

Confound & Destroy

The magazine of RAF 100 Group Association

AUTUMN 2015



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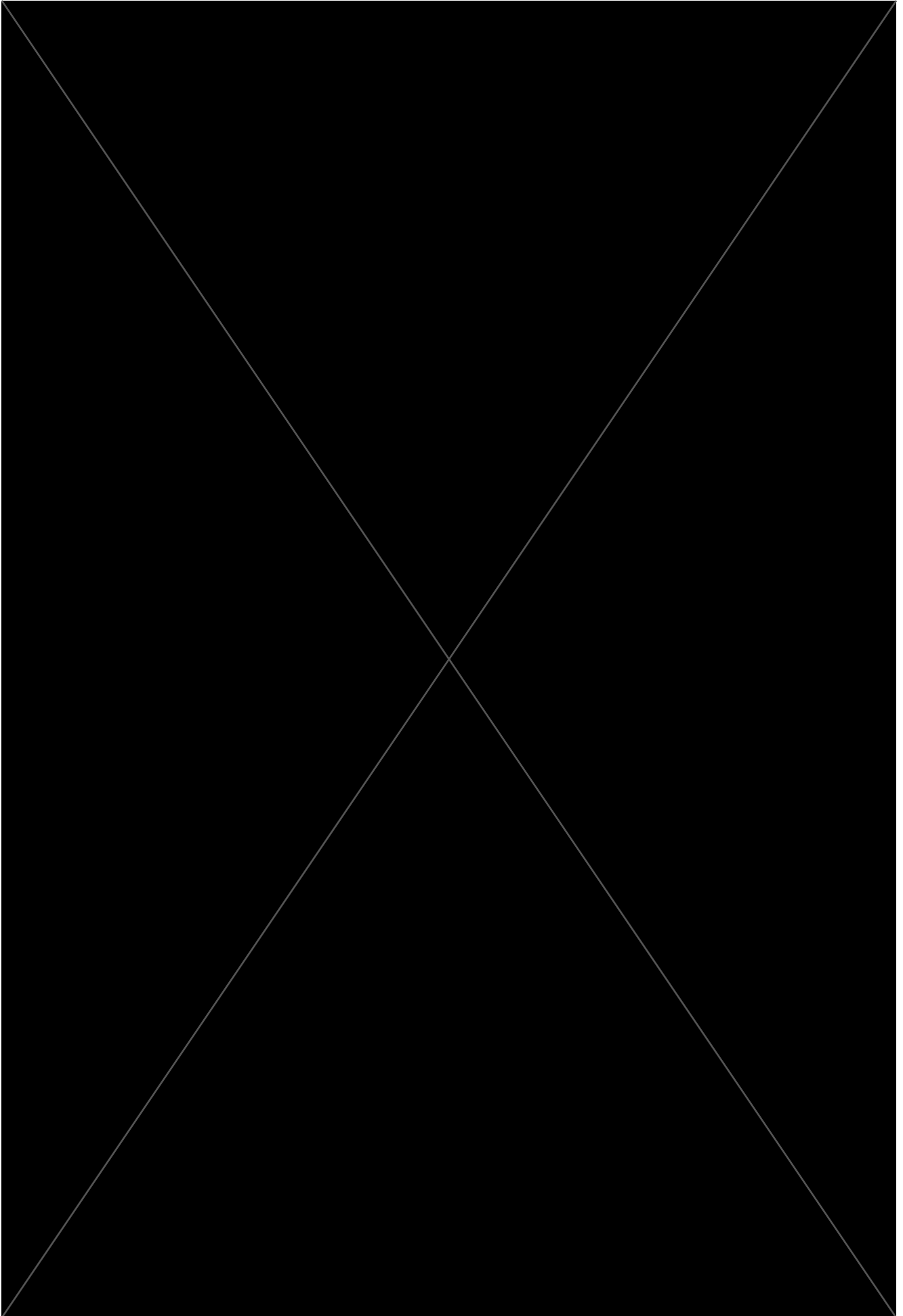
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RAF 100 Group Association

Committee



EDITOR'S PAGE



Dearest Friends

It is with deep sorrow I share my sad news that Tony has left me after what were to me over five wonderful years together. I remain shocked, confused, in a state of breakdown, and broken. Often the pain is too much to bear. I exist from moment to moment. It is the Association and its people which keeps me alive, together with your loving messages of strength and support. Thank you for being there in a time of great need. You are quite literally saving my life! Since early this year, Tony has worked in London, first for three days, then five, arriving home late Friday to spend Saturday with me, before the long drive back to London on Sunday. The charity he works for offers housing to Forces personnel with life-changing injuries. To save on accommodation costs, they offered him a flat with the prospect of working with them for 2-3 years. I saw him on my birthday, 4 July, but then he failed to come two weeks in a row. As any wife would do, I suggested moving south to have quality time together. His response came on Sunday 19th in an email saying that London was now his home. He didn't want Filey or me. I collapsed on reading it. Three weeks on came a text saying he wants his freedom and an '*amicable divorce*', and on coming to collect his personal belongings, the life we shared was gone. In London, he has a house and is settled for the future, with a lady in the background. I cannot begin to describe the tsunami of emotion in which I have been drowning since. All I know is that it is your letters, your emails and phone calls, this magazine, and books containing your stories being published that sustains me.

The book: *RAF 100 Group – Kindred Spirits: voices of RAF & USAAF on secret Norfolk airfields during WWII* with Stephen Hutton's chapter on The Mighty 8th's Squadron of Deception, and Foreword by Wing Commander Dix-Weeks OBE, AFC, QCVSA, is currently with Austin Macauley publishers who wrote a lovely letter after reading the first section, saying they eagerly anticipated reading the remainder of the book with a view to publishing. I am hoping this will happen this year. If so, you will be first to know!

Meanwhile, this new Autumn 2015 magazine comes packed with information and shared experiences, and I'm sure you will join in offering a warm welcome to our seven newest members – all 'Mighty 8th' veterans and their families in the States. They flew alongside RAF 100 Group on many operations, residing in Norfolk for the duration. It is wonderful to have them as an integral part of our Family. This edition includes their words, their memories, offering a slightly different perspective which should prove interesting and at times humorous. Thanks Stephen, for your support in making this happen.

Sadly, you will have learned of the death of Les Munro, aged 95, one of only two New Zealanders to take part in the 1943 Dambuster Raid. Les recently made headlines in wanting to auction his medals to pay for the upkeep of the Bomber Command Memorial in London. In accepting Lord Ashcroft's proposal to donate £75,000 towards its maintenance, Les instead gifted all decorations and medals to the Museum in New Zealand: '*I am content I have achieved my goal of doing all I can to ensure the men of Bomber Command who lost their lives during WWII will be remembered with pride for generations to come*'. Sad news again is that, on 27 July, Air Vice Marshal Grahame Jones finally lost his fight against cancer. I would ask that we all hold Beverley, his wife, in our prayers at this time, together with the family of dear Reg Fidler who died on 4 August. He was a dear friend and valued Association member and will be missed.

It already seems a lifetime ago since we were together in Norfolk enjoying this year's Reunion. But I can personally recommend a CD brought together by Geoff West who steadfastly filmed almost every moment. It makes compulsive viewing, and I love the stirring and emotive music accompanying these memories of a wonderful time shared. The CD is available at £10 First Class in the UK from: [Geoff West, Bancroft, The Street, Little Snoring, Fakenham, Norfolk NR21 0HU. Tel: 01328 878501. grwest@btinternet.com](#) Cheques to: G. R. West.

I would remind you that next year's Reunion venue is – **THE HOLIDAY INN, Norwich.**

*Love & Hugz All,
Janinexx*

Items for magazine should be sent to:
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WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Phil James MBE



Dear Friends,

In memory of my good friend Air Vice Marshal Grahame Jones, I would like to share with you all a day to remember.

When my grand-daughter's husband, Wing Commander Phil Slee, came home from Saudi Arabia, my grand-daughter decided that they would have a party combining his home-coming and his birthday. Grahame Jones and his wife were among the guests.

This is where I first met up with Grahame and his wife Beverley.

During my chat with Grahame, I found out his dad was ex-aircrew with 76 Squadron (later attending his funeral). Grahame during our chat asked if I would like to go to the Air Show at Fairford. I said I would. This was on a Saturday. On Monday, I received a letter from Grahame with instructions on how to get to RAF Innsworth, saying that Vera and I were booked into the Officers' Mess, but would eat at his home. We couldn't stay at his home because his Mum and Dad and their two children were also there.

On Sunday morning, he told me we would be picked up at 9 am to go to the Air Show. We passed all the cars waiting to go in and went through a special entrance, duly arriving at the 'British Aerospace' Marquee where we were put in the hands of one of the hosts. We had wonderful food all day, and whatever we wanted to drink!

During the day, we were taken to a special stand to watch the aircraft display, and supplied with hot drinks whenever. In the Marquee, I met up with one of our Directors of the RAF Benevolent Fund who I had met before at Cardiff while attending a concert by the RAF Band. He told me to stand at a spot by a table when he gave the nod. This I did, and was then met by the Duke of Kent and we had a chat for a few minutes.

Sadly, the day came to an end, and before we left I was presented with two books by one of the hostesses. They were all aircraft related and top quality items.

It was a day I will never forget, thanks to Grahame and his wife Beverley.

Phil James MBE

LETTER from the CHAIRMAN



Dear Friends,

The excellent weather of our May Reunion seems a distant memory as we experience a very wet summer. I hope your experience of the holiday season has been better than mine.

The news that Squadron Leader J. L. Munro CNZM, DSO, QSO, DFC died on August 4th 2015 at the age of 96 in his native New Zealand was carried around the world by the media. Les Munro was the last surviving pilot of 617 Squadron's Dambuster Raid which still captures the imagination and admiration of successive generations.

On the night of 16-17 May 1943, nineteen specially modified Lancasters attacked the Ruhr dams: Mohne, Eder, Sorpe, Ennepe and Bever in *Operation Chastise*, using the Barnes Wallis bouncing bomb code-named '*Upkeep*'. The Mohne and Eder targets required the aircraft to fly at an altitude of 60 feet at exactly 220 mph in hilly terrain. Both dams were destroyed.

Les Munro's aircraft was badly damaged by flak on the outward leg over Holland and returned to Scampton landing safely with the '*Upkeep*' bomb on board. After the Dams Raid, Munro continued with 617 Squadron, completing 58 missions. On D-Day, with Leonard Cheshire VC as co-pilot, his Lancaster dropped *Window* to simulate a phantom naval force off Cap D'Antifer.

On the 65th Anniversary of the Dams Raid, Les Munro was asked about his feelings before the raid. He answered that his greatest concern was not the targets or the low flying, but the German defences in the Ruhr Valley. His apprehension was well-founded.

Although the *Chastise Raid* was a resounding success, the price in losses was high. Eight aircraft were lost and 53 crew killed, with 3 becoming PoWs. A loss rate of 42% was dreadful and unsustainable. But in May 1943, there was no RAF 100 (Bomber Support) Group – the brave crews of 617 were on their own. Technical innovations such as *Window* had a positive effect upon loss rates and later electronic intelligence and electronic counter-measures were concentrated in 100 Group which was formed in November 1943. From there on, our bomber crews were no longer alone.

Roger Dobson

CITY OF NORWICH AVIATION MUSEUM



Dear Friends,

The last three months have been very busy here at the Museum. We had a massive attendance to see the last flying Vulcan flyover, our own Vulcan as part of a nationwide tour of former V bomber stations and surviving Vulcans, Victors and the one remaining Valiant at the end of June. We blocked all roads in the village with traffic and had a great day. In mid-July we took the fund raising stall to the Flying Legends Air Show at Duxford and were pleased to have several visits from 100 Group Association members.

We have a staff change at the Museum as Jamie Bygrave has secured an apprenticeship with KLM and will now only work for CNAM on Sundays. This has resulted in a rearrangement of staffing and we have taken on three young employees all working part-time. The Museum has been so busy that we now find we often need three staff members plus volunteers some days to deal with visitor numbers. This year will be our most successful to date and we are looking forward to the future with confidence.

The Norwich Northern Distributor Road has now received full planning consent and a start could be made on its construction as early as the coming Autumn. We are still to have confirmation of exactly how this will affect the Museum site, meetings are taking place at which we now have representation by a professional land agent. Certainly, we will soon know and when agreements have been agreed we will then enter a new era in the development of the Museum from which we can move forward.

If you have been looking at the Museum website, you will see that we have now linked this with our Facebook page rather than with Twitter and this has been very good for getting news and offers out quicker. There are images from some recent events on the Facebook link.

We have also managed to update some of the displays in the 100 Group section. Roy Hastie's uniformed mannequin has joined that of Stafford Sinclair bringing two Oulton-based stories together rather than in separate areas of the Museum. The display of RCM equipment has now been transferred to a tall glass display case, showing these items to better advantage and generally giving a better impression when first entering the 100 Group area.

Finally, if anyone is seeking a copy of Martin Bowman's book on 100 Group: *'Confounding the Reich'*, we have a limited number of very good condition used copies which are signed by Martin, available for £14.00 including UK postage.

(Picture right was taken at the Vulcan V-Force Tour Sunday 28 June, courtesy: Jeremy Osborne.)

Thanks

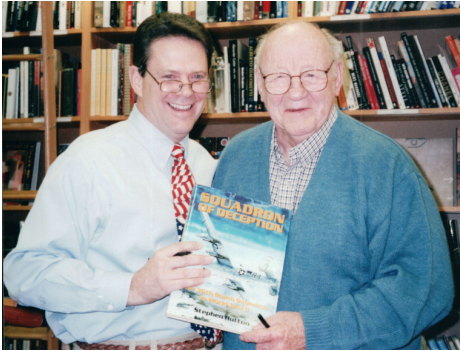
Kelvin Sloper

CNAM



COMMITTEE MEMBER

Stephen Hutton: 8th Air Force Representative



Stephen w father Iredell Hutton

From Stateside USA, Stephen Hutton reports ...

Ladies and Gentlemen, veterans of RAF 100 Group and the 8th Air Force, Association members and families; it gives me great satisfaction and pleasure to have been elected to join the RAF 100 Group Association Committee at this year's May Reunion. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity to serve and represent the Americans of the 8th Air Force, especially those veterans and their family members of the 803rd and 36th Bomb Squadron Radar Counter Measure Units who worked alongside the RAF 100 Group.

In the past years, as a member of the Association, I have enjoyed meeting many of you at the Reunions in England. As a member, I have also corresponded with Janine, the Secretary – and sometimes even provided stories about the 803rd and 36th for the '*Confound & Destroy*' magazines. Now, as a new Committee member representing the Americans, I shall be presenting a feature story in the upcoming issues, illustrating the contributions of the U.S Servicemen toward our victory in Europe.

In my life, it has been my special honor to have met and interviewed so many of the veterans and now have the opportunity to share their stories with you.

If anyone ever has questions, or desires further information, please feel free to contact me direct at smhutton@36rcm.com.

So now then, here is my first input in the American 8AF Series – a story written by Captain George E. Paris. Read now his personal account on being assigned as the first Commanding Officer of the 803rd Bomb Squadron Radar Counter Measure Unit in England.

Most sincerely and with my best regards,

Stephen Hutton

North Carolina

Author – '*Squadron of Deception*'

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GEORGE E. PARIS, LT. COL. USAF Ret.

THE FOLLOWING IS A BRIEF NARRATION BY GEORGE E. PARIS, LT. COL. USAF Ret.
REGARDING HIS TOUR OF DUTY WITH THE 803rd RCM DETACHMENT (Prov.),
LATER THE 803rd BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (Prov.) DURING THE PERIOD JAN – JULY 1944.



I arrived in England in early 1943 after ferrying a B-17 from the U.S. across the southern Atlantic route, landing at Bovingdon, from which I was assigned to the 368th Squadron, 306th Bomb Group (H), 1st Air Division, Eighth Air Force, stationed at Thurleigh, near Bedford.

By December of that year, I had completed 25 missions over France and Germany and was eligible to return to the U.S. However, the tide of war was turning at that time and I wished to remain in the theatre until the impending invasion of our forces was effected into the mainland of Europe – D-Day.

On or about January 1944, after interviewing with Headquarters, 1st Air Division; I was placed on detached service as Commanding Officer of the 803rd RCM Detachment (Provisional) being put together at RAF Station Oulton, which was under the command of Group Captain T. C. Dickens, a highly decorated and experienced pilot of the RAF. Our mission was to provide flight training and check out qualifications to RAF flight and ground crew personnel in B-17 aircraft which the RAF would subsequently operate on tactical missions, using electronic counter-measure equipment (RCM) to divert attention of German radar from the increasing penetration of the bomber 'stream' of British and American aircraft going into enemy territory. Additionally, the Eighth Air Force intended that the 803rd would become familiar and otherwise educated sufficiently with the British radar counter-measures operation to eventually participate jointly with the RAF to increase overall effectiveness of diversionary counter-measures against the enemy. At the time, the British were considerably ahead of the Americans in RCM techniques, application and equipment.

I had reported on 17 January and shortly thereafter, additional personnel were brought in from many American units scattered over England and assembled at Oulton to comprise the 803rd Detachment which would soon be elevated to Squadron status. These personnel included flight crew personnel who had completed their bombing missions tour and other personnel ... ground support and maintenance, administrative, supply, aircraft radio and gunnery technicians, engineering and others, including a Chaplain.

I had reported to Group Captain Dickens upon arrival and received a briefing from his staff relative to the RAF mission there and the contributory role that the 803rd would play in support of the operation. I assured them that we would do all possible and co-operate fully in that regard.

By February, the 803rd was settled in appreciably, conducting B-17 orientation and getting training flights into the air while working with RAF personnel for familiarization on the RCM operation.

In March, our Detachment was upgraded to Bombardment Squadron status, receiving additional personnel to compliment the upgrading.

In May, Lt. Col. Clayton A. Scott, newly arrived from the U.S. was assigned as the Squadron Commander and I was relegated to Squadron Executive Officer at that time, and subsequently served as Squadron Operations Officer prior to completion of my tour with the 803rd.

On 3rd June, prior to D-Day, I flew the Squadron's first mission (daylight) in a B-17 'G' model equipped with RCM equipment and full aircrew plus RCM operators over enemy territory as our initial sortie, to test the equipment and aircraft ability in a RCM capacity. (From a personal viewpoint, this was a greatly appreciated highlight in my tenure with the 803rd and, since I had not flown operational missions since December 1943, I was very eager to get into the air again and as it turned out, it was my only mission in '44 and my last one in the ETO. I really felt honoured to make this flight.) The flight went perfectly with sunshine and minor cloud formation ... visibility was very good and enemy opposition of flak and fighters was nil despite the solo sortie. To top it off, as I recall, we were escorted briefly by two P-51 fighter aircraft on our return flight portion of the mission. **(See excerpts from the original Squadron Record regarding this flight.)*

My other recollections of that period involve our social activities in our Officers' Club in Blickling Hall of Anne Boleyn's Estate. This being my initial duty on an RAF Station, I had the pleasure to socialize with an international group of RAF flyers hailing not only from Great Britain, but also Canada, Australia, India and Nyasaland (now Malawi). As supply of libations was very limited at that time and dispensed on a monthly allotment basis, we frequently combined a variety of our libations from our limited allotment for a merry monthly get-together in the Club. Usually, there were occasions of competitive contests wherein representatives of our international group would try to out-do others relative to the expedient consumption of pints of stout, ale, or beer, or whatever else was available. Although the Aussies and RAF were outstanding in this competition, usually winning, we Americans finally found one Officer who, after a bit of practice, could help the U.S. hold its own! At times, the revelry included participant members parading around ghost-like, clothed in bedsheets ... obviously a parody in memory of Anne Boleyn! I must say that these incidents, in a notable and memorable way, were outstanding substitutions for professional entertainment which was not available at that time.

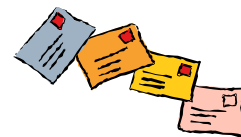
I would be sorely derelict if I failed to mention, besides Group Captain Dickens, Wing Commander Desmond John McGlinn, Squadron Leader William S. Day and Flight Lieutenant George Wright ... all of whom among others gave the 803rd outstanding co-operation and assistance. And within the 803rd ... Captain R. G. Stutzman (an excellent Operations Officer!), Charles M. Travis (Flight Leader), R. A. Robinson (Pilot who co-piloted me on our first operational mission), 1st Lt. Robert C. Resta, 1st Lt. Donald W. Keating, 1st Lt. Harold Preuss (Engineering Officer) and 2nd Lt. Valentine Wood (Administration), and others whose names I can't recall ... who were instrumental in organizing our initial Detachment.

(signed)

George E. Paris
Lt. Col. USAF Ret.

* The flight took place on 3 June in B-17 #42-3518 and piloted by Captain George Paris, his co-pilot Captain Raymond Robinson with Lt. Franklin Zatlin in charge of recording instruments. It was made with fighter protection and proceeded to a point near Brussels, Belgium. No opposition was met. The purpose of this flight was to measure over enemy territory the operational height and relative field strength of radio transmitters located at both Bawdsey and Sizewell on the east coast of Britain. An enemy FuGe-16Z, radio receiver modified by ABL-15 (American-British Laboratory Division 15) to indicate relative signal strength was mounted in the nose of the aircraft. The flight was completed successfully and the results contributed to the research being accomplished on countering German fighter control.

LETTERS PAGES



Thanks for the memories: Reunion moments captured by Susan Mather



Hi Janine,

Having just finished reading the Special Summer Edition of your magazine I had to drop you a line and tell you how much I enjoyed it. You certainly seem to have had a lovely Reunion weekend, and made me realise how much hard work you put into this, and producing such a professional magazine. Well done! Needless to say, Dad thoroughly enjoyed himself and it was good for him to have a break. Special thanks to Rod Vowler for giving him a lift to the various functions, much appreciated Rod. Mum is doing okay at the moment, but does not have the stamina or mobility that Dad has, or indeed myself these days. He is remarkable. Well, that only leaves me to say keep up the good work. I am delighted that the Association continues to grow and wish you all the very best for the future.

*Barbara*xxx

(Daughter of Association President Phil James MBE)



Hi Janine,

Everyone is thrilled by your coverage of the Reunion and you have been very kind with the description of the music. The boys are really pleased. You have worked very hard putting together the magazine and done a great job. Well done! Thank you for putting in Paul's words for 'Toy Soldiers'. He was excited to see them in the magazine. We're very busy with exams and life generally. Meanwhile, the boys are playing for a wedding on Friday, a Ball at RAF Valley next week, and a Festival the week after.

Since the Reunion in May, we have attended the Welsh Urdd National Eisteddfod in Caerphilly where Sean was performing with his school. They did very well, coming third in the under-11 choir, and were seen live on S4C singing their chosen song.

It has taken a while to get our energy levels back up to normal strength, but hopefully we will come again next year to the Reunion if you will have us. We all found it a very moving experience and a real privilege to take part. Well done to you for all your hard work. Everything went so well. The link to the recording of 'Toy Soldiers' on YouTube for anyone using the internet who would like to see the performance is: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmX8T3M9Mgo>

Best wishes,

Stephen, Elaine, Paul, Matthew, James, Sean & Daniel

pmjsmagee@btinternet.com

NOTE: The Magee Brothers have accepted our invitation to play again at our 2016 Reunion, and we very much look forward to sharing their songs and music, with Brendan Maguire hopefully playing alongside.



Hi Janine,

Thank you so much for the Summer Magazine which I managed to download even with my limited laptop skills. I look forward to it every season. It is always very interesting and I love the stories and the people who send them in. The Reunion looks like a fantastic success and you all had a great time. We had a nice break in the Lake District, otherwise we would have been there to join you. I would like to thank you, Tony, and all the team for all your hard and time-consuming work that goes into producing this fantastic magazine. It really is appreciated. I'm also looking forward to your books when you have time to fit them in.

Very kind regards,

Peter & Julia Thompson

halifax.pete690@btinternet.com



Hi Janine,

I can confirm that the email attachment link works in opening another excellent magazine (*although I do grimace when I see on the closing pages 192 Squadron losses still shown as 5*). As I mentioned at the May Reunion, I plan to visit Germany again in November with the intention of being at Durnbach CWGC for the 75th Anniversary on the 21st. On my last visit, I photographed the 100 Group graves, but missed those of the murdered crew of 214 Squadron Fortress HB779 BU-L. I will rectify this oversight on this visit. If anyone is interested, I believe I will then have photographs of all 100 Group graves at this cemetery.

My visit to Germany last year: 18 – 23 November 2014 was my fourth trip since 2009, all by car, staying in Bad Konig en-route to Durnbach CWGC and again on the return journey. My schedule took me to Bad Konig (in Odenwald), arriving 18 November and staying for 2 nights. This allowed me to again visit the 'scene of the crime' where my uncle: Sgt R. B. Hales, and Flt Sgt A. P. Bloomfield met their untimely end on the night of 21 November 1944, and where I left 2 RAF crosses in remembrance.

I left Bad Konig early on 20 November heading for my next hotel within about three miles of Durnbach CWGC. I visited the cemetery in the afternoon and again all day on the 21st. I paid my respects at the grave of my uncle and those of the crew of Halifax MZ806 who were lost on 21 November 1944, then moved on to the crews of four other 100 Group aircraft who I was aware also lay in that cemetery:

[192 Squadron Halifax MZ806 DT-R](#). In support of Main Force Operation against Aschaffenburg railway yards – shot down by night-fighter 21 November 1944:

- Warrant Officer B. H. Harrison RAFVR (Pilot)
- [Sergeant R. B. Hales RAFVR \(Flight Engineer\)](#)
- Flight Sergeant A. P. Bloomfield RAFVR (Air Bomber)
- Sergeant R. P. Clancy RAFVR (Air Gunner)
- Sergeant T. D. McGill RAFVR (Air Gunner)
- Warrant Officer J. R. Sutton RAFVR (Special Operator/Air Gunner)

[192 Squadron Halifax NA241 DT-O](#). In support of Main Force Operation against Pforzheim – cause of loss not established 23 February 1945:

- Flight Lieutenant W. H. P. Mitchell RAAF (Pilot)
- Sergeant F. Parkins RAFVR (Flight Engineer)
- Sergeant A. K. Goodall RAFVR (Navigator)
- Flight Sergeant T. G. Campbell RCAF (Air Gunner)
- Sergeant R. N. Seager RAFVR (Air Gunner)
- Flight Sergeant J. L. Kerr RAFVR (Wireless Operator/Air Gunner)
- Flying Officer A. W. Clark RAFVR (Air Bomber)

[192 Squadron Halifax MZ449 DT-Y](#). In support of Main Force Operation against Pforzheim – shot down by night-fighter 23 February 1945:

- Flight Sergeant G. A. C. Morgan RAFVR (Pilot)
- Sergeant E. Spencer RAFVR (Flight Engineer)
- Flight Sergeant A. M. Brunton RAFVR (Navigator)
- Flight Sergeant D. J. Paterson RAAF (?)
- Sergeant W. M. Wilkinson RAFVR (Air Gunner)
- Flight Sergeant J. F. Carvell RAFVR (Air Bomber)

[214 Squadron Fortress HB785 BU-A](#). In support of Bohlen Operation. Lost 20/21 March 1945:

- Flying Officer R. V. Kingdon RCAF (Pilot)
- Sergeant W. D. Dale RAFVR (Flight Engineer)
- Pilot Officer W. A. Routley RCAF (Navigator)

- Flight Sergeant D. F. Miller RAFVR (Wireless Operator/Air Gunner)
- Pilot Officer J. W. Pellant RCAF (Air Bomber)
- Flying Officer D. N. Donald RCAF (Air Bomber) although serving with RCAF, understand he was an American from Indianapolis, U.S.A.
- Pilot Officer H. M. Carter RCAF (Air Gunner)
- Sergeant W. Perkins RAFVR (Air Gunner)
- Warrant Officer Class II R. G. Wilson RCAF (Air Gunner)
- Sergeant D. Parker RAFVR (Air Gunner)

214 Squadron Fortress HB779 BU-L. Badly damaged 15 March 1945, but pilot (Wynne) made it back to Bassingbourne after regaining control of aircraft. Nine crew members bailed out over enemy territory. Five were subsequently executed (murdered):

- Flying Officer J. W. Vinall RAFVR (Flight Engineer)
- Flying Officer G. A. Hall RAFVR (Air Gunner)
- Flying Officer H. Frost RAFVR (Air Gunner)
- Flight Lieutenant S. C. Matthews RAFVR (Air Gunner)
- Flight Sergeant E. A. Percival RAFVR (Air Gunner)

For all the above crew members I took photographs of their final resting places and would be happy to forward copies to anyone with a specific interest.

Meanwhile, I returned to the cemetery on 22 November where I spent the morning before returning to Bad Konig. The long journey home on 23 November was uneventful.

David Hales

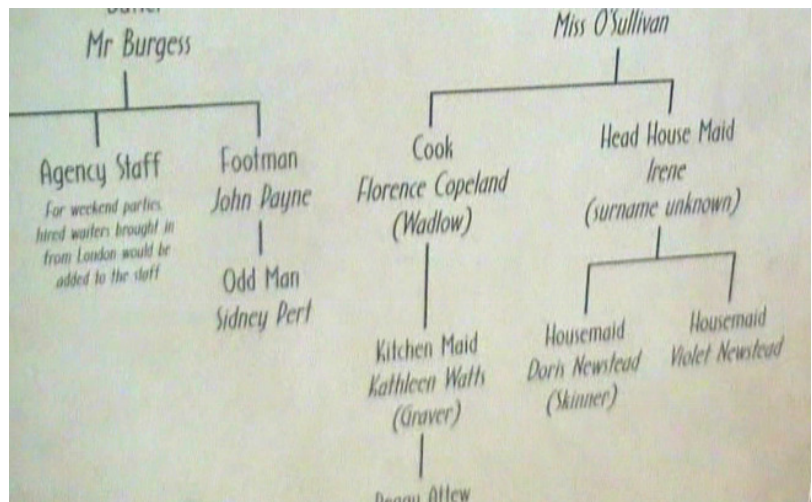
davidjohn_hales@hotmail.com



Dear Janine,

I have recently read your booklet: *A Brief History of RAF Oulton 1940 – 1947*. Mentioned on page 4 is a Bob Collis. I knew a Mrs Irene Collis who was Head Housemaid at Blickling Hall in the 1930s under Lord Lothian. At that time, Irene was not known as Irene Collis, her married name, and her maiden name remains unknown. However, in the kitchen at Blickling Hall a notice board shows:

- *Irene: Head House Maid*
- *Doris Newstead: Housemaid*
- *Violet Newstead: Housemaid*



My aunt Doris (Newstead) left Blickling Hall when Somerset De Chair came on the scene. He was very impressed by my aunt and asked if she would be interested in becoming his housekeeper along with Arthur as Bailiff to St Osyth's Priory in Essex (they married in 1937, Doris was 23 yrs). Aunt Doris and Uncle Arthur took the job and moved to St Osyth's Priory where they worked all their lives. Aunt died aged 82, still living in the Bailiff's Cottage. I believe Somerset died a year or two before. Somerset had a very colourful life! And valued Aunt Doris enormously. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Colin & Julie Chamberlain:

Ccmobileservices@aol.com

Hello Janine,

'*Confound & Destroy*' arrived in today's mail, and I must say you have done us proud, Janine. Marvellous effort, with a picture of Stuart ('*Living History Film Productions*' who attended our Reunion 2015) sitting with his usual big smile. 169 Squadron seemed to be pretty sparsely represented however. As already stated, Doug Waite (who I contacted recently) and Harry Reed are the only two other surviving members, unless Brian Odam was one of us, but his name is not known to me. The whole magazine is first rate, as it always is of course, with plenty to comment on, especially the mention of part of Lawrence Binyon's poem: '*For the Fallen*'. I always do the six o'clock tribute at the RSA of a Wednesday and looking back, can say that I have recited that verse over one thousand times here in Nelson, New Zealand; the last thirty years. Thank you for mentioning ANZAC DAY which won't have the same significance in the UK, but which this year marks the 100th Anniversary of the Gallipoli Campaign, so there was a great deal of effort going into the commemorations on 25 April.

We at RSA authorised the supply of 600 white crosses to be displayed bearing the names of local men killed during the Campaign, which gives some idea of the depth of local involvement. I don't know whether or not it got coverage on television in the UK, but believe me, it was some event here, and in Australia and at Gallipoli itself being the 100th Anniversary of the landings at Anzac Cove.

Here in Nelson, where the occasion is usually observed at Anzac Park, it was shifted to Trafalgar Park, the Sports Ground in the city itself. A temporary War Memorial was set up and I would say that out of our population of forty-odd thousand, over ten thousand turned out for the Dawn Parade. The veterans marched as a column from the town centre to the grounds and I must say that the numbers from the Second World War were very thin indeed. I was the only Bomber Command vet there, and son Greg and I dutifully laid our wreath. The preponderance of those who had served were from the Viet Nam conflict.

The service started at 6am and was long, as both the Maori people and the Turkish Ambassador had their say. Also, it was pretty cold and by daylight Wendy and I had had about enough. Fortunately, we live only a ten minute walk from where all this went on, so we staggered home where I cooked a bacon and egg breakfast and then back into the sack for a few hours, with the wick turned up on the electric blankets!

Because of the early hour, I haven't seen any good photos of the crowd in the local paper, but I have never, never seen so many people in Nelson turn out for any function, including rugby games. The whole field was packed solid, but when the *Last Post* was well played on a bugle by an Air Force Sergeant, a great silence fell on the entire crowd. This was followed by the second verse of Binyon's '*Ode to the Fallen*': '*They shall grow not old ...*' and so forth. It was all very moving. As a bit of personal history, I have recited the ode at the local RSA over a thousand times and offered to do it on this occasion, but was turned down and the President who did recite it got it a bit wrong ...

We had our Bomber Command Association luncheon at a local pub last week, and it went off very well as per usual. I invited a girl who works with me at the Cawthron Institute, Caitlin Fielder, who is the granddaughter of Les Munro of Dam Busters fame. She really enjoyed it and said she would like to come again. Stuart Borlase of Living History Film Productions has come to previous luncheons, but now he is back in Perth and soon heading your way to the Reunion, asking veterans if they would like to become involved in a project whereby they are filmed sharing their personal wartime experiences on camera, ensuring the history lives on and is never forgotten.

Wishing you all well with the promise of warmer weather,

*John & Wendy Beeching*xx
169 Squadron, RAF Great Massingham



Dear Janine,

I'll say one thing. You sure are a persistent little gal ... and I love it! The only thing wrong in sharing my wartime experiences is I feel I'm coming on like a one man Squadron. I would include the forays of others, but time has erased much of the past, so I will sacrifice my modesty on my altar of conceit.

I remember vividly our very first mission. We hadn't a clue of what our future had fashioned for us, but we soon found out. At our altitude, there wasn't a cloud in the sky. Suddenly, three dots coming straight at us, and I calmly called out: *'Three enemy fighters approaching head on!'* They had to be enemy planes because none of our fighter planes ever flew patrols. Frankly, I was pleased with myself for being so calm and I thought I'd wait a few seconds before starting to return the fire of the German aircraft. Then panic set in. I didn't think my guns were working, but fortunately they only made a single pass on the way towards the German coast. It was only then I realised my turret was jumping all over as I was still shooting. I must have started shooting when they were still dots on the horizon and their pilots were probably home having a beer when I stopped shooting. The barrels of my guns were a bright red and dripping like an ice-cream cone in the sun. I had completely burned out my barrels and I couldn't have shot a rabbit if I had to. Lucky me, there are few bunnies at 12,000 feet! After it was all over, the one question that came running through my mind: *'Why did I leave college for this?'*



You were asking about photos of *'Lady Jane'* and suddenly I started to think ... I don't really have a good photo of her. Stephen Hutton has a better pix in his book: *'Squadron of Deception'*. Hope your sun is smiling on you, although I don't think it can out-do our private California sun which hit 99 today. It was so hot I suspended my training for the 100-mile dash for the next Olympics!

Funny thing, while I was lying in my little trundle bed waiting for snores to begin, it suddenly occurred to me that I said the Glen Miller Show was the only time we heard our hit songs on the noon show.

Well, that couldn't be because most air crews had an idiotic ritual routine before a mission, after a mission, or in a pub. Ours was that we would pop to attention wherever we were, place our hand over our heart as the radio played: *'Don't Fence Me In'*. Needless to say, eight of the nine of us were bachelors with only our Flight Engineer wearing a wedding ring. I don't know where the music originated, but it wasn't confined to the lunch hour. As for the plane closest to us, its crew would always give their scantily-clad girl on the



side of their aircraft a pat on the backside before and after each mission. I don't recall any of the other rituals, but most crews had one. As for photos, the lively blokes in Downham Market Square, Norfolk, (seen on previous page) are left to right: [Fran Parenti](#), [J. T. Thompson](#), [me](#), and [Hoss Billadeau](#). My crew flew all 18 missions together – [Sol Soloman](#) our [Bombadier](#) who was not needed as we didn't carry bombs, was assigned to a Bomb Group and died on his first mission; [Harry Soderstrom](#) our [Pilot](#), [Bob Dewitt](#) co-pilot, and [Gu Anderson](#) Navigator. There was also [Johnny Fillinger](#), [me](#), [J. T. Thompson](#) radio, [Hoss Billedau](#) and [Robert Price](#) our [Flight Engineer](#).

I'm more than happy to share my memories and you can have them because I seldom use them any more. In any case, I'd been planning to send you an anecdote for some time, but have been visiting my home-from-home because I love hospital cooking! (*My sickly humour is showing – I lost seven pounds in my two-week stay!*) The following would be even funnier if I could just capture the anger our Tail Gunner displayed the night he came back from guarding our plane.

Normally, guards with Top Security clearance get that duty, but when no-one is available, a crew member gets the job. Johnny Fillinger from West Virginia was it. He was sitting by 'Lady Jane' thinking about buying a Sherman tank and using it to rob banks, when an Englishman came strolling across the runway headed for a cluster of homes on the far side of the field. Johnny yelled: 'Halt! You don't belong here.' The Englishman yelled back: 'I don't belong here? You don't belong here. This is my country. The land belongs to the English. I will go where I damn well please.' Johnny was a hot head anyway, so he decided to scare the guy by cocking his rifle as if to shoot him. The only trouble is, his gun fell to the ground in pieces. The Englishman turned and came back, picked up the gun, and in a matter of seconds reassembled it before handing it back to Johnny. 'Can't you Yanks do anything right? You didn't push the lock pin all the way in.' With that, he resumed his trek across the runways. Johnny said he was so furious, but so embarrassed, he would have let him crawl into our plane and take photos of our electronic devices. The funniest part was the way Johnny was fuming when he came back to the barracks.

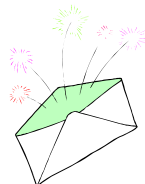
Johnny Fillinger was from West Virginia and like a guy with the personality of a fighting rooster who couldn't say more than four words without swearing. Sadly, he is no longer with us. But one further thing I recall which you might find slightly funny is when we arrived in Southampton in December 1943. We were whisked onto a waiting train well after dark. The Germans chose that time to bomb the docks of Southampton where troops, supplies and equipment were being unloaded. We were not in the area of the raid, but sitting in a totally dark train, listening to the plans and bombs while telling the scariest ghost stories we could think of. Then our Radio Operator J. T. Thompson came up with this gem. A flyboy came home early on leave anxious to see his bride and yelled: 'Honey, I'm home!' She answered: 'I'm in the shower'. 'Well, slip on something and come on down.' So she slipped on a bar of soap! Being as we were tense from the bombing and ghost stories, this got our Radio Operator mugged by us all.

Under the 36th Bomb Squadron, our crew was amongst the first to join the Alconbury Club, and now I'm looking forward to your ability to dig up ancient history about old dudes and turn it into something readable. Take care, and I wish you the very best with your scrawling ...

Bill Whitworth

36th BS Sergeant

Nose gunner for Lt. Soderstrom crew



Dear Janine,

My name is Al Castillo. I have been in contact with Stephen Hutton about my father Luis Castillo who served with the 36th Bomb Squadron during WWII. He also was at RAF Oulton before going to Cheddington with the 36th. My father was one of those unfortunate ones who, after the Battle of the Bulge, was sent to be an Infantry replacement. He, along with seventeen others from the 36th, were sent to the 12th Reinforcement Depot on 28 January 1945. The other sixteen men were: Hershell Benner, Lewis Kirkpatrick, John Sullivan, Frank Falter, Howard Goodrich, Calvin Harris, William Henry, Hassel Smith, John Michaels, Werner Albrecht, Herman Brown, Doreteo Lucero, John McElfish, Dan O'Rourke, Bennie Sirt

and Philip Moores. These men who were sent as Infantry replacements seemed to have disappeared from the pages of USAAF history. Thousands of men were taken from the Air Corp and trained in a short time as Infantrymen before being sent to the Front Lines.

I do not know what happened to the other sixteen men, perhaps some were wounded or even killed in action. I do know that it had a profound effect on my father. He was haunted by things he saw in the war until his death. I remember one day as we stood at the front door watching a thunderstorm roll in across the Texas plains. As we listened to the thunder in the distance, he said: *'You know, that's what artillery fire sounds like at night when you're lying in your foxholes ...'* For a brief moment his mind had drifted to the past, to happier days in England, and to the horrors of combat in Germany.

Below are a few excerpts from the tape I made in 1984. I do not include the horrors of war friends getting killed, the shooting of prisoners, etc. Just a few of the many memories he had of his Service in the war.

Luis Castillo 1942 – 1945

I went overseas on the Queen Mary in June 1943. It was about a week and not much to do except eat and sleep. After getting to Scotland, we were sent to England near London. England is a beautiful country and I enjoyed being in England, there was always something to do when not on duty. The English people were very friendly and nice to us and they liked American things. I had a lot of good times in England. Duty at the Air Base was not too hard and it seemed like we got into trouble more than anything else!

While I was stationed in England, I would go with a Pass to town. Many of the bus drivers would not let me get on the buses because they thought I was a former Italian PoW. I told my Sergeant and the Lieutenant made me out a card: 'This is an American soldier, treat him with the same courtesy and respect you would any other Allied soldier'. I never had any trouble after that.

Life in England was pretty good. I really enjoyed being there. But at the beginning of 1945 I was sent to the Infantry. I really didn't want to go, but that's where I ended up. When I was transferred they gave us a lot of training and after, we were sent to La Havre, France. On boarding the ship to France they didn't tell us anything because everything was so secret. We climbed down rope ladders to boats that took us in, well prepared to fight with the training we'd been given. I joined the 2nd Division in Company 1, 9th Infantry Regiment. Two days after joining we were in our foxholes and being shelled by Germans. The next day we attacked. Attacking in combat is hard to explain. Some may be taking this town, while others are taking another. You're going in leaps and bounds. In combat I was scared, to say I was not would be a lie. But you had to bring up the courage to do what you had to do. I think I was in two or three major battles and a lot of little encounters with the enemy.

Soon after getting to the Front, I was forward on point down a wide road. It was cold and dark. I saw something moving in front of my position and looking hard, saw a figure standing a few yards away. I didn't want to fire because it would give away my position, so I shouted: 'Halt! Who goes there?' No answer. I said it again: 'Halt!' taking a grenade and lobbing it at the figure. It went off with a lot of noise. So then everyone started moving forward, wondering what was going on. The Platoon Sergeant came up and asked me: 'What's wrong?' I told him there was someone out there. We stopped, pulled back, dug in, and waited all night with our eyes forward. As dawn came up we went forward and the Sergeant started laughing, slapping me on the back, saying: 'There's the German you killed last night!' I looked ... and there was a tree stump full of shrapnel. Everyone had a good laugh on me that day.

It was during this time that we took a lot of prisoners. A lot of them just gave up, but many still had a lot of fight in them. The young ones, kids aged thirteen to sixteen years old, were the worst. They fought like hell! But when you captured them, they broke down and cried like babies. They'd been told that, if we captured them we would shoot them. The SS troopers were the worst and fought until killed. Regular Germans gave up pretty easy, they didn't want to fight any more. Sometimes we would just point them to the rear. When we captured German prisoners we would take all their medals and personal items, cutting off their buttons from pants and belts. This kept them from running. I never felt sorry for them.

When the war ended, we came home to Camp Swift Texas to be told we were going to fight the Japanese. But a couple of months after, the war against the Japanese ended and they started discharging us. I was discharged in November 1945. In the late '40s, I joined the Army Reserve in the Quarter Master Corps. I did it for the money and it wasn't too bad, not like it had been during the war. But then the war in Korea started. I didn't want anything to do with another war, plus I now had a wife and three kids. I figured I'd best get out before they sent me to some place in Korea to get killed. I was discharged finally in 1951.

Below is a photo of my father, seen left; soon after arriving at Remagan Bridge with the 2nd Infantry Division. The other soldier I believe is John Sullivan, another former 36th Bomb Squadron member.



Sincerely,
Al Castillo
Warhist@aol.com

COMPANY SECRET MORNING REPORT ENDING 28 January 1945 5

STATION Cheddington, 2 mi s., WL 37/37
ORGANIZATION 36 Bomb Sq (H) British

SERIAL NUMBER	NAME	GRADE	CODE
18057215	Benner, Hershall E.	Sgt	K
14065955	Kirkpatrick, Lewis B.	Sgt	
17055214	Michaels, John L.	Sgt	
38362929	Castillo, Luis	Cpl	
12123179	Falter, Frank F.	Cpl	
39829621	Goodrich, Howard H.	Cpl	
38199770	Harris, Calvin	Cpl	
35714082	Henry, William E.	Cpl	
7009351	Smith, Hassel L.	Cpl	
31076235	Sullivan, John J.	Cpl	
39908616	Albrecht, Werner	Pfc	
37317946	Brown, Herman A.	Pfc	
38348931	Lucero, Doroteo	Pfc	
33703488	McElfish, John A.	Pfc	
15382969	O'Rourke, Dan P.	Pfc	
36350207	Sirt, Bennie	Pfc	
11008310	Moore, Philip A.	Pvt	

17 PW held from asgmt & trfd in gr to 12th Reinforcement Depot, Reinforcement Command, European Theater of Operations, U. S. Army, APO 551, departed per par 6 50 24

OFFICER STRENGTH	PLD O & CAPT	1ST LT	2D LT	WO	FLT O					
ASSIGNED	PRES	ABST	PRES	ABST	PRES	ABST	PRES	ABST	PRES	ABST
ATTACHED UNASSIGNED ATTACHED FR OTHER ORGN										
TOTAL										

AVN CADET & ENLISTED STRENGTH	PRESENT	ABSENT	PRESENT FOR DUTY	PRESENT FOR DUTY	ABSENT	PRESENT AND ABSENT
ASSIGNED						
ATTACHED UNASSIGNED ATTACHED FR OTHER ORGN						
TOTAL						

R I ESTIMATED NUMBER OF / DAY OF WEEK
RATIONS REQUIRED FOR / DATE
T II MESS ATTENDANCE FOR DAY OF THIS REPORT
I BREAKFAST DINNER SUPPER
O MEN AUTHORIZED TO MESS SEPARATELY MEN ATCHD FOR RATIONS
N III MEN ATCHD TO OTHER ORGN FOR RATIONS NET O & OTHERS MESSED TOTAL
S MEN PRESENT LESS PLUS

PAGE 1 OF 2 PAGES
I CERTIFY THAT THIS MORNING REPORT IS CORRECT AND THAT RATION FIGURES IN PART II REPRESENT AN ACTUAL COUNT AS REPORTED TO ME.

SIGNATURE (NAME) (GRADE) (PLN OR SERVICE)
B.D. & S.D. FORM NO. 1 (MARCH 22, 1943) WD COPY THRU MRU OR SCU

NOTE from Stephen Hutton: 28 January 1945 was the end of the Battle of the Bulge. With so many American losses, I'm sure Allied Generals were trying to build up their replacement numbers, which explains Luis Castillo's transfer from the 36th to serve in the Infantry on that date (see above slip).



Hi Janine,

The Comet picture is a stack of 9 x 2 minute exposures made into a single image. This is because the Comet moves relative to the background stars and when you align and stack the nine images, you have to align on the Comet so the stars appear trailed. The green colour is due to diatomic carbon. Comet Lovejoy won't be back for 8000 years, so I thought I'd best grab a picture whilst I could.

Best wishes,
David Jackson



SHARED EXPERIENCES

PROJECT PROPELLOR

Phil James MBE



I recently had the pleasure of spending a day with 'PROJECT PROPELLOR' at RAF Cosford (*Phil seen left of photo*).

I was picked up at Swansea Airport by John Zarno (Dutch) who lives near Cambridge; in his aircraft called a 'Cirrus', one of the latest aircraft built with a parachute in the roof, so if you have an engine problem you pull a handle inside the aircraft and it shoots out a parachute that helps bring the aircraft down a lot slower. It took us 1 hr 5 minutes to fly to Cosford at about 130mph. Cosford Museum has lots of aircraft – a Comet, Spitfire, and a TSR2 that looks awesome.

We were entertained by [a threesome of ladies singing 1940 tunes \(below\)](#). We also had several speeches all about Cosford and 'Project Propellor', before being able to help ourselves to as much food as we could eat, all first class and fresh.

I met up with Doc Elliott (*Association Member, 192 Squadron, same as Phil*) so we had a good chat. Two local Air Cadets showed me around the hangars that make up the Museum. I also met up with a few Caterpillar Badge holders, one veteran with a DFM and AFM, also a veteran with a Caterpillar and Goldfish Badge together (the latter is for saving a life in a dinghy). A very brave man! My thoughts at the visit was how many wonderful stories were to be heard there. 130 private aircraft at the airfield were parked 'very proper' and there were 150 veterans attending, mostly flown in thanks to the owners of the aircraft.



Lastly, we had a first class photo shoot of Halifax and Lancaster ex-aircrew. We then flew back to Swansea at 160mph in 50 minutes. It was certainly a sight to see how green the land was when we were at 5,500 feet! A big THANK YOU John, who asks could he come again next year!



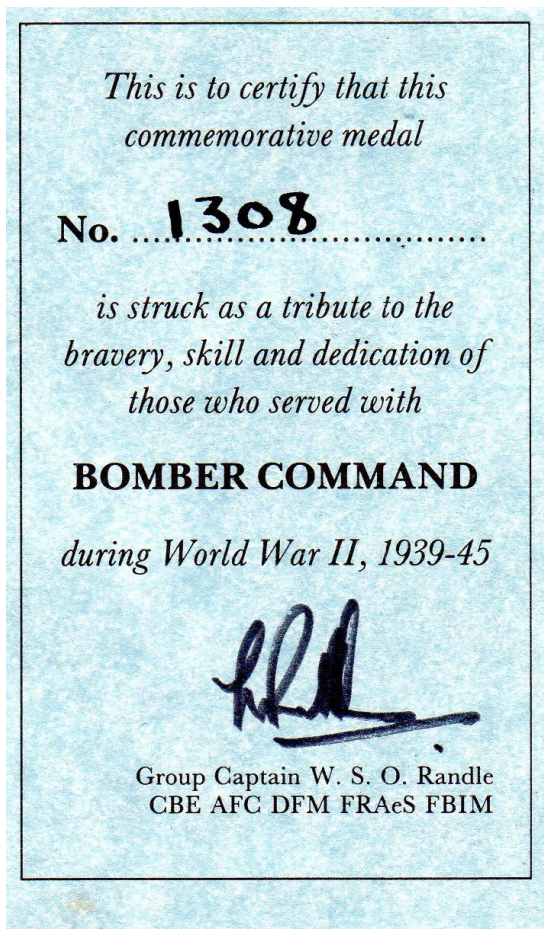
Phil James MBE sitting fifth from left, front row

BOMBER COMMAND CLASP

Janine Bradley

In the light of Ken White's recently shared letter in this magazine about his failed attempts both on his part and his son's to acquire a Bomber Command Clasp, I thought it appropriate to identify other people's stories of the same.

However, first let me revisit the Summer edition in which I brought to the attention of members that a Bomber Command Medal actually existed for a short while, the first awarded to Arthur Harris. Since Norman Storey first sent me one of the original leaflets about this medal, I have asked several veterans, none of whom knew anything about it, which left me wondering how it was advertised, and whether anyone actually sent off for one, at a cost of £15. Gaining recognition for RAF 100 Group drives my passion for writing about the Group and its Squadrons based in Norfolk during WWII. I have been inspired over the past twenty or so years of my involvement with the Association, to preserve its history and stories rather than risk having them lost forever in the mists of time. I continue to feel an urgent need for those who have no knowledge of the Group to become aware of its existence, its work, and everything it achieved. It's the reason I talk about it whenever I get the chance.



John Beeching who served in 169 Squadron at RAF Great Massingham responded to the picture of the medal in the last edition of the magazine:

'I wear my Bomber Command medal with my Campaign medals and am not worried about people who regard it as not quite 'pukkah'. Until the Clasp was struck, it was the only thing which separated us from an Army pay-clerk. I had no problem with the Clasp. I merely sent them a scanned copy of a page from my Log Book which contained the details of about four operations, and as it had the month's summary signed by the Squadron Commander at the bottom, there was no problem. But I do know that the Powers-that-Be dreamed up some pretty unique restrictions about who did qualify.

Yes, the medal is the very same one as in the leaflet shown in the magazine. I still have the fancy box it came in and a bit of spare ribbon. We are going back a long time here as it was first offered when the New Zealand branch of the Mosquito Aircrew Association was operating with a large membership. It wound up because of natural attrition, shall we say. As I recall, it cost about twenty dollars New Zealand, about the same price as advertised in the UK. They made a lovely job of its production. I don't know what it is made of, but it never tarnishes. It came with the advice that it should not be worn with official medals, but separate, which most recipients have chosen to ignore. If you study pictures of groups of old flying men,

you will indeed spot a few of them sporting the gong at the end of their row. I have no compunction about displaying it to all and sundry.

After reading the last magazine, I dug out the ornate case it came in and low and behold there was a lovely little certificate inside with about six inches of spare ribbon. The medal was issued by:

Token Publishing Ltd
Crossways Road
Greysthott
Hindhead
Surrey GU26 6HF
Tel: 0428 737242

Inside the lid there is a little crest with the name 'Pobjay Mint'. Who knows, they might even still have a few left.'

Moving on to the Bomber Command Clasp, [Mary Stopes Roe](#) (pictured below), daughter of Barnes Wallis – the scientist behind the Dambuster's bouncing bombs – raised the issue at an event marking the 70th Anniversary of that mission; the most celebrated raid of the war. She described the decision to offer only a Clasp rather than a Medal as 'cheese-paringly' mean, adding: *'What did those men do except lay down their lives for their duty? My father would have been raging; I know that for sure.'*



George 'Johnny' Johnson, 91, one of only three surviving aircrew from the 1943 raid on the German dams, added: *'I don't think the Clasp achieves the same, by any means. If they were going to recognise us properly, it should have been a Medal, not a Clasp.'*

Bomber Command suffered the highest casualty rate of the British Armed Forces in the Second World War, losing 55,573 of the 125,000 who served. However, figures suggest that barely half of those eligible for the lesser award have so far applied, with veterans snubbing the 'pathetic' award. The Ministry of Defence has received 2,165 applications for the Clasp from surviving bomber veterans, just over half of the 4,000 members of the Bomber Command Association, most of whom are veterans of the Second World War.

Ivor Foster served in 16 raids as a Mid-Upper Gunner: *'I'm not applying. I think the Clasp is an insult. It is disgusting. My pilot was sent a form to fill in and apply, but he just wrote on it: 'what a load of rubbish' and sent it back. I'm not interested in a Clasp ...'*

Harry Irons, a Rear Gunner who flew 60 missions, said several of his former comrades had also decided not to apply: *'The Clasp is pathetic. I have received mine because at least it is something, but I know that quite a few have not bothered. It isn't enough considering what those boys went through. We've been begging for a Medal for years, and they give us a Clasp.'*

Meanwhile, an MoD spokesman responds: *'We have no reason to believe there has been a boycott of applications for the Bomber Command Clasp. This has actually had a huge response from veterans and their families from across the country with over 2,100 applications from veterans to date. The award of a Clasp rather than a separate Medal for Bomber Command is consistent with the position taken for those members of Fighter Command who took part in the Battle of Britain. Those eligible for the Clasp will have previously qualified for the 1939-1945 Star, to which the Clasp will be affixed.'*

On the other hand, as Association member Ken White is well aware, dozens of Second World War veterans have been denied the Bomber Command Clasp, and now calling for its award to be extended to dozens of surviving aircrew who risked their lives on raids in the Mediterranean, Middle East and Far East. Aircrew who undertook perilous bombing raids over Italy, Africa, the Middle East and Far East have been told they are not eligible for the new award which only applies to those who flew with Bomber Command over Western Europe. Bomber Command Association has now backed veterans and an MP is calling for the Ministry of Defence to reconsider the qualifying rules for the decoration.

Pressure continues to grow on Defence Chiefs to rethink the awarding of the Bomber Command Clasp after more and more veterans reveal they have been denied it. They include a Wireless Operator who took part in an air raid on Hitler's Alpine home and a Navigator who took part in thirty raids and later won the George Medal. They have been told they have been refused the Clasp on the grounds that either they didn't serve long enough or because they did not fly from Britain. Geoffrey French, 88, flew on the raid on Berchtesgaden, Hitler's mountain retreat in the Bavarian Alps in April 1945: *'I felt very put out. I earned this Clasp. When we attacked Hitler's mountain retreat we had to go round twice because the bombs wouldn't go. It was very well defended and we took the brunt of the flak. Our Lancaster had holes as big as dinner plates afterwards. We were lucky we didn't get hit in the petrol tanks otherwise it would have been 'boom'.* Mr French also flew on several missions in *Operation Manna*, parachuting food to starving Dutch civilians. Mr Joyner from Cromer risked his young life as part of a Lancaster crew during the Second World War but has repeatedly been denied the Bomber Command Clasp honour which would mean so much to him. Now, after another year of rejections, Mr Joyner at ninety years old, has decided to surrender with quiet dignity. His treatment has outraged respected Norwich-based Aviation historian and author Martin Bowman who said he was *'absolutely disgusted'* at the inflexibility of MoD bureaucrats. They insist Mr Joyner is not entitled to the Clasp because he *'only'* served for 52 days with Bomber Command, rather than the qualifying 60.

Also turned down was Stanley Eustace who flew 30 missions as a Navigator from Foggia in southern Italy. He then proved his bravery once again after the war by stopping a bank robbery and saving the life of a clerk who was being badly beaten. Mr Eustace was awarded the George Medal for his bravery. *'When I got the rejection letter for the Clasp it was very curt. It was an enormous raspberry! They should be ashamed of themselves. It is absolutely disgusting for all those in Bomber Command. Just over ninety percent of the crews from my Squadron did not return from operations. I crash-landed once and managed to get out before the plane blew up. On another occasion we got hit by flak on a raid over Trieste marshalling yards. The following day, our plane was cordoned off at our Base because there was an unexploded ack-ack shell in the bomb bay. I just think the decision about the Clasp reflects the state of our society.'* Mr Eustace, who became a Radiographer after the war, was told he had not served long enough to earn the Clasp.

Current eligibility is restricted to aircrew or their families who served for at least sixty days, or completed a tour of operations on a Bomber Command operational Unit and flew at least one operational sortie on a Bomber Command operational Unit from 3 September 1939 – 8 May 1945 inclusive.

BATTLE OF BRITAIN COMPETITION



QUESTION: How did The Battle of Britain get its name?

PRIZE: A six-page full-colour Special Folder containing a mint pictorial stamp sheet and four artwork prints by aviation artist Keith Woodcock, in addition to which Air Commodore Graham Pitchfork provides a commentary of wartime Britain and the five phases of the Battle of Britain.

All you need do to receive this unique gift is to answer the question above and send your answer to Janine Bradley, Secretary of RAF 100 Group Association using telephone, email or letter.

Closing date: October 1st 2015

The lucky winner will be chosen from a prize draw of correct answers, with the winner receiving the prize by post as described above. Both answer and winner will appear in the Winter edition.

To purchase the collection as a keepsake or gift, visit the website below:

<https://www.iompost.com/stamps-coins/collection/the-battle-of-britain-75th-anniversary/>

Alternatively, you can contact the **Isle of Man Stamps & Coins** direct by post, email or telephone:

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This competition is sponsored by the ISLE OF MAN STAMPS & COINS
We are grateful for their contribution and interest

... NEWSFLASH ...

Demise of Chapel of Remembrance at Biggin Hill Planned for 2016



St George's Royal Air Force Chapel of Remembrance at Biggin Hill stands on what was Royal Air Force Station Biggin Hill. The most famous period of its history is as a Fighter Station during the Second World War and it will remain forever linked with the Battle of Britain fought in the air in 1940. The Chapel is beautiful in its simplicity, following the design of a previous Station Church destroyed by fire in 1946. It stands as a Memorial to all aircrew from the Royal Air Force, Commonwealth and Allied Air Forces who died flying from the Biggin Hill Sector during World War Two.

Stained glass windows showing the spirit of a young pilot holding an emblem or badge are a joy to see. On both sides of the altar, gold lettering records the names of aircrew who paid the ultimate sacrifice, whilst in the Remembrance Book the 454 names are listed by date and a page is turned daily.

On guard at the Chapel gates are a Spitfire and a Hurricane which are dedicated to the aircrews. These full size detailed replicas have the markings of aircraft which flew from the airfield during the Battle of Britain. Ground crew of the war years are also remembered in four of the seventeen beautiful stained glass windows. In one, the three Military Medals awarded to members of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force at Biggin Hill are shown. During the war, only six were awarded in total.

Many interesting items are displayed, all of which have a story to tell. A Caretaker will gladly show you around, answering any questions. Whether you come out of interest or on pilgrimage, young or old, you will learn something new and experience the peace of this truly wonderful Memorial. There is an Anglican Service held each Sunday at 9.30am and Roman Catholic Mass each Saturday at 6pm. On Battle of Britain Sunday, 21 September, last year 110 people attended a service of Thanksgiving and Commemoration. On Remembrance Sunday, 9 November, the congregation was over 200, and 45 attended a short service around the Flagpole on Remembrance Day. Everyone is welcome at services.

However, by March 2016 the Royal Air Force/Ministry of Defence are withdrawing all support from the Chapel. If no-one or group takes on the responsibility it will be closed without access to the public or church services. This Chapel was built as a Memorial to Aircrew who had their lives taken in World War Two. They fought and died. We today have the freedom to forget!



<http://www.kentattractions.co.uk/index.php/st-georges-raf-chapel-of-remembrance.html#sthash.GDSY9hBZ.dpuf>

Address: Main Road, Biggin Hill, Westerham, Kent TN16 3EJ. **Tel:** 01959 570353 (opening hours).

Email: stgeorgesrafchapel@gmail.com **Website:** www.rafchapelbigginhill.com

SHARED EXPERIENCES

AFTER THE FLYING

Sidney Pike

Dozens of books have been written and hundreds of stories told of individual experiences of life on a Squadron and on Operations, all of us have our own memories based on the common theme of flying on Ops. What do seem to differ are the experiences of aircrew when the flying is over and there's some time to go before demob. *What happened to you?* Perhaps I could tell you what I did after leaving 214 Squadron at Oulton in April 1945.

On completion of two tours, one with Frank Savage, the second with Verner Scantleton; I was posted to Catterick to be re-mustered as a Pilot Officer to GD/Admin and, after a couple of weeks, was sent to the RAF School of Administration and Hygiene at Credenhill near Hereford. There with about thirty other redundant aircrew we had a six-week course learning Kings Regulations on how to arrange and conduct discipline interviews and all those matters which appeared appropriate to the duties of a Station Adjutant, and a Far East posting looked on the cards.

Come the day, I was posted to the British Air Force of Occupation in Germany, not too far from Hanover. After being interviewed by the Group Captain, I was told I had been sent to fill a vacancy in the Personnel Section which dealt with the postings of Officers in and out of the British zone, which meant liaising with our opposite number in the Air Ministry in London. I signed on to stay an extra year, so did this work for two and a half years as a Flight Lieutenant.

Personnel Group also had a Legal Section headed by a Wing Commander. This gentleman was a source of several historic visits I was invited to make. He obtained the invites.

I first obtained a Day Pass to the Nuremburg War Crimes Trial of the Nazi hierarchy, those that had not committed suicide. There they were: Goering, Hess, and all the rest of Hitler's Government. I sat so near to them in the Press Box next to the dock in which they were seated. That day they were entering their pleas to the charges put to them, all of which were '*not guilty*'. Goering attempted to make a speech, but was cut short by the Prosecuting Officer and told to enter his plea, which he did and returned to his seat in the dock. Hess, who appeared quite detached from the proceedings, merely answered: 'Yes' to the question. The Prosecutor said he would accept it as meaning not guilty. So it continued, but I was able to see in the flesh those members of the hierarchy we had fought against.

A couple of months later, I was given a Pass to attend the Auschwitz-Belsen War Crimes Trial at Wuppertal. On trial were the Camp Commandants and some of the guards of these two concentration camps. On my visit, the Prosecutor was outlining the case against each individual and he had come to one Ima Grese, a camp guard who had served at Auschwitz before transferring to Belson. It was alleged that she was very liberal with the use of a bullwhip and of setting her Alsatian dog on women prisoners. At Auschwitz she had selected prisoners for the gas chambers, sometimes, it was alleged up to thirty a day. Details of her crimes were quite horrendous to listen to, but she sat in the dock appearing as though she had not the slightest regret. Most of the accused were ultimately found guilty and hanged. Ima had been a guard for three years and was hanged aged twenty-one on 13 December 1945.

Thousands of war crimes trials were held in Western Europe after the war, in the countries in which the crimes were committed, or of which a national was the accused. In the British zone of Western Europe some 937 Military trials or Tribunals were held, involving people accused of the murder or ill-treatment of British Forces personnel. These consisted of a court chaired by a member of the Judge Advocates staff and Military Officers who sat with the judge to hear the case reach a verdict and pass sentence. The prosecution and defence were conducted by Military Officers. I attended two of these as a member of the Tribunal sitting with a judge and an Army Captain at a court in Wuppertal. One of these was a local Mayor who failed to allow a badly burned pilot to receive medical attention in the prison with the result he died in his cell. That Mayor was sentenced to 10 years in prison. The second trial was a farm worker who used a pitch fork to kill a captured airman and disposed of his body in a manure pit. He was sentenced to be hanged.

My last visit in Germany was to RAF Gatow in Berlin where I was told to audit the accounts of the Officers' Mess. Having done so, the Group Captain offered me his car with driver to take a tour of the zone, taking in the Brandenburg Gate and the ruined Rectag and damage done by so many raids by the RAF and USAAF. In the evening, I took the bus (a three-ton lorry fitted with wooden benches) into Berlin to enjoy the hospitality of the RAF Malcolm Club, before returning to my Quarters on the same bus, as did all personnel apart from those with cars. The following morning, I was invited to attend, with the Group Captain; a meeting with a small delegation of Russian Army Officers to discuss the logistics of removing road blocks and pill boxes. Our party was led by an AVM, and the Russians by a General. After nearly an hour, the meeting was adjourned to another day.

I returned to my day job at BAFO Headquarters until November 1947 when I was recalled to the UK to be demobbed on 27 November. I returned to my civvy job with the Post Office (later British Telecom) retiring in December 1982 as an Engineering Head of Division in Central London.

I am still here to tell the tale!

Sidney Pike

IN MEMORY

LAC LEN 'Abbie' ABBS

20 May 1920 – 28 March 2014

Shared by the Witts & Abbs Family

Most people on the Association will remember Peter Witts – believed to be the only person to serve in three separate Squadrons under RAF 100 Group: No. 223, No. 214 and No. 462 Squadron RAAF; commissioned after the war as a Pilot Officer. He and his brother-in-law Len Abbs shared a close relationship, and Peter named his son Len Witts after him. Len Abbs was a remarkable man. Carolyn Witts, Peter's daughter, shares these words which lead into the story of her uncle, in commemoration of VJ Day:

Uncle Len was my Dad's brother-in-law, my Mum's brother. They were like brothers, my father and he. The moving story of how they first met goes back to when my mother, then Joan Abbs, was a WAAF working in the Officers' Mess when one of the Officers told her they had just admitted a Len Abbs, a prisoner of war; into hospital. As far as Mum knew, her brother was reported dead, missing in action. The Officer took Mum to the hospital to see if it was indeed Len. On entering the hospital ward she was confronted by all these skeletal men just lying there. She said: 'I can't see my brother'. Len heard her voice. 'Joan ... my sister Joan'. Mum said this skeletal man was walking towards her with no hair, having had a mass of blonde curls when he went to war. It couldn't be Len! He put his arms out saying simply: 'Joan.' This was her brother ... Mum started to visit Len regularly in the hospital where, in the next bed, was another prisoner of war, a Hugh Trebble from Woolacombe, my Dad's home village. One of Mum's jobs in the Officers' Mess was to sort the mail. She noticed a letter post marked from Woolacombe to a Mr Peter Witts. Mum told Dad when he came to collect his mail that there was a Hugh Trebble in hospital, a prisoner of war, and did he know him. Dad said: 'Know him? He only lives in the same street as me! We went to school together. He's a mate. We'd been told he was lost in action.' So Mum and Dad started visiting the hospital together and were married two years on. As a point of interest, Hugh Trebble had a brother who was killed on the last night of the war, so they had one son returned to them only to lose another.

Len Abbs was born in Norwich and lived in Lowestoft for many years, an East Anglian through and through. Aged eighteen, he was already working in photography when he joined the RAF in July 1938. He went on to train in RAF photographic work at Farnborough before being posted to 9 Squadron (Vickers Wellington Bombers). He was then posted to 211 Squadron, joining them at El Dabaa ([seen right](#)) on 12 March 1940 at that uncertain stage of WWII known as 'The Phoney War', before even the Battle of France had begun. One of the originals posted to 211 Squadron to the Far East, there he was taken captive along with over 300 other ground crew members of the Squadron at the fall of Java in March 1942.



Repatriated from the Far East, Len met Betty Robertson in 1947. They were engaged that August and married on 27 December, facing the triumphs and hurdles of life happily together down the years with a growing family of five children, all daughters. In 2007, Len and Betty celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary, with family in Lowestoft and a message of congratulations from HM the Queen.

However, reaching back through the years of wartime lay a stark tale of one man's part in a great tragedy brought together in Len's own hand, beginning at his arrival in Greece with the Squadron in November 1940.



November 1940

At Menidi airfield (ex KLM airport), seventeen kilometres from Athens; Jim Fryatt and I were in close proximity with the photo section room next to the Armourers on the side of a hangar. When things were quiet we shared a mug of tea together. One night, we celebrated a birthday and many of us were worse for wear drinking ouzo and mavrodaphne, drinks we weren't used to, but cheap. I'd play cards with Jim, 'Swede' Revett, and Bill Pettitt. They were Armourers.

When Germany invaded Greece, 211 withdrew to Menidi. We went to Corfu first, to this day don't understand why; we were there only a week with no aircraft. But then we were pinned down in slit trenches, being attacked by 109s and 110s (Messerschmitts). They carried extra fuel tanks and destroyed all 211's remaining Blenheims on the ground. Orders came to make for the port of Argos to be evacuated by troop ships. We travelled at first in convoy, but it was apparent we were too big a target, so split up. Gerry 'shufti kite' ('shufti': Arabic for 'look see') would fly over followed by Stuka (Junkers Ju 87) dive bombers. The section I was in, three lorries, saw the fighters and ran for cover. They destroyed all the lorries and we legged it for Agrinion where we caught a train. We never made the town before nightfall, so sheltered in an olive grove, meeting up with other RAF bods with the same idea. We were fortunate they had cooked some Maconachies. Tins of soup with vegetables and meat. Absolutely beautiful at such times, having not eaten for 14 hours. We had water bottles, carried tins of bully (corned beef), but that meal was one never forgotten. Little did we then know what fate had in store for us! Next day, we travelled in small groups to catch the train at Agrinion for Argos.

The town was packed with British Service personnel, some Army operating the ack-ack guns at the aerodrome had orders to leave. We were on the train 15 minutes before being attacked by dive bombers and fighters. The train stopped. I went to open the door and make a run for it. 'Knocker' Wade, one of ours, grabbed hold of me: 'Stay, you stupid bastard!' He had a way with words! Sure enough, many ran into the fields. Gerry returned and machine-gunned them, some 50 hit, 15 killed. When it quietened, we carried them into Agrinion. Some transport did come out and must have seen what happened.

We carried on walking by night, sheltering by day; safer with hundreds of us making for Argos. After eight days struggle, scrounging drink and food, the Greeks were kind but unsure what tomorrow would bring. In the distance, we saw Argos, rising columns of smoke where Gerry had sunk the ships waiting for us. Walking along the road, six of us in total, an elderly Greek came out beckoning us into his bungalow, gesturing we eat and drink. With him was Grandad, Grandmother, daughter, two granddaughters Rhola and Christine, twelve and fourteen. Both granddaughters spoke good English. But what a meal! Spaghetti, tomatoes and meat (goat or sheep) washed down with red wine. After eight days on hard tack biscuits and bully beef we enjoyed that so much! We must have smelled, for Mama suggested we take a bath. Mama's husband was in the Greek Army, serving on the Albanian border. A tin bath was produced. We filled the copper up from the well at the bottom of the garden, and when the water boiled, the bath was duly filled and tested for the right temperature. We tossed a coin for who would go first. The family never left the room. I took Rhola outside, explaining we'd need privacy, and she spoke in Greek to the family who all burst out laughing, but then left us alone. We emptied and refilled that bath three times, a toss of the coin deciding who would get fresh water.

While bathing, the two girls went into Argos to buy us cigarettes. We had a whip-round, telling them to buy sweets and chocolates for their parents. Coming back with the goods, they warned that German motorcycle troops were in town and at once, everyone was talking excitedly, while Grandad signalled for silence and spoke to us through the girls. He'd listened to the radio, heard that Australians were holding the line at Kalamata where British forces were being evacuated. 'I will take you at nightfall to the pass through the mountain range that leads to Kalamata.' We left at 7pm with torches and lanterns, walking and resting every half hour through mostly olive groves. It was almost midnight when Grandad said: 'There is the pass ahead'. We had walked an estimated 15 miles. We shook hands, hugged goodbye then walked the rest of the night, through the next day, finally making Kalamata to discover about 500 airmen sheltering in a disused brewery. On entering, four airmen at a table took name, rank and number. A Sunderland aircraft came in every hour, landing in the bay, taking fifty men off. Fifty names were called

and you sheltered, waiting at the dockside. As one party left, another assembled. Eventually they took seventy, stripped to underpants. It was hot in Egypt. We were there 2 days, our names not called. We had two bad air-raids with civilian casualties making our presence unpopular. It was a beautiful place, but a ridiculous situation to be in. With a crowd of us still there, one amongst us Flt/Sgt Wrightson, Wireless Operator/Air Gunner, saw a light flashing out at sea: 'It's the Navy! They're coming in to get us.' We ran to the dock to drop its gang-plank. Then taking us out of the bay in threes and fours to a waiting troop-ship, we laid our legs across one another amongst 3,000 troops on the Delwarra. Come dawn, I looked around. There were 7 merchant ships, 5 cruisers, 12 destroyers, and it wasn't long before we were attacked by high flying and dive bombers, the first hitting a merchant ship while two cruise ships, one either side, held her upright until they took 1500 men off, with some 500 lost. Late afternoon they hit another, same procedure, with most off. When the cruisers pulled away, the ships sank. Second day a bomb dropped that blew a hole in our side and we listed over. The Captain announced he was shutting the hold to save the ship with 250 men inside. Our speed dropped, the convoy left us with one cruiser, and we limped into Alexandria harbour a day later with all docked ships blasting their sirens. On the dockside, benches were set up and WVS women and Salvation Army served hot drinks, rolls, bowls of soup, cigarettes, sweets, you name it. Bath, change of clothing, pay and a month's leave.

November 1941/1942

We were in Egypt being re-equipped. They flew by hops to Palembang, Sumatra then the Dutch East Indies. Besides crew, they took tradesmen, a skeleton staff sufficient to get airborne on arrival. Assisted and working with the Dutch Air Force who went on raids on approaching Japanese landing craft. The aerodrome was defended by Indonesian forces who put up no resistance when Jap paratroopers landed at dawn. Some 80 of 211 Squadron personnel got away, making it to Java. Remaining ground staff who hadn't flown with the advance party to Palembang went by troop ship. We had one naval cruiser escort. It always amazed me how around the world in different theatres of war all hell is let loose, and here we were lying sunbathing in the Indian Ocean listening to Vera Lynn singing: 'We'll Meet Again ...'

We disembarked at Oosthaven, Sumatra, 1600 hours Friday 13 February 1942: 'unlucky for some'. We board a train, with Palembang next stop ... not so! Approximately three hours on the train stops and we're ordered to dismount, lining up outside a small railway station. We are addressed by our Squadron Adjutant, Flt/Lt Bright known affectionately as 'Bright Eyes'. Wearing spectacles, an ex-schoolmaster, he is loved and respected by every PoW who unfortunately were in the same camps as him. Meanwhile, at the station he informs us that Japanese forces have landed at the other end of the island. The train driver refuses to go further. We march to a sugar plantation where we spent a night in one of the warehouses, with no grub available, so we consume our emergency rations. Next morning, we commandeer every available transport and at speed make for Oosthaven, hoping the Yoma troop ship is still there. We made it back to the ship where the Captain said he would wait until dusk for stragglers. Weighing anchor, he set sail for Batavia, sailing close to land in shallow water, afraid of submarine detection. We made it mid-morning next day and Bright Eyes informed us we were to march to a Dutch Army barracks on the other side of town to be billeted ... We had two weeks at the barracks and looking back it was hard to believe it happened. We were actually paid by the Dutch Military Command and a guilder a day colonial pay extra; Guilders in those days about two shillings. But they didn't know what to do with us, reporting each day at 8am, with it being a supply base with no planes, no equipment, and sufficient staff. But then the Japs landed. There was a huge sea battle off Java. Six British destroyers actually sailed between the landing barges picking them off. Heavy Japanese battleships from a distance of 15 miles picked off the destroyers one by one, ignoring the fact they were hitting their own troops, estimating they could lose a third of their invasion forces and still take Java ... which as history records, they did! Day after day, steamship 'Orcades' berthed in Batavia and we boarded her bound for Australia, believing we could get away from Java. We must have numbered 150 of 211 Squadron. Bright Eyes approached our gathering: 'There is a Yank auxiliary unit holding the approach bridge. The Captain asks for 100 men to leave the ship to let Dutch women and children board'. Every one of 211 Squadron followed Bright Eyes off that ship. We were going to Jamis in the hills where all British Forces would make a stand. Ye Gods! Brave words indeed ...

While waiting at the railway station, a Dutch Army convoy stopped to replenish their water supply. They gave us permission to travel with them as they were going near Jamis. It was an Infantry Company. They were going post haste to join the main Dutch forces engaging the Japs, having guarded an area of coastline where they might have landed. But on the road we were fired on by machine guns. We sheltered under the lorry, lying behind the wheel. Paratroopers blocked the road ahead. We had rifles and ammo and fired into the trees where they were hiding. Knocker, a regular defence Gunner, reminded us not to waste ammo. We were all tense. Dutch soldiers lobbed grenades where enemy fire was coming from. God, I thought, I'm glad I joined the Air Force! Eventually, it fell quiet. Dutch medics came round, seeing to the wounded. A Dutch Officer spoke to us: 'Are you glad you joined our convoy! My Wireless Operator has been in touch with HQ and information is that British are assembled at Jamis'. Later they dropped us off, pointing us in the right direction and we climbed upwards and upwards, walking a mile or so before finding the camp. There were hundreds of airmen assembled. It was here we were to make a stand. However, Gibson, Knocker Wade, Bob Kerswell and myself had a chinwag, deciding for our sins to pinch a truck and make for the coast to persuade a fisherman to take us to an off-shore island. We picked a 30-cwt truck with a nearly full tank, but as we were pulling away a Flying Officer signalled we stop. Bob drove on and as we passed, the Officer shouted: 'I'll have you court-martialled!' We passed thousands of Dutch troops carrying white flags, some with Japanese flags, and eventually made Tjilatjap where airmen sat on either side of the road. 'What's the gen, fellas?' 'What's your unit?' We said 211. 'There's loads of your fellas on the 'drome'. Following instructions, we found the 'drome and there was Bright Eyes, also Sqd/Ldr Padre Rourke who was to be remembered as one of the finest, bravest men who ever lived!

Padre Rourke took off his uniform and changed it for an airman's. He seemed pretty wised up, knowing they separated senior Officers from other ranks. The Padre said his place was amongst the men and he slept in our billets. I saw him when a prisoner, take a rifle off a Japanese guard who was beating the hell out of an English prisoner. The Padre took the rifle, stood to attention, bowed to the guard, and handed him the rifle back. The guard stood flabbergasted, raised his rifle to hit the Padre, but then stopped. 'Muchigo' he said, meaning 'come with me'. He took the Padre to the guardhouse. This was at Yar Mari Camp, Surabaya, where there were at least 3,000 prisoners mostly Dutch. Rumours spread round the camp like wildfire. They will shoot him, beat him up ... About three hours later, Padre returned to his hut with a packet of Japanese fags and a bag of fruit. The interpreter said the Camp Commandant, a Major in the Emperor of Nippon's Imperial Forces, was a true Bushido and admired the courage of the Padre. From that day, some of the guards even saluted him. At Malang camp when we were made to witness the execution of four prisoners, I said to Padre Rourke: 'Where is your God now? He let that happen'. He replied: 'What you witnessed this day is not God's work, but man's'.

At the aerodrome at Tjilatjap we met several of our old comrades, so decided to wait our fate with them. Bright Eyes told me to destroy photographs I had, about 150. Also my Log Book. The first few days we saw few Jap soldiers, doing pretty much as we liked. For our own safety, we were advised to stay on camp at night. I made friends with a Dutch girl, Pam de Bly, and met her family. When we were eventually moved from the drome, I left her with souvenirs I accumulated on my travels. Also medals and a cup I won in boxing and swimming whilst in the Forces. She promised to send them to my parent's address. I heard no more. Who knows what fate awaited them, for eventually white Dutch women too were interned. Lt Colonel Soni, a Japanese Camp Commandant, once said if the women had fought for Java they would never have lost it. Soni lived in England at one time, spoke perfect English. He was one of the better ones.

A company of Japs turned up one morning at the 'drome and everything changed dramatically. 750 of us were put on a train and taken to Malang. We travelled all day while the Japs treated us well. When the train pulled in at a station they let us buy refreshments. Most of us had money. One Jap Sergeant told us to hide it as when we got to Malang the Kempe-Tai (Gestapo, Secret Police) would take it from us. Our escort to Malang were the Jap Imperial Guards who actually fought taking Java. They treated us with respect and some played cards with us on the train. Many times I thought of them, thinking they can't all be as bad as this bastard who is kicking me as I lay on the ground! We arrived at Malang ... and then things really did change ... and for the worse!

As a PoW I was shipped to Haroku Island. 2,000 Dutch and English. At one time we were burying 15-20 men each day with dysentery, beri-beri, and malnutrition. I left the Island with the first batch of sick to return to Java. At that time, 400 were buried there, 950 on our ship. By the time we reached Java, 300 were dead and thrown overboard without ceremony. When we docked, I was taken to De la Rosa Hospital, Batavia, unconscious when I went in. I awoke thinking I had died and gone to heaven for I was in bed with clean sheets and above me a fan spinning. I weighed 7 stone, 3 lbs. and was there three months, to leave weighing 10 stone, 7 lbs. It was brilliant, the only Japs we saw were Medics.

I then went to Sumatra working on building a railway. They only speak of the Thai railway. In Sumatra, they built a railway from end to end ... Pakenbaroe to Palembang. Workers started from both ends and met in the middle. At one time, building a bridge over the Inderhari, we were 60 feet above water. 650 men lost their lives building that bridge. I was working with an Aussie who came from Tasmania. I only remember him as Blue. Going to work one morning he said: 'Abbie, if that bastard sticks his bayonet in my arse today, I'm jumping!' He did, and took the Jap with him. I last saw him when they surfaced, he still had hold of the Jap. The current was fast, both were never seen again.

All survivors of Haroku worked on that railway. Of the original 2,000 that went to Haroku at the end of the war, 80 survived. I had malaria 28 times on Sumatra. We worked in gangs of ten, if seven were sick the gang got rations for three. No work, no food. We were counted out of the gate to calculate next day's rations. Sometimes fit men helped the not-so-fit to work to boost the rations. I never made it to the link up, the meeting of the railway lines, as I went back to Base Camp with dysentery and malaria. Normally they would not have bothered, but it was June 1945 and for them the writing was on the wall.

19 August 1945: *a Major, two Staff Sergeants and 100 paratroopers dropped in on our Camp. The next day planes dropped food supplies and medicine. Suffice to say I was one of the 'Fortunates'. I spent 26 weeks in RAF Hospital when I returned home, and was discharged on medical grounds. It broke my heart for I loved the RAF life and had intended to sign on. I have had a wonderful life since thanks to my Betty and family.*

Gathering Sunset



Len turned 93 in May 2013. His memory was failing, but he continued well enough and safe in care, though missing Betty greatly. Her health declined. The role of Carer had fallen increasingly on him at their home in Lowestoft. She departed this life on Friday 14 January 2011 after a long illness. The couple are seen left, sharing a happy day on their Diamond Wedding Anniversary, December 2007; courtesy Abbs family. Leonard William Abbs died peacefully on the morning of 28 March 2014, aged 93. As the years passed and their five daughters flourished, Len had come to refer good humouredly to his home-life as 'petticoat government', with Betty cast as OC and Maz Second-in-Command. Maz and her four sisters were by his bedside at the end.

Len played a very big part in keeping the Squadron operational. No mean achievement. Not only that: he was one among some 340 of the Squadron's Ground Crew to be taken prisoner on Java in 1942, and one of only 159 to survive the next three years of captivity.

Right: Richard Forder, Peter Witts, Len Abbs ... at Oulton Memorial



... NEWSFLASH ...

Bomber Command Veterans sought for Memorial Unveiling



The Memorial Spire is one element of the new International Bomber Command Centre.

Every living veteran who served in Bomber Command during World War Two is being sought for the unveiling of this new Memorial.

The International Bomber Command Centre is being built in Lincolnshire, known as Bomber County in the war because it had so many RAF Bases.

The Centre is due to open in 2016, but a Memorial Spire has already been erected at the site in Lincoln.

Organisers want to invite every veteran to the unveiling on 2 October 2015. They already have names of 900 veterans, but believe there are more still to be identified.

Almost half of the 125,000 Bomber Command lost their lives – more than today's entire RAF personnel. Bombing German cities, including Dresden, killed between 300,000 and 600,000 people.

Nicky Barr from the International Bomber Command Centre says they have made some new contacts: 'A lot of the veterans we've now been able to invite weren't on any comprehensive database or Squadron lists', she said. 'We've picked up thus far about 50 that come under that category. We suspect there's probably, at an estimate, another 100 out there.'

The design of the Centre is based on the shape of a Lancaster bomber, while the spire stands higher than the *Angel of the North* and will be surrounded by a 'wall of names' recording the 55,573 men who lost their lives serving in Bomber Command. Other elements of the Centre will include an exhibition and education space called 'The Chadwick Centre', an amphitheatre and acres of landscaped gardens.

All Bomber Command veterans are urged to register their names
by emailing: events@internationalbcc.co.uk,
or by writing to: The IBCC, 13 Cherry Holt Road, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9LA.



IN MEMORY

Australian Pilot William Searle Vale Flight Lieutenant Alfred Edward David Ashcroft



Flight Lieutenant Alfred Edward David Ashcroft, 24, (seen left) Navigator and Wireless Operator from Surrey; was killed alongside Australian Pilot William Searle Vale, 27, when their Mosquito came down in a field near Drieslinter on 6 October 1944. They were returning to RAF Swannington, Norfolk, after a raid on Bremen and Dortmund in Germany. Alfred Ashcroft's medals were sent to his mother in a small box complete with a letter from the King.

A few months earlier, American Pilot Olger Ivan Aal, 21, was killed when his Thunderbolt aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft guns while strafing a German airfield in nearby Melkwezer.

The sacrifice of these three airmen fighting to free people from German occupation touched the hearts of villagers so much that they are remembered still decades later.

Relatives of Flt/Lt Alfred Edward David Ashcroft were traced after an appeal by the Sunday Express, a newspaper approached for help by the Belgian authorities who contacted welfare charity SSAFA, formerly known as Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association. They had been struggling to trace relatives of Mr Ashcroft until a story was published in February and Wing Commander David Bramley from the Surrey Branch of SSAFA was contacted, allowing him to get in touch with a niece, Carolyn Mason, of North Devon, and a cousin, Chris Toase from Gloucestershire. Officials in Linter, the new name given to seven villages including Drieslinter in the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium, desperately needed to trace relatives of the war heroes to invite them to attend an unveiling of a plaque honouring them.

The family of Mr Vale were easy to find. They still owned the family farm where he'd lived in Picola, north of Victoria. Relatives of Mr Aal were also quickly traced in Washington, Minnesota and North Dakota.

It was an emotional moment as relatives of the three wartime heroes gathered for the unveiling of the plaque. Mrs Mason said: *'My uncle, who I never met, feels so much more real to me after coming here. Before, I just had a few bits of paper and some medals in a box. Now I feel closer to him I can fully understand his story.'*

Seen left: Australian Grace Harding, whose brother William Searle Vale died in the crash.

'Seeing the plaque for the first time with Grace standing by my side felt right, as that was how Alfred and William were when they flew together ... and died.'

Mr Ashcroft had joined the RAF as a trainee Pilot in April 1939, but became an Air Gunner, forming a successful partnership with Battle of Britain ace: Squadron Leader Edward Wolfe, which gained him a Commission and a Distinguished Flying Cross.



After retraining as a Navigator and Wireless Operator for the RAF's new Mosquito aircraft, he flew 95 operational and training flights with Mr Vale.

Mrs Mason said she had to sit down when she heard of the plans for a Memorial after all these years. *'It was very touching and humbling to find so many people in this village still care about what, for us, had been a family tragedy.'*

Mrs Harding, 82, of Nithalia, Victoria, said: *'I still remember the day we got the telegram saying he was missing in action and the next day another one saying his plane had crashed'*.

Lisette Wouters, of Linter Remembrance Group, said: *'We are very proud that the families of the three airmen are all here today'*.



Taken from the Sunday Express: 10 May 2015

A Quiet Corner



In the second half of 1944 Flight Lieutenant Alfred Edward David Ashcroft was flying with 157 Squadron from Swannington, intruding over German night-fighter airfields. On 6 October 1944, he failed to return from a sortie to Dortmund. Mosquito NFXIX MM678 RS-A came down in Belgium, cause unknown. P/O William S. Vale RAAF was also lost: the plane crashing in the village of Drieslinter, now known as LINTER.

At my Grandma's house, the picture of Bill in uniform in the garden sat next to the mantle clock. It always intrigued me. It was the unspoken and yet daily sad reminder. I would have been a teenager when I wrote this poem.

THE PHOTO



Dedicated to:
William (Bill) Searle Vale
Royal Australian Pilot Officer

The clock ticks on the mantle
As my life is passing by
I stare at the faded old photo
It always makes me cry.....
You left me in the prime of life
You turned and walked away
I stood as if tied to the ground
Silently begging you to stay
A consoling arm was not enough
My soul was torn in two
And when that dreadful message came
My fears had all come true
'Killed in action for God and Country'
The war we may have won
But this can never rectify
The early loss of my son
And though my eyes are growing dim
My life was cut short too
And I realise my living will just begin
When God reunites me with you.
... Your loving Mother

Copyright: Helen Rankin, circa 1977



Final Postings

Death will be 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 died late 2005
- 192 Squadron** Ted Gomersall died 30 November 2004
- 192 Squadron** Hank Cooper DSO, DFC died 2005.
- 192 Squadron** Michael Simpson W/Op & F/O died on the Isle of Man
- 192 Squadron** Richie' Richards Rear Airgunner, flew Wellingtons. Son, F L Richards, died August 2009, both members of the Association.
- 192 Squadron** Air Commodore Vic Willis, C.O, RAF Foulsham, died 30 July 2006.
- 192 Squadron** Group Captain Jack Short died December 2006. Association Chairman till 1996
- 192 Squadron** W.O (later P/O) A G McEachern RCAF died 15 August 2007, Saskatchewan aged 85
- 192 Squadron** LAC Harris, Ground Crew died 15 August 2007. Grandson James Kerslake: Association member.
- 192 Squadron** Wing Commander David Donaldson, DSO*DFC died 15 January 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. Roger Dobson – Association Chairman from May 2014.
- 192 Squadron** W/O John Rhys Powell, Rear Gunner flying Wellingtons, died 1992
- 192 Squadron** Sgt George Richards, Tail Gunner, posted missing 4/5 July 1944. Remembered by niece Cheryl Cairns nee Colgan & sister Agnes Colgan.
- 192 Squadron** F/Lt Henry Victor Vinnell (Vic) posted missing 26/27 Nov 1944. Remembered by wartime fiancée Nina Chessall & daughter Janine Bradley, Association Secretary.
- 192 Squadron** P/O Jack Glen Millan Fisher, Royal Canadian Air Force, posted missing 26/27 Nov 1944. Remembered by sisters Audrey & Gloria and family.
- 192 Squadron** Flt/Lt Albert Victor (Vic) Parker died November 14 2010. Remembered by daughter Ann Felsky.
- 192 Squadron** Spec/Op (Wop) John Henry BALL, Association member for many years, died 23 April 2009. Remembered by daughter, Susan Lawford.
- 192 Squadron** George Lowe, originally 1473 Flight before becoming 192 Squadron, Special Signals, Foulsham. Died 24 March 2011.
- 192 Squadron** F/O Alan Thomsett died 27 May 2011. Flew with 1473 Flight during Battle of the Beams, 1941, then as part of No. 80 Wing. Missed by daughter Anne, and Association members.
- 192 Squadron** Eric Clarkson, Wireless Operator/Navigator, died beginning of 2012. Remembered by daughter Jenny Bentley & friend Dennis Wildman.
- 192 Squadron** Sqn/Ldr Cecil William Cornish, died 19 August 2011. Flt/Sgt at Foulsham. Initially with 98 Squadron, he was a survivor of the sinking of TS Lancastria.
- 192 Squadron** Flt/Sgt John Eggert (2202199) aka 'Shorty'. Died 28 April 2006
- 192 Squadron** Sgt Hugh Holm, Radio Mechanic, remembered with love by Phil & Vera James, especially for kindness to them while holidaying in Canada.

- 192 Squadron** Macdonald, Kenneth Wynne CD, Colonel, Stan Forsyth's Skipper; died 12 February 2014. Missed by family and all who served with him.
- 192 Squadron** F/Sgt Earl Skjonsberg, mid-upper gunner on DT.O, in crew of Phil James MBE and remembered by him. Died October 2014.
- 199 Squadron** F/O Ed Emmerson, Navigator to Flt/Lt Paddy Passmore DFC, Canadian
- 199 Squadron** Arthur Fitch, former RAF Bomber, died July 2006
- 199/171 Sqn** Group Captain George Cubby, MBE, FRMets died 2005. Remembered by wife Betty and Roy Smith, only surviving member of his crew.
- 171 Squadron** Joe Brogan, Halifax pilot died 2004, remembered by widow Sheila
- 171 Squadron** Arthur Adcock died February 2008 & Syd Love, Canadian crew member, died April 2008. *'Friends to the end!'*
- 171 Squadron** Len Fanstone died 13 January 2010. Missed by Harry Freegard & wife, in touch since his return to Canada in 1946.
- 171/102 Sqn** Ken Ratcliffe Nav/Bomb Aimer died March 8 2010 age 86. Flew Halifax & Lancasters, in touch with crew all their lives.
- 171 Squadron** Flight Engineer Andrew Melvin Robertson died 1998. Remembered by son Colin Robertson, Association member.
- 171 Squadron** Wop/Ag Wilf Thompson died 1991. Remembered by son Peter, Association member.
- 171 Squadron** Warrant Officer Edwin Moore died 15 May 2014. Remembered by son Ian & family.
- 171 Squadron** F/Lt Charles 'Chuck' Warner, Edwin Moore's pilot, died 6 July 1965.
- 157 Squadron** Bryan Gale Flt/Lt died 2 January 2009. Missed by daughter Valerie & son Chris
- 169 Squadron** Fred Herbert, Navigator/Radar, died 15 October 2010, remembered by friend colleague & pilot John Beeching
- 169 Squadron** Flt/Lt Bert Vine, former Navigator of Sqdn/Ldr. James A. Wright, 'A' Flight Commander, both of whom are no longer with us, remembered by 169 pilot John Beeching
- 214 Squadron** Geoff Liles, Pilot, died 4 March 2006
- 214 Squadron** Mr J Creech died April 2006
- 214 Squadron** Don Austin, remembered by Les Bostock
- 214 Squadron** Air Vice Marshall Jack Furner died 1 Jan 2007
- 214 Squadron** Sqdn Leader/Flight Commander Bob Davies died June 2007
- 214 Squadron** Bill Howard died October 2007
- 214 Squadron** Flt/Lt Blair died Sept 2007
- 214 Squadron** John Hereford, Spec Op.
- 214 Squadron** Robert Moorby W/Op died 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 3/4 March 1945, remembered by nephew Leslie Barker.
- 214 Squadron** Alan Mercer died 6 June 2009
- 214 Squadron** Warrant Officer Gordon Wing, 'Howie', died Nov 2009 age 87. Rear Gunner, Eric Morrison's crew, Stirlings/Fortresses; Founder member of Airgunners' Association.
- 214 Squadron** Robert Louie William Darracott, Navigator, died May 8 2010, 94 years
- 214 Squadron** Flying Officer Reginald Coates completed whole of 2nd Tour of Ops as Bomber Pilot in March 1945. Died 10 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** [Flt/Sgt George V Cox](#) died 21 July 2011. Flight Engineer in crew of S/Ldr Miller DFC.
- 214 Squadron** Squadron Leader [William 'Bill' Doy DFC](#) died 28 November 2011.
- 214 Squadron** [P/O Peter Witts 223/214/462 RAAF, Air Gunner](#), commissioned after the war. 1925 – 2011. Missed by family and friends, remains in our hearts, a Legend.
- 214 Squadron** [George Fisher, Navigator](#) with No.214 REM & No.206 Squadrons 1942-1946, died 25 Sept 2012
- 214 Squadron** [Flying Officer William 'Bill' Foskett](#) died 21 December 2011. Missed by wife Pauline, 2 sons, 4 grandchildren, good friend Tony Cooper.
- 214 Squadron** 'Doug' [Douglas, Tail Gunner on Fortresses and ex POW](#), died in Nelson, New Zealand, 2013.
- 214 Squadron** [Sgt Gerhard Heilig, Pilot Officer in post war RAFVR](#); died 24 October 2014 in Austria. Loved and missed by wife Sissy, together with all who knew him. A true Gentleman!
- 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, died 13 May 2006.
- 223 Squadron** [F/Lt Jack Brigham DFC](#) died 2008. Original Captain as 223 reformed. Flew Liberator TS524/6G-0; 36 ops. Remembered by Len Davies, Waist Gunner, only surviving member of crew.
- 223 Squadron** [F/L/Sir John Briscoe](#) died a few years ago.
- 223 Squadron** [2nd Pilot Mervyn Utah](#), Canadian in late Tony Morris's crew, died 8 Nov 2010.
- 223 Squadron** [James Edward Bratten](#): 26.11.1922 – 6.11.2001. Andrew Barron's crew.
- 223 Squadron** [Mick Stirrop](#) died March 2012.
- 223 Squadron** [Flying Officer Reggie Wade, Navigator](#), died Christmas Eve 2012. Reggie served in the crew of Squadron Leader Carrington, 'B' Flight Commander.
- 223 Squadron** [Air Gunner John McLaren](#) died 31.3.2013, leaving wife Margaret and son Graham.
- 223 Squadron** [F/Lt Navigator Ron Johnson](#) died August 2013. Missed by wife Betty & Richard Forder.
- 223 Squadron** [W/Mechanic Desmond Pye, Ground Crew, B Flight](#) died 3/4 May 2014, remembered by daughter Virginia Cranfield and family.
- 223 Squadron** [Flt/Lt John R. Maunsell DFC, Navigator with Flt/Lt Allnutt crew](#), died beginning of 2015.
- 223 Squadron** [Flt/Lt Robert Oliver Belton, Pilot](#) died 11 January 2015. Remembered by his family with love.
- 23 Squadron** [Flt/Lt Johnny Rivas](#), died 2 January 2013.
- 23 Squadron** [Wing Commander Phil Russell](#) died end November 2012.
- 23 Squadron** 'Bud' [Badley](#), died beginning of 2013
- 141 Squadron** [Flt/Lt Doug Gregory DFC, Pilot](#) died 2015 aged 92 yrs. Missed by wife Liz, son & daughter.
- 157 Squadron** [W/Cdr K. H. P. Beauchamp DSO*, DFC](#), Commanding Officer 157 Squadron, Swannington, died 1996 aged 80 yrs. Missed by son Paul, Association member.
- 515 Squadron** [Flt/Sgt Reg Fidler, Navigator w Townsley crew on Mosquito](#) died 4 August 2015. Remembered in love by daughter Jenny and husband Martin, with stepsons David & Laurie.
- 88 Squadron** [F/Lt Len Dellow](#) died Christmas/New Year 2006-7; veteran of 88 Squadron, 2 Group & Rear Gunner/Wireless Operator on Bostons.
- 49 Squadron** [Len Bradfield](#) died Nov 2005. PoW w pilot Johnny Moss, shot down in Lancaster ED625. Nursed to health by Nora, who he married.

- 462 RAAF Sqn** F/O H .R. Anderson DFC 'Andy' died 6 April 2008 in New South Wales.
- 462 Squadron** Donald Hulbert died October 2009.
- 462 Squadron** Pilot Bruce Drinkwater died 2 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 Mosquitoes with 2 Group.
- ? Corporal Charles 'Fred' Savage died 18 Dec 2011 - Wireless Operator, serving in No 2 Heavy Mobile W/T Section in France, 1940.

Dates for your Diary

2016 REUNION – Friday 6, Saturday 7, Sunday 8 May

Please ensure you put the dates in your diaries now.

PLEASE NOTE: We are booked at **THE NORWICH HOLIDAY INN** for the main Saturday evening dinner 7th May 2016. 10 rooms have been put aside for us, but it will be first come first served. I have already booked in to be certain. We would advise anyone else wanting to stay where the evening dinner is being held to do the same. The 3 course meal will be £25. Rooms are £80 B&B.

They are extremely helpful and responsive to our needs.

We will have **THE HALIFAX SUITE** with our own private bar ... and a dance floor! So be prepared those of you who have the urge, as at this year's Reunion, to get up and dance. The room is spacious, and they are laying on a lot of extras for us free of charge, so I'm hoping we might finally have found a home for the future. They pride themselves on their aviation history, and their decoration reflects this.

Those flying need to know **NORWICH HOLIDAY INN** is right by the airport. Those with cars, there is plenty of free parking.

CONTACT DETAILS: Jade Fromings, Conference & Events Supervisor, Holiday Inn Norwich North, Cromer Rd., Norwich NR6 6JA. Telephone: 01603 410544. Email: events@hinorwich.com

I would suggest booking early to avoid disappointment. Mention you are with the RAF 100 Group Association Reunion party.

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CONTACT DETAILS FOR STUART BORLASE : Living History Film Productions

For veterans willing to be filmed sharing their wartime experiences

67 Woodvale Drive
Woodvale,
Western Australia 6026

livingfilm@amnet.net.au

Stuart would love to hear from anyone wishing to take part in his Project which presents a wonderful opportunity to tell your story, and preserve the history and its people for the future.

100 Group Order of Battle

SQD	AIRCRAFT	1st 100 GROUP OPERATION	BASE	SORTIES, LOSSES ROLL
192 USAAF 7 th PRG	Mosquito II, B.IV, B.XVI, Halifax IV Wellington B.III Lightnings P-38	Dec 1943 Aug 44 – March 45	Foulsham	2171/5 Losses Electronic Intel/Elint
141	Beaufighters VI, Mosquito II, VI, XXX	Dec 1943	West Raynham	1214/11 Losses 80 EA, 58 Trains, 7 Ships Dest
219/239	Mosquito II, VI, XXX	20 Jan 1944	West Raynham	1394/9 Losses 51 En AC Dest
515	Mosquito II, VI	3 March 1944	Little Snoring	1366/21 losses 29 En AC Dest
169	Mosquito II, VI, XIX	20 Jan 1944	Little Snoring, Great Massingham	1247/13 Losses 25 En AC + 1 V1 Dest
214	Fortress II, III	20/21 April 1944	Sculthorpe, Oulton	1225/13 Losses Electronic Jamming
199	Stirling III, Halifax III	1 May 1944	North Creak	1707/6 Losses Electronic Jamming
157	Mosquito XIX, XXX	May 1944	Swannington West Malling	1336/6 Losses 37 En AC +39 V1 Dest
85	Mosquito XII, XVII	5/6 June 1944	Swannington West Malling	1190/7 Losses 71 En AC+30 V1 Dest
23	Mosquito VI	5/6 July 1944	Little Snoring	1067/8 Losses 18 En AC Dest
223	Liberator VI, Fortress II, III	Sept 1944	Oulton	625/3 Losses Electronic Jamming
171	Stirling II, Halifax III	15 Sept 1944	North Creak	1583/4 Losses Electronic Jamming
462 RAAF	Halifax III	1 January 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

Created by Janine Bradley

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