces, at times our mission consisted of establishing radar screens over the North Sea to screen our bombers from detection by German radar and fighter aircraft. Other times we would lead the bomber force into Germany. Also, we flew missions to disrupt communications among ground operations of the German Army.

My longest mission was flown on December 31, 1944. The total mission was eleven hours, with over seven hours orbiting the Battle of the Bulge interrupting German tank communications.

Considering these, and many other factors, someone came up with the idea that we should fly three hundred 'operational' hours to complete a tour of duty.

However, the center piece of this tale is that I and our [Nose Gunner, Jack Long \(seen right\)](#), flew three hundred *and five* operational hours. We flew five hours over the required three hundred hours. This happened because at the completion of our fifty-fourth mission we were *fifteen minutes short of our three hundred hour goal*. Therefore we were required to fly one more mission. This was accomplished on February 8, 1945 and it lasted five hours and *fifteen minutes*.



On completion of our mission on February 6, 1945, all our crew thought we had only one more to fly to accumulate our required 300 hours. We were not always sure of how many total hours we had flown. It was only after the completion of the following mission on February 7, 1945, that we received the news that we needed fifteen more minutes, so it would be necessary to fly one more mission. We were scheduled to fly the next day with another crew.

This happened because crew flying time was not always the same because of sickness or some other valid reason. In the case where only one or two members may not be available to fly, substitute crew members were found and the mission went forward. Jack Long and my problem occurred because we were grounded for a day by the medics because we received a shot for something and the doctor thought it best that we miss a day's flying. So we did not have as much operational time as the rest of our crew.

* * * *

I digress to explain another aspect of this story:

In another account I wrote of the loss of the air crew of [1st Lt. Harold T. Boehm](#) on December 22, 1944. Only he, and his [Co-Pilot, 2nd Lt. Donald W. Burch](#) survived ([seen right](#)).



This meant a further difficulty for the survivors. They were there, with no crew, and it was necessary for them to complete their tour of duty. So, their progress in completion was slowed considerably because as 'extras', they could only fly when an active crew needed their skills. Actually, Lt Boehm, Jack Long and I were extra that day. Lt. Burch did not fly with us as co-pilot.

So, on this last mission day, Jack and I were very pleased to find out that we were to fly with Lt. Boehm who was substituting for another pilot. I had great respect for him, both as a person, and his reputation as a good pilot.

All seemed to be going well in our preparations to get airborne. I thought that I may well make the best of the situation and try to enjoy the flight with the glow of expectation that it would be my last. Little did I know that not too far off from my precious fifteen minute goal, it came very close to being not only our last mission, but our last everything else!

I completed the pre-flight check of my turret, donned my high altitude flying gear, strapped on my parachute harness and stood by for take-off. On take-off, it was my habit to stand at a waist window, lean on the sill and watch the world go streaming by as the airplane picked up speed and lifted into the air. This time, I was on the starboard (that's sailor talk for 'right') side of the airplane.

I was especially thrilled with this moment of rush as at first the identifiable blades of grass along the runway transformed into an unidentifiable streak. As the fully loaded B-24 reached the 110 miles per hour it needed the pilot to start the rotation that would soon take us into 'The Wild Blue Yonder,' as the song has it.

Soon the trees at the end of the runway began to slide under us. The first bumps of turbulent air began to reveal themselves. I had experienced this many times and it always worked out OK. However, within moments the turbulence increased until we began a rough bounce through the air. Experienced or not, I did not like it.

All of a sudden, I think my heart stopped. As I looked out the window, I saw the propellers on number three and four engines begin to 'windmill', that is, turn from inertia and not the power of the engine. Immediately, I realized there was no engine noise! That meant that all four engines were dead. Furthermore, it meant that without a miracle, we were dead ducks!

Since the size of aircraft gun turrets were pretty snug, and to make it more comfortable to move around the airplane, we were equipped with parachutes rigged so that we wore only the straps and fasteners, we called it the 'harness'; our parachute was packed separately so that it could be left outside the turret, or nearby area. In the event of an emergency, we would be able to grab the pack and snap it to the harness and jump when ready.



I estimated that we were at about 1,800 feet above ground when the engines quit. Since a B-24 flew something akin to a rock with dead engines, this meant that if I was to get out in time to have my parachute open before I was introduced to the ground, I had to get out now!

Also, fleetingly, I realized that the erratic air was a factor. I would probably be oscillating to the extent that I was almost certain to end up with broken legs at least. That brought on another calculation, this one said: *'Go for it Buddy, it's better to break your leg than your neck!'* I agreed and reached for the escape hatch handle in the floor of the airplane. Jack Long reached for it just a bit faster than I, but he lost his balance in the turbulence, and fell across the escape hatch.

It was too late, so I fell to the deck of the airplane and braced myself for a crash landing. But, Wait! *'... what was that roar in my ear?'* All four engines were running at full throttle, and the airplane had resumed its climb! I was glad!

How, why, did it happen?

How it happened, we know. Or, at least this is what was told to me. The B-24 airplane had four toggle switches on the instrument panel all neatly in a row. These were the power switches for the four engines. It was explained to me that the Co-Pilot reached over and turned all four of them off simultaneously. If they were in the down position, the engines could not run.

Why it happened, nobody knows. The poor man that did it had no idea why he did. It must have been a sudden and inexplicable impulse. It was an impulse that could have been very costly in lives and equipment.

Fortunately, he faced reality when the engines quit and flipped all the switches back on. Since the engines were still turning over, they started again. But they were not just 'running', they were screaming as Lt. Boehm 'fire walled' the throttles (opened them to full military power) and we continued our bouncy climb. In my shaken condition, I thought it good to stay right there on the floor, so I did for quite a long time.

I was in sort of a dream state for the rest of the mission. I was not sure what we were doing up there, but I was aware of us heading out over France. I thought, *'Man, I have seen France too many times already, why again?'*

We completed the mission with no further excitement.

I was then ready to go home! However, maybe not yet? You see, that evening, I began *to think about Lt. Boehm* and his bad turn of circumstances. He was a good and honourable man! He was a good B-24 pilot.

Why was this happening to him? He had lost his crew, and as closely knit as they were, it was a disaster above comprehension. Being stuck in England waiting for makeup crews was no doubt 'a hard pill to swallow'. Now, having the four engines of his airplane quit all at once must have been impossible for an experienced pilot to digest. So, I can imagine that his morale was at rock bottom that evening. *But, what could I do about it? Go over and try to cheer him up? Come on, 'Hope', how in the world do you think you could do that?* Besides that, he needed more than cheer, he needed stability. I was sure that I would be leaving very soon, so if I was going to try to do something about it, I was going to have to work fast.

The officers were quartered in a different area than enlisted men. The area was generally off limits to us. However, I made bold to go into the area that evening to talk with Lt Boehm. I found his hut and knocked on the door and asked the officer that responded if he would please ask Lt. Boehm to come outside to talk with me. I have often wondered since if Lt. Boehm thought, *'Oh my goodness, he is coming over here to gripe to me about today's event!'*

When he arrived, I told him that I was concerned about him being stuck there for a long time without a crew. If he was willing I would like to volunteer to stay on as his Tail Gunner. I thought it would help in that it would be necessary to look for one less available crew member.

He was stunned! *'Do you mean that you would be willing to fly with me with what you know?'* I knew that he felt partly to blame for the loss of his crew, and maybe somehow felt partially at fault in today's incident. I told him that I knew he was a good pilot and that I would be willing to fly with him any place, any time, under any circumstances. I told him that if he had been a pilot with lesser skills, we would not have lived through this day! That brought tears to his eyes, but he refused to take me up on the offer. He thanked me for it, but he said that I had more than earned my trip home, and he would not interfere.

I have a hunch that if I had shared my plans with Jack to try to help Lt. Boehm complete his missions beforehand; he would have volunteered with me. It seems the two of us had learned to think pretty much along the same track.

I had no further contact with Lt. Boehm. That was February 8, 1945.

On February 10, Jack and I received our orders to start our return to the United States.

Jack Hope

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IN LOVING MEMORY



Caroline McKenzie York Hutton

5th October 1922 - 30th May 2012



My mother and father, Iredell Sidney Hutton, first started dating in high school in High Point, NC during the late 30's and soon fell in love. They enjoyed times together at the school ball games where my mother was a cheerleader and times away from school at movies where my father had a job as an usher.

After a while their love grew to a point where they decided to secretly get married in August 1941. Just months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor they escaped to South Carolina and eloped. However, upon returning to High Point they continued to live at home with their families and did not tell their parents of their drastic actions until January of 1943 when my father was already serving in the Army and going to Signal Corp school in Florida. It was there at that time that my mother visited my father and both wrote to notify their parents of their marriage.

My father soon sought higher pay and a greater challenge than what was offered in the Signal Corps. He volunteered and joined the U.S. Army Air Corps to become an Aerial Gunner and fly in B17 and B24 heavy bombers. Upon completing Gunnery School in Charleston, SC he joined the 8th Air Force and shipped out to Great Britain. Arriving on D-Day, June 6, 1944 he and his crew headed for RAF Oulton as part of the 803rd Bomb Squadron (Heavy) Provisional to fly night missions, performing radar counter measures with RAF 100 Group supporting heavy bomber raids over Europe. The 803rd was later to become the 36th Bomb Squadron (Heavy), and he continued to fly with RAF 100 Group from Station 113 Cheddington until January 1945. After Cheddington was attacked by the Germans in February 1945, the 36th moved to Station 102 Alconbury.

Throughout his time in England my father kept a diary – of course thoroughly unauthorized and against regulations. All of what he wrote was directed to my mother and how he loved and missed her. He also addressed his time with his crew and their air operations, meeting the British locals and even sharing a few experiences with his two brothers also serving in England.

In March 1945 my father returned home to mother and they began a new life together. Mother had been working in the Government Records Department and after my father left the military that year he returned to manage movie theaters. Mother graduated from college, started teaching elementary school and as God would have it, they started their family. My sister Susan was soon born in February of 1946, my brother John was to follow in 1948, me in 1950, and finally Henry surprised us all in 1960.

Naturally, there were times of trial with the Civil Rights Movement in the '60s and my father left the theater business, did an assortment of jobs before heading a local community action program helping poor people get jobs. This led to a state position as an Occupational Program Consultant aiding industry establish alcohol and drug abuse programs to help affected employees. He was constantly getting calls from troubled people for help he freely gave. My mother helped in her special way as well. She continued and taught school for 28 years to educate, direct and shape young minds in the best of ways of learning and living life. Both would serve on the local Mental Health board and were instrumental in establishing a thrift store to aid funding a residential treatment service to assist those plagued by alcohol and drug abuse. My father would go on to be recognized by North Carolina's Governor as one of our State's most outstanding volunteers.



Both parents were active in raising us children - seeing that we did our school work and house work. They instilled in us an appreciation for music. Susan and Henry played the piano, John the drums, and me the trombone. My parents had many friends and played bridge with many of them. They loved big band music, danced and visited friends and had parties. My father was one of the largest collectors of big band music in the Southeast U.S. In church activities they saw to it that us kids attended on Sundays and holidays. They later worked and proudly established a local Unity Church.

Every summer growing up we all vacationed in Hutton beach houses on the NC coast where we enjoyed the water, the sun and the seafood. This tradition was later expanded when my mother would take just the grandkids for them to be together at the beach and relieve us parents.

In life my mother and father loved to travel to places like Niagara Falls and New Orleans, but most especially to Great Britain to hear the big band music of the Syd Lawrence Orchestra. My mother loved Great Britain dearly, its history, the beauty of its people and the countryside. She especially enjoyed the Museums and treasured her times at Pontins at Pakefield. My father and mother as well as Pam and I were close friends with Syd Lawrence and his orchestra for many years. They also went to the island of Jersey to see the band there. In 1989 it was just me and my father who travelled together as Syd Lawrence big band roadies.

These two wonderful people were married 63 years. Stephen Iredell Sidney Hutton, my father, passed away in 2005. They both gave great love and time to family, community and country. We four children, seven grandkids, and nine great grandkids have been most truly blessed to have shared so many fine times, places and memorable experiences with them.

Stephen Hutton

smhutton@36rcm.com

Author of 'Squadron of Deception: The 36th Bomb Squadron in WWII'

IN LOVING MEMORY

 **Gillian Vowler** 
8th May 1953 – 11th July 2012



Rod Vowler, Standard Bearer to RAF 100 Group Association, recently lost his beloved wife Gillian after a three year struggle with cancer. She passed away on 11th July.

It seems a fitting tribute to share the words Rod read at her funeral, and we would ask that members hold Rod in their thoughts and hearts at this difficult time.

* * * *

It was only seeing so many people in the church during the funeral service that I realised just how many lives Gillian touched during her lifetime. We had 74 sympathy cards.

Gillian was born on 8th May 1953 at Queen Charlotte hospital in London. At her Junior School she was good at story writing. At the Taunton Convent she was shown the way by one of her lifetime friends, Sue Hurst. She must have pleased the nuns as she was good at Scripture. Unbeknown to me, she was also good at French and Latin. Her technical College days she enjoyed as she was treated as an adult. Another lifetime friend, Pat Pollard, told me of Gillian's mischief with her and the laughs they shared together.

On 13th July 1971, Gillian went to Buckingham Palace to receive her Gold Award for the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme.

Her choice of career was always the police service. She tried it out as a Special Constable and joined up on 31st July 1972, when she got her firsts pay cheque for one whole day. After training, Gillian came to Bath. As a Probationer, she had to do an attachment to the Traffic Department.

She got me!

Gillian astounded me on her knowledge of traffic law. In those days a Supervisor had to see you in person at least once during your shift. He did so on a cold night with the back door of the patrol car open while he quizzed Gillian on her knowledge of Traffic Law. She was not impressed.

This was the start of 37 years of marriage!

My Chief Inspector told me in no uncertain terms that Bath Traffic Department was not changing their ways just because I was married. However, Gillian's Supervisor (Peggy Howells) allowed Gillian to have the same days off as me.

Gillian went on to become a Tutor Constable and the first in this Force to tutor a male. She must have done a good job. Tony stayed the distance and came back for more as a Civilian working with the police. We only got to work together once. Club Licensing Laws are such that you have to be a member for 48 hours before you can use the facilities. We just went in on three

occasions. It was good for us on overtime, all the drinks paid for. At Court, each drink I bought would have been a separate offence, and the list of people to buy for was endless. The Pop Hit being played in the Club at that time was 'Captain Tobias Wilcox of Jamaican Airways'. Very appropriate as we were in St Paul's in Bristol.

In 1977, Sarah came along and I have never lived this down as I went off to eat just before Sarah came into the world. In the ward, the lady in the next bed kept telling Gillian that she knew her. Of course, Gillian knew her ... she had arrested her for shoplifting!

In those days, you resigned after the birth of your child. Gillian had five years and 157 days of exemplary service. Abi arrived in 1981.

Gillian's final job was with the University of Bath. She called herself 'a scrubber' instead of an 'Environmental Technician'. This life she enjoyed with Wendy and Cathy and others, especially the grandmother time with them.

So many people have told me of Gillian's sense of humour. Despite Gillian's Chief Constable Mr Steel telling her mother that her daughter never smiled. And Gillian had an inner strength despite her illness. Her last ambulance trip she sat in our front room laughing and joking with the three ambulance crew as if she had nothing wrong with her. Her financial advisor, Finbarr, for her Dad's Will Trust, loved her emails. In his words, they were 'ballsy!'

After her hysterectomy and the start of this cancer, we had to see a Consultant who talked down to us. He said '*this procedure is no worse than a smear test*'. To which Gillian replied: '*Have you ever had one?*' The nurse fell about laughing to the consternation of the Consultant.



In Gillian's words, one of her greatest achievements was as a lifetime smoker to have given up in 2003, staying that way for 9 years. She had many interests – the Saturday Telegraph crossword she did in competition with her mother; and Piglet ... you name it, she had Piglet on it! She also loved Alexander of comparethemarket.com – '*Simples!*'



Her boys, as she called, the grandsons, she was forever knitting or doing things for them. When Primark opened in Bristol that was it! Numerous trips for their clothes!!

Children have a simple outlook on life. Oliver, who is three, said to his mother just before Gillian went: '*Is Heaven calling Nanny Gill?*' Gillian thought of me even at the end. We were going to the Isle of Wight. Gillian was just too ill to go. Abi, our daughter, went instead for a few days. Gillian made sure I got the '*bullseyes*' I love so much!

Gillian I will Always Love You, until we meet again....

Rod Vowler

Standard Bearer to RAF 100 Group Association

A Quiet Corner



ALL IS WELL

Death is nothing at all
I have only slipped away into the next room
I am I and you are you
Whatever we were to each other
That we are still.
Call me by my old familiar name
Speak to me in the easy way you always used
Put no difference into your tone
Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow
Laugh as we always laughed
At the little jokes we always enjoyed together
Play, smile, think of me, pray for me
Let my name be ever the household word that it always was
Let it be spoken without effort
Without the ghost of a shadow in it
Life means all that it ever meant
It is the same as it ever was
There is absolute unbroken continuity
What is death but a negligible accident?
Why should I be out of mind
because I am out of sight?
I am waiting for you for an interval
Somewhere very near
Just around the corner
All is well.
Nothing is past; nothing is lost
One brief moment and all will be as it was before
How we shall laugh at the trouble of parting when we meet again!

Canon Henry Scott-Holland, 1847-1918,
Canon of St Paul's Cathedral

In Loving Memory

Caroline McKenzie York Hutton 5th October 1922 - 30th May 2012

&

Gillian Vowler 8th May 1953 – 11th July 2012



Final Postings

Death is but a pause...

Martin Albert Staunton, Eileen Boorman (nee Staunton), Len Bartram

Founders of RAF 100 Group Association – remembered in love

- 192 Squadron** George Ward DFC Sqd/Ldr; Phil James' Canadian pilot
- 192 Squadron** Kenneth 'Paddy' Passmore: DFC Flt/Lt; Canadian, died 2005.
- 192 Squadron** John Cooke left memorabilia to the Museum archive collection.
- 192 Squadron** Ron Phillips passed away late 2005
- 192 Squadron** Ted Gomersall passed away 30th November 2004,
- 192 Squadron** Hank Cooper DSO, DFC passed away 2005.
- 192 Squadron** Michael Simpson W/Op & F/O passed away on the Isle of Man.
- 192 Squadron** Richie' Richards Rear Airgunner, flew Wellingtons. His son, F L Richards, passed on in August 2009, both members of the Association.
- 192 Squadron** Air Commodore Vic Willis, C.O, RAF Foulsham, passed away 30.7.06
- 192 Squadron** Group Captain Jack Short passed away December 2006. Association Chair till 1996.
- 192 Squadron** W.O (later P/O) A G McEachern RCAF died 15th August 2007, Saskatchewan aged 85.
- 192 Squadron** LAC Harris, Ground Crew passed away 15th August 2007. His grandson James Kerslake is an Association member.
- 192 Squadron** Wing Commander David Donaldson, DSO*DFC passed away 15.1.2004.
- 192 Squadron** Wilhelmson, F/O Sander Willie Raymond (J10026). DFC Home: Elbow, Saskatchewan.
- 192 Squadron** F/Lt Richard (Dick or Dobbie) William Dobson, died 1996, remembered by son, Roger & daughter Susan, both members.
- 192 Squadron** W/O John Rhys Powell, rear gunner flying Wellingtons, died 1992.
- 192 Squadron** Sgt George Richards, tail gunner, posted missing 4th/5th July 1944. Remembered by niece Cheryl Cairns nee Colgan & sister Agnes Colgan.
- 192 Squadron** F/Lt Henry Victor Vinnell (Vic) posted missing 26/27th Nov 1944. Remembered by wartime fiancée Nina & her daughter Janine H.
- 192 Squadron** Jack Glen Millan Fisher, Pilot Officer with Royal Canadian Air Force, posted missing 26/27th Nov 1944. Remembered by sister Audrey.
- 192 Squadron** Flight Lieutenant Albert Victor (Vic) Parker passed away November 14th 2010. Remembered by daughter Ann Felsky.
- 192 Squadron** Spec/Op (Wop) John Henry BALL, Association member for many years, passed away 23 April 2009. Remembered by daughter, Susan Lawford.
- 192 Squadron** George Lowe, originally 1473 Flight before becoming 192 Squadron, Special Signals, Foulsham. Died 24th March 2011.

- 192 Squadron** F/O Alan Thomsett passed away 27th May 2011. Initially flew ops with 1473 Flight during Battle of the Beams, 1941, then as part of No. 80 Wing. Sadly missed by daughter Anne, and other Association members who knew him.
- 192 Squadron** Eric Clarkson, Wireless Operator/Navigator, passed away beginning of 2012. Remembered by daughter Jenny Bentley & friend Dennis Wildman.
- 192 Squadron** Squadron Leader Cecil William Cornish, passed away 19 August 2011. A Flight Sergeant at Foulsham. Initially with 98 Squadron, he was a survivor of the sinking of TS Lancastria. Mike, his son, is an Association member.
- 192 Squadron** Flight Sergeant John Eggert (2202199) aka 'Shorty'. Passed away 28th April 2006.
- 199 Squadron** F/O Ed Emmerson, Navigator to Flt/Lt Paddy Passmore DFC, Canadian
- 199 Squadron** Arthur Fitch, former RAF Bomber, passed away July 2006
- 199/171 Sqn** Group Captain George Cubby, MBE, FRMets passed away 2005. Remembered by Roy Smith, only surviving member of his crew.
- 171 Squadron** Joe Brogan, Halifax pilot, finished the war at North Creak; passed away 2004, remembered by widow Sheila.
- 171 Squadron** Arthur Adcock passed away February 2008 & Syd Love, Canadian crew member, passed away April 2008. *'Friends to the end!'*
- 171 Squadron** Len Fanstone passed away 13th January 2010. Greatly missed by Harry Freegard & wife, in touch since his return to Canada in 1946.
- 171/102 Sqn** Ken Ratcliffe Nav/Bomb Aimer passed away March 8th 2010 age 86. He flew Halifax & Lancasters, in touch with his crew all their lives.
- 171 Squadron** Flight Engineer Andrew Melvin Robertson passed away in 1998. Remembered by son Colin Robertson, now an Association member.
- 157 Squadron** Bryan Gale Flt/Lt passed away 2.1.09. Missed by daughter Valerie & son Chris.
- 214 Squadron** Geoff Liles, pilot, passed away 4 March 2006.
- 214 Squadron** Mr J Creech passed away April 2006.
- 214 Squadron** Don Austin, remembered by Les Bostock.
- 214 Squadron** Air Vice Marshall Jack Furner passed away 1st Jan 2007.
- 214 Squadron** Sqdn Leader/Flight Commander Bob Davies passed away June 2007.
- 214 Squadron** Bill Howard passed away October 2007.
- 214 Squadron** Flt Lt Blair passed away Sept 2007.
- 214 Squadron** John Hereford, Spec Op.
- 214 Squadron** Robert Moorby W/Op passed on January 2008. Remembered by sons, Michael and Robin. Also Shirley Whitlock.
- 214 Squadron** Ft/Sg Hadder, Air Gunner in Fortress III HB815, bearing code letters "BU-J" killed 3/4th March 1945, remembered by nephew Leslie Barker.
- 214 Squadron** Alan Mercer passed away 6th June 2009.

214 Squadron	Warrant Officer Gordon Wing , 'Howie' (character in Australian newspaper) passed away Nov 2009 age 87. Rear Gunner in Eric Morrison's crew in Stirlings & Fortresses; Founder member of Airgunners Association.
214 Squadron	Robert Louie William Darracott , navigator, died May 8 th 2010, 94 years.
214 Squadron	Flying Officer Reginald Coates completed whole of 2 nd tour of ops as Bomber Pilot in March 1945. Died 10 th Nov 1963. Remembered by son.
214 Squadron	Bomb Aimer Les Bostock in Don Austin's crew died just before Christmas 2010. Remembered by M/U gunner C A Piper, 'Pip'.
214 Squadron	Flight Sergeant George V Cox passed away 21 July 2011. Also Flight Engineer in crew of Squadron Leader Miller DFC.
214 Squadron	Squadron Leader William 'Bill' Doy DFC passed away 28 November 2011.
214 Squadron	P/O Peter Witts 223/214/462 RAAF, Airgunner , commissioned after the war. 1925 – 2011. Missed by family and friends, remains in our hearts, a Legend.
214 Squadron	Flying Officer William 'Bill' Foskett passed away 21.12.2011. Sadly missed by wife Pauline, 2 sons, 4 grandchildren, good friend Tony Cooper.
223 Squadron	Flt Lt A E L Morris (Tony) died June 2005. Andrew Barron's skipper: Oct 44 – 1945.
223 Squadron	Tom Butler 'Bishop' .
223 Squadron	C. L. Matthews (Les) rear gunner, Peter Witts nose gunner in Flt/L Stan Woodward DFC crew before Peter went on to 214 Squadron.
223 Squadron	Arthur Anthony , Flight Engineer, passed away May 13 th 2006.
223 Squadron	F/Lt Jack Brigham DFC passed away 2008. Original Captain when 223 reformed. Flew Liberator TS 524, 6G-0; 36 ops. Remembered by Len Davies, Waist Gunner, only surviving member of crew.
223 Squadron	F/L/Sir John Briscoe passed on a few years ago.
223 Squadron	2nd Pilot Mervyn Utas , Canadian in late Tony Morris's crew, passed away 8 Nov 2010.
223 Squadron	James Edward Bratten : 26.11.1922 - 16.11.2001. Andrew Barron's crew.
223 Squadron	Mick Stirrop passed away in March this year, 2012.
88 Squadron	F/Lt Len Dellow passed away Christmas/New Year 2006-7; veteran of 88 Squadron, 2 Group & rear gunner/wireless operator on Bostons.
49 Squadron	Len Bradfield passed away Nov 2005. PoW with pilot Johnny Moss when shot down in Lancaster ED625. Nursed to health by Nora, who he married.
462 RAAF Sqn	F/O H .R. Anderson DFC 'Andy' passed away 6 th April 2008 in New South Wales.
462 Squadron	Donald Hulbert passed away October 2009.
462 Squadron	Pilot Bruce Drinkwater passed away on 2 nd May 2010. Peter Witt's Skipper.
?	Flt Lt Eric Atkins DFC* KW* died 22.11.2011. Blenheim pilot with 139 Sqn flying from Horsham St Faith & Oulton in 1940/1. Flew Mosquito's with 2 Grp.
?	Corporal Charles 'Fred' Savage passed away 18 Dec 2011. Fred was a Wireless Operator, serving in No 2 Heavy Mobile W/T Section in France, 1940.

Dates for your Diary



2012/2013

2012 RAF 100 Group Association Reunion

Put these dates in your diary now. We look forward to seeing you there!

* * * *

10th – 12th May 2013

2nd weekend in 2014

* * * *

..... DON'T MISS

Winter Magazine: out in December 2012

It includes an interview with Bill Ramsey - current QFI and Vulcan display pilot, former BBMF Lancaster and Dakota pilot, Tutor display pilot and Wing Commander Red Arrows - and his involvement with The People's Mosquito restoration project.



HELPFUL TIP

This tip is for members who take copies of the magazine by email and are unable to download a copy all in one go. The reason is that some email providers restrict the amount of data that can be downloaded. A way around this problem is to open a Gmail account through Google. This costs you nothing. It is simple to use. And it would enable to you get the magazine faster and easier.

But please remember
Give Janine Harrington your new email address
if you do so!

100 Group Order of Battle

SQD	AIRCRAFT	1st 100 GROUP OPERATION	BASE	SORTIES, LOSSES ROLL
192	Mosquito, Halifax Wellington Lightnings	Dec 1943	Foulsham	2171/5 Losses Electronic Intel/Elint
141	Beaufighters, Mosquito	Dec 1943	West Raynham	1214/11 Losses 80 EA, 58 Trains, 7 Ships Dest
219/239	Mosquito	Jan 1944	West Raynham	1394/9 Losses 51 En AC Dest
515	Mosquito	March 1944	Little Snoring	1366/21 losses 29 En AC Dest
169	Mosquito	Jan 1944	Little Snoring, Great Massingham	1247/13 Losses 25 En AC + 1 V1 Dest
214	Fortress	April 1944	Sculthorpe, Oulton	1225/13 Losses Electronic Jamming
199	Stirling, Halifax	May 1944	North Creake	1707/6 Losses Electronic Jamming
157	Mosquito	May 1944	Swannington West Malling	1336/6 Losses 37 En AC +39 V1 Dest
85	Mosquito	June 1944	Swannington West Malling	1190/7 Losses 71 En AC+30 V1 Dest
23	Mosquito	July 1944	Little Snoring	1067/8 Losses 18 En AC Dest
223	Liberator Fortress	Sept 1944	Oulton	625/3 Losses Electronic Jamming
171	Stirling, Halifax	Sept 1944	North Creake	1583/4 Losses Electronic Jamming
462 RAAF	Halifax	Jan 1945	Foulsham	621/7 Losses Jamming/Windows
36 & 803 BS	Boeing B-17F P38	Jan 1944	Sculthorpe, Oulton	1211/0 Losses Electronic Jamming
857 & 858 BS	Consolidated B-24G	Jan 1944	Oulton	280/2 Losses Electronic Jamming

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