



Confound & Destroy

The magazine of RAF 100 Group Association



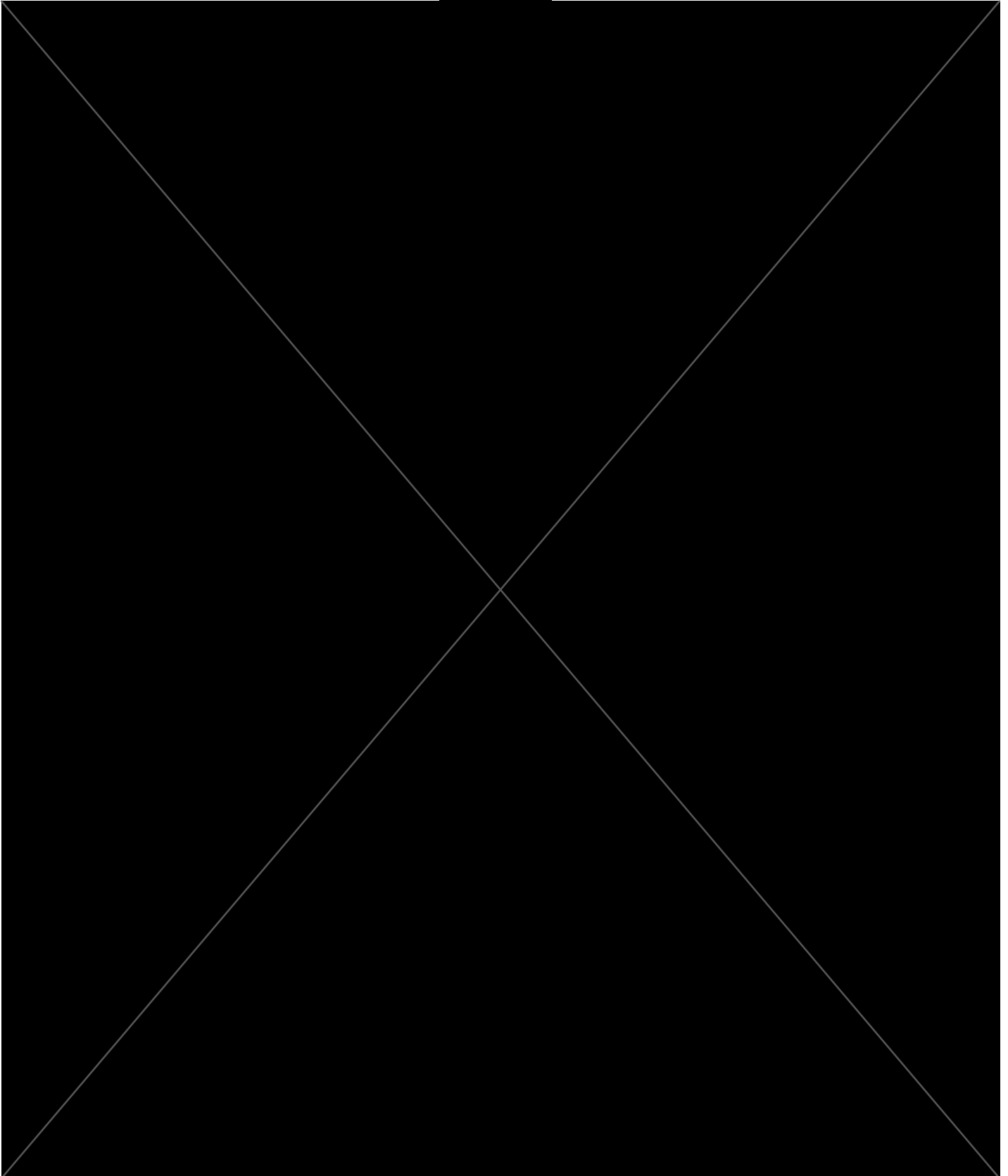
RAF 100 Group Association Chairman Roger Dobson.
RAF 100 Group Association Secretary Stuart Borlase.

Email: raf100groupassociation@gmail.com
Website: www.raf100groupassociation.org

Home to Memorabilia of RAF 100 Group
City of Norwich Aviation Museum
Old Norwich Road, Horsham St Faith, Norwich, Norfolk NR10 3JF
Telephone: 01603 893080

www.cnam.org.uk

RAF 100 Group Association Committee



EDITOR'S PAGE



Hello Everyone,

Well, this is an issue of firsts I am sad to say. This is the first issue of “Confound and Destroy” in which our special lady Janine has not written her regular piece – and there is no voice either from our good friend Stephen Hutton in the United States.

They, along with their regular contributions, so faithfully written over many years. On behalf of our entire 100 Group Association family, I want to tell them as they read these words, of how much they are valued and respected and how much they will be missed. Thank you both, for everything you have done in helping build our Association into what it is today and for sharing your knowledge in the books you have both written. We are indeed, in a variety of ways, all of us, ‘Kindred Spirits’.

In June, and within the space of twelve days, we have had to say farewell to another three of our Veteran family;

- Peggy Pollard from Surrey, who passed away on June 6th, just after her 98th Birthday. She served at Belaugh Hall at 100 Group HQ.
- Dorothy Hudson on June 13th, who was “a Met Girl”, based at the Swannington Tower complex, and
- ‘JP’, Mr James Ostler from Arlington Heights in the US, who passed away on June 17th aged 101! He flew as a Navigator with the 36th Bomb Squadron.

As I write Covid is raging through the Eastern States of Australia, particularly New South Wales and Victoria. In the greater Sydney area, lockdowns will continue right through until the end of September and Melbourne’s are now going through their 6th lockdown (200+ days *in total* and counting) which now includes a curfew! And now New Zealand, a Country that has been free of restrictions for 6 months, is also in various stages of lockdown but most of the Country now is breathing a little easier!

The World at large seems to be in a real mess with weird and wild weather events happening in many different places causing destruction and grief and now of course the debacle in Afghanistan that has filled our News over the last couple of weeks, but I’ve just heard that a Qatar Airlines flight has left, Kabul for Doha, the first since 30th August, with 30 US citizens, a number of Canadians and others, a total of 113 persons. This effort thanks to US Veteran’s groups, former Special Forces personnel, Non-Governmental Organisations, Non-profit organisations, Christian relief and aid organisations, all coming together to make this happen. How remarkable! A beam of light in a dark time.

But I mentioned in the last magazine that I would like to relate the story of one of the most remarkable stories of courage, selflessness and heroism ever to come out of wartime. This particular one I have had to hold off for the time being.

There are a lot of amazing personal accounts like this, and especially in Bomber Command and I am reminded of the story of Tom Scotland, a Halifax pilot from Western Australian, who on a night training exercise over the English countryside, prior to being posted, experienced multi engine failure in his Halifax Mk2. After ordering his crew to bail out, held his aircraft in the air with rapidly bleeding airspeed, just long enough to avoid a small village looming through the darkness. The aircraft impacted

the ground heavily and ploughed through a stone wall at the other end. The Halifax and stone wall were totally destroyed, but Tom survived – and just walked away! There are those even today who remain convinced he should have received a medal for this, but that was not to be. Some of these stories I would like to retell over future issues, however, issues of copyright are now even more important, so permissions must be confirmed. But stay tuned ...

Finally, in closing, I would like to pass on my warmest greetings to our President Phil James and to our very special Centenarian Barb Bradshaw and their families and to **all** our other Veterans and their families, in England, Ireland, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the United States and South Africa. There are too many of you to mention by name here, but we value and appreciate each and every one of you.

Stuart.

A little bit of Housekeeping...

Dear Members,

Over the years when you have written in asking questions, seeking answers to various matters relating to 100 Group, looking for more information of a family member who served etc or just making comments or offering encouragement, we have published your letters in the magazine. The assent to doing so was often implied but in good faith and there has never been an issue. So, thank you all for that. Our magazine is one of the many good things about our Association.

However, with new Copyright sensitivities, permissions must now be given before your correspondence can be printed. So, when you are writing to us, could you please **confirm** that you are happy for your letter (and/or accompanying written piece) to be published. I will shoot you an email if I'm unsure, but your help in this will be very much appreciated .

With thanks,
Your Editor...

Items for the magazine (Newspaper cuttings and articles etc) should be sent to:

**Linda & Arthur Reid,
23 Esk Valley Terrace, Eskbank,
Edinburgh EH22 3FT**

Normal Postal Mail to:

**Ms Janine Harrington
7 Ashley Court, Filey,
North Yorkshire YO14 9LS**

Email Correspondence and Electronic articles for the magazine as usual to:

raf100groupassociation@gmail.com

Or, if you would like to reach me at my personal email you are most welcome to do so. You can contact me at:

mosquitobv1@gmail.com

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



Dear Friends,

Here in Cumbria the summer is drawing to a close as the nights become longer and the temperature drops. It has been a strange time with some glorious sunshine alternating with heavy rain and flooding. In the background Covid still constrains our lives. Thankfully as more people are vaccinated, we are returning to a semblance of normality. I am conscious that for some of our readers on the other side of the world the winter will be ending although the challenges of Covid are shared by us all.

Despite being forced to cancel our May Reunion for the second year running because of Covid, our Association has been active. Our thanks and congratulations to Nigel and Claire for their brilliant project management and fundraising for wonderful Stirling Bomber sculpture that has been officially unveiled at North Creak. We hope that North Creak will be a must visit destination at future Reunions. Plans for May 2022 are now well advanced.

Nearer to home I have been busy engaging in my other hobby – politics. I have fought two by-elections for our County Council this year. After five attempts over a span of fifty years I have at last been elected. I will be sworn in tomorrow, September the 1st by the County Council Chief Executive. I must confess to you that one helpful dimension to my campaign was my involvement in RAF 100 Group which I felt I should be open about. Especially when my opponent justifiably pointed out that he had served 25 years in the army. Politics sometimes has a bad name but not in this recent campaign – all was civility and respect. So much so that my opponent has asked me to speak about RAF 100 Group at the next meeting of the Royal British Legion.

Another pleasing development concerns my son Richard's rowing. Or more accurately his rowing scull. At university, Richard was a considerable oarsman, winning pretty well everything at Scottish and the British Universities before representing Scotland at the Commonwealth Games. His rowing scull was a twenty-first birthday present which he rowed in the UK and then on the Shannon. When he returned, I looked after the boat in Anglesey for twenty years. We have less room at our new house, and I suggested he should arrange a new home, Richard decided to gift the boat to our local rowing club Talkin' Tarn. They have spent Covid refurbishing the boat and are arranging a naming ceremony. The Rowing Club proposed to name the boat "Richard Dobson". My son felt this was a little over the top given he is young and hopefully has a long life ahead of him. The happy compromise is to name the boat "Flt Lt Richard Dobson" after Richard's Grandfather.

We were shocked by the news that the super fit 'Peter Pan' of our Association Chris Lambert had been hospitalised. The good news is that Chris is back home and on the mend. As you might expect, your committee on your behalf, made a presentation to our long serving Secretary on her retirement. I am pleased to report that Janine was delighted by our gift, a beautiful wooden model of a de Havilland Mosquito depicted as the aircraft flown by her mother's fiancée Vic Vinnell.

Best wishes





An Important Note from Our Treasurer

Gift Aiding It!

Making your membership subscriptions and donations go further

Dear Members,

I am so pleased to inform you that we have been approved by **Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs** as an Association, to claim Gift Aid on membership subscriptions and donations made by UK Taxpayers. This is very exciting news for us as an Association as we can claim back for the last preceding four years, it will initially considerably improve our funds and also secure our finances going forward for all to benefit.

I have had the privilege to be your Treasurer for six years now, and during this time we have managed to keep the accounts in credit, but our funds are slowly dwindling. This is not sustainable long term, particularly as we have not been able to hold our Reunion for two years due to the pandemic, which has always boosted our funds with the raffle and auction. Gift Aid allows us to claim an additional 25% on membership payments and donations! So, for a 'Gift Aided' donation of £100 we gain an extra £25 and for all £20 membership Gift-Aided subscriptions we gain another £5.

I would like to ask our members who live in the UK to complete the Membership and Gift Aid Declaration form which is included as a separate sheet within the magazine and return it to me with your annual subscription ASAP so I can begin the task of claiming the gift aid from HMRC. This is a one-off exercise, but I do need your signed declaration without it we could be losing out on much needed funds. If you would like to contact me, I would be pleased to help with any questions or queries you may have.

Thank you for reading this, especially our members outside the UK, gift aiding will be a benefit to all the members of our Association.

Kind regards,
Andrea.

26 Chestnut Road, Tasburgh,
Norwich NR151UH
01508 471529
andrea@theslums.co.uk

Annual Memberships Due November/December

LETTERS PAGES



RAF 100 GROUP (BOMBER SUPPORT) ASSOCIATION

President Mr Phil AE James, MBE

Chairman Mr Roger Dobson

29th July, 2021

Dear Janine,

This letter accompanies a gift which recognises your extraordinary contribution to our Association. The model of a de Havilland Mosquito is intended to depict the aircraft flown by your mother's fiancée Vic Vinnell.



Photographs courtesy of Mike Hillier

We hope this will give you pleasure and remind you of the moving love story you made known through their letters in your book 'Nina and Vic'. We also hope the model will mark our profound appreciation of your long service as Secretary, Editor of our magazine, and organiser of annual Reunions. In addition, you have selflessly assisted so many to understand the role played by their relatives who served in 100 Group.

Your legacy will continue for many years to come, wherever and whenever people remember and celebrate the courage and sacrifice made by a remarkable generation.

You will remain in our thoughts and prayers.

On behalf of the Committee and Members of RAF 100 Group Association,

All our love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Gaz', written on a white background.



Dearest Friends,

I'm sorry it's taken until now to write, but the past two weeks have not been good. My health continues to deteriorate. I have a major meeting on Monday to talk about 'steps forward' with two Consultants and my Carer at the Hospice.

However, your gift arrived a couple of days ago. It came in a large bulky box, and luckily the Courier was more than happy to bring it inside. On opening, I was completely taken by surprise, overwhelmed to discover the precious prize hidden within a mountain of packing ...

The Mosquito!

It took a while as I pushed in a couple of the things which had come loose during its journey, and ensured the propellers were secure. But when finally, it was made whole, I could enjoy the craftsmanship, the smooth sleek lines and body, then sit back and wonder at the words on the plinth on which it stood. It was as if dear Vic and Jack had finally come home.

It is an absolutely stunning model of DK292, 'My Nina' !

The words on your letter, Roger, touched me deeply. The Association has played such a pivotal role in my life, I am still grieving its passing, although letters still arrive from Kindred Spirits who I am happy to keep in touch with. It is always a joy to hear from them, and they understand that a reply will come in slower time.

Can I ask who crafted the Mosquito, Mike?

I have never seen such craftsmanship, and whoever it was, wherever it came from, truly should be congratulated.

It will stand in pride of place. I also have a large, sculpted model of 'Vic & Jack' studying maps, preparing to go on an Operation. It was bought as a limited edition a few years ago but is too tall to do justice to their aircraft. It reminds me of Gulliver's Travels, as if they landed on the wrong world. No wonder they're looking seriously puzzled!

Thank you All for your 'gift of the heart'. Everyone who visits will be commenting on it admiringly, and apart from the story behind it, I'd love to share who crafted it, and from whence it originated?

THANK YOU xxx

God Bless You All,

Janine xx



Hi Janine,

Regarding my father Andrew Barron.

I'm sorry it was such short notice about my father's funeral. We have saved copies of it, so we can send a USB/Memory Stick or DVD if anyone would like a copy of the Service. It's quite a big file and not resendable by email once downloaded

Kati Williamson (+ Mike)
kati.williamson88@gmail.com

If anyone would like to avail themselves of Kati and Mike's offer, please contact them directly. If you don't have internet access, please write in and your details will be passed on to Kati and Mike – Ed.



Hello Janine & Stuart.

The copy of your magazine has arrived with me, thank you very much.

I would like to congratulate you and all concerned in the compilation of it, all very professional indeed. I will pass it on to Graham to read and then take it to the Memorial Room at the Museum when we next attend. We are now allowed to take up to three visitors to the room now, so if you wish to come and see us sometime, you will be more than welcome.

Thanks again,

Kind regards,

Robin

Robin Lingard
Elsham Wolds Museum

suelingard44@yahoo.co.uk



Dear Ms Harrington,

With reference to your booklet about RAF North Creake. I was stationed there at the age of twenty as a Meteorological Officer, 189888, Flying Officer R. W. Berrill.

I recall many of the incidents quoted in your booklet and can add a number of others.

I was asked to go to Norwich to obtain as much beer as I could get on V.E. Day and coming back with one solitary barrel.

I would be pleased to meet you and recount other experiences that occurred during my time there. I read your book with great pleasure.

Yours very sincerely,

Roy

Roy Berrill

NOTE: Roy dictated his letter to Janet Blyth. Douglas Williamson (92) is my brother-in-law and was a keen aircraft spotter. He has sent an additional note correcting the photo shown on page 25 of the North Creake booklet 'which is not a Stirling, but a Halifax ... a Stirling is on page 50'.

My apologies - Janine H.



Hi,

It is an extremely sad day to lose Janine as the editor of this magazine, and more importantly as the Secretary of the RAF 100 Group Association.

Without all the hard work and dedication she has put in over the last 25+ years, this magazine and the Association would most definitely not be where it is today, if it even continued to exist at all.

She has made a lifelong commitment to supporting the Veterans (and their families) and has truly put her heart and soul into this magazine and organising the annual Reunions.

I will also miss the regular articles in the magazine from the outgoing US representative Stephen Hutton.

Donna Gray & Darren Rose
Heroes Of Our Time
www.heroesofourtime.co.uk



Hi Janine

So sorry to read about your retirement. You have been an amazing person, and with all the stories and information that you have found over the years, you deserve a pat on the back.

So, you may be able to take it easy, with no stress.

All the very best,

Peter

Peter Thompson



Hi All,

Whilst wading through bit and pieces of documents and reports (as is my normal daily task), I came across this which you might find an interesting read.

<https://ueaeprints.uea.ac.uk/id/eprint/79294/1/2019NunnSPhD.pdf>

**Blickling Hall - RAF Oulton,
Pages 247-254**

I've also copied and attached another item from the above report which might be of interest, although I shouldn't think that many people living on land that was once used as a storage facility for the RAF, would want to read about it.

Cheers,

Mike Hillier

(You will find the article referred to in our 'Features' section - Ed.)



This letter, received from Mr John Stubbington, is written in response to the online presentation that was given by Tom Withington on 27th May, on the history of RAF 100 Group and the beginnings of Electronic Warfare - Ed.

RAF 100 Group during WW2 and Thereafter

Our 100 Group Association achieves amazing success with the recording of so much personal and family history, largely drawn from our Veterans and their continuing family generations. The seasonal Newsletters and Reunions, managed so well by Janine Harrington over many decades, form a living history for members of the Association. It was my immense privilege to have been nominated as Chairman in 2008, subsequently handing over to Roger Dobson in 2014.

The operational history of RAF 100 Group remains largely obscure in various official archives and within a short list of well-informed books by several authors. It was therefore very appropriate that the RAF Museum selected a Trenchard Memorial Lecture online talk on 27th May 2021 about RAF 100 Group and the birth of Electronic Warfare. That talk by Tom Withington attracted a large audience, many of whom may have had little prior knowledge, even of the existence of 100 Group – with the exception of 100 Group Association members. That wider visibility well outside the Association membership was very welcome.

It was however unfortunate that the talk focussed extensively on some aspects of the radio countermeasures (RCM) activities and thereby covered only a slice of 100 Group's operational activities. My purpose now is to draw attention to some of those other aspects.

The air battle over Germany had by 1943-44 become so intense and complex that it must be doubted whether the bomber or night-fighter aircraft from the earlier phases of the war would have stood the slightest chance of executing a successful mission. Air superiority was eventually achieved by the bomber force, from the later months in 1944 until the end of the war. It had – in view of the immense effort by the German Air Force to destroy the bombers – only been achieved by a comparable effort and an even greater degree of skill by the Allied forces, the Research Establishments and the Industrial Support ¹.

The important organisational Radio Counter Measures (RCM) decision during WW2 was to establish a specialist RAF unit to become responsible for the operational development, application and co-ordination of all RCM programmes, from the air and from the ground. No.100 Group became operational in December 1943 and subsumed No.80 Wing, with Air Commodore Addison as the Air Officer Commanding. The Group began with the somewhat vague directive that it was under the administrative control of Bomber Command but under the technical control of the Air Ministry.

This was clarified in March 1944, when Bomber Command set down the principal tasks as being:

- To provide direct support to the bomber offensive, using night fighters.
- To exploit air and ground RCM.
- To investigate and report on the enemy development of radar and radio equipment.
- To build a body of knowledge as a basis for planning future operations.

¹ PRO, Air 14/1394

- To make use of immediate information about enemy fighter movements.

The nature of day-to-day operational missions by 100 Group may be seen from a SECRET IMMEDIATE Operational Intentions Order issued from 100 Group HQ to all 100 Group stations, copy to Head Quarters Bomber Command (HQBC) all Bomber Groups; AI4(f), Y-Service Canterbury and Cheadle [Note that AI4(f) is the Air Section at Bletchley Park]. That Operational Intention had the following details for the specific day in question²:

- To screen the approach of Nos 1 and 6 Groups: A MANDREL screen at 15,000ft will be disposed between 1750hrs when the first bomber is at 0330 East and will continue until 1940hrs when the last bomber is approaching liberated air. The MANDREL screen will move forward when the last bomber of the second main force has passed through it. This is to create confusion in enemy plotting and jamming of ground and airborne radars.
- To present the enemy defences with a diversion: A WINDOW force at 20,000ft will break off from the first main force at 0530 East and proceed on the same track to 0710 East when it will return as far as the Front Line on the reciprocal track dropping WINDOW heavily the whole time.
- Fighter Bombers will break out from the WINDOW force and attack the enemy Night Fighter airfield codenamed "Shark".
- To jam HF and VHF communications and enemy SN2 AI with Nos 1 and 6 Groups, using JOSTLE and PIPERACK.
- To jam *Würzburg* radars throughout the Target area and the Spoof Target area thus rendering ineffective that part of the Early Warning system, Ground Controlled Intercept of night-fighters, searchlight coning and Flak gun laying.
- To harass enemy night-fighters by patrolling assembly areas on the way to the real and spoof targets; by covering the real and spoof target areas during the bombing attacks; intercepting the enemy night-fighters when recovering to their landing airfields; and covering the activities of No 3 Group by fighter support.

That close interaction between 100 Group HQ at Bylaugh Hall, HQBC, Bletchley Park and the RAF Y-Service paid enormous dividends, not least in the detailed planning at HQBC for all main bombing operations, with the closely integrated Operational Support Missions flown by 100 Group. The timing and routes for these missions was crucial to their successful outcome. The Group produced daily Intentions Orders to all Bomber Groups, consistent with the Main Force operational planning for the night's raids - which by October 1944 were using low level approach tactics under radio silence. For the first time, the other Groups became fully aware of the protection and support that 100 Group was providing; and one perhaps unexpected outcome was that some Groups claimed that others were being 'better treated'.

During the major raids into the Ruhr during November, the enemy adopted the practice of keeping his night-fighters in that area regardless of Spoof Operations and therefore the 100 Group Special WINDOW Force was used to invest the whole area with vast quantities of WINDOW. Throughout the year the Fortresses of 214 Sqn and, later, the Liberators of 223 Sqn, had been providing their radar and communications jamming support from within the Main Force bomber streams. By December, they were of even better value by being fully equipped with CARPET jammers against the enemy *Würzburg* radars and PIPERACK against the SN2 AI radars. It was also during December that 192 Sqn Mosquitoes provided inbound Y-recordings of enemy R/T traffic, then provided PIPERACK jamming of

² PRO, Air 14/2971, 29 Dec 44, 1210A

the enemy night fighter SN2 radars until well after the main force attack had finished, to protect any 'stragglers' on their return to UK airfields.

As the depth of main force raids into Germany was increasing, the effectiveness of the WINDOW screen diminished, and more use was made of multiple spoof raids with MANDREL jamming and WINDOW.

On one night, not having heard a recall message, one Fortress from 214 Sqn completed the planned sortie alone and was plotted by the enemy as a force of 20-30 aircraft.

No.192 Squadron was not mentioned in the talk. It was one of the first two Squadrons to join the newly formed 100 Group in November 1943, becoming the first unit to fly an operational mission. The role was airborne signals intercept, and this entailed the identification and recording of enemy radar and radio signals - we have for many decades known this as ELINT and COMINT – collectively as SIGINT. The operational role of 192 Squadron was as part of the RAF Y-Service.

There were many other ways in which 100 Group, the Y-Service and Bletchley Park were coordinated. The following example is indicative of the extent of the coordination. Bomber Command Signals Instruction No 23, dated 1st July 1944, detailed the actions to be taken by 214 Sqn aircraft JOSTLE operators, under the control of the RAF Kingsdown Y-Service intercept station.³ The instruction is referred to in "The War in the Ether"⁴ and also in the "Despatch on War Operations"⁵. JOSTLE was a very high-power radio jammer working in HF and VHF bands; in the VHF band it was able to cover all or most of the enemy frequencies with barrage jamming; but in the HF band, it was necessary to select the HF frequency(cies) for jamming. These frequencies were monitored by Y-Service stations in UK and passed to the aircraft by RAF Kingsdown Intercept Station in real-time during the sorties.

With the advent of the V-1 and V-2 weapons, No.192 Squadron aircraft were also kept on stand-by for immediate take-off in order to determine if there was any radio control system. In the initial stage of V-2 launches, the Squadron maintained a 24-hour patrol.

Within 100 Group, the Bomber Support Development Unit (BSDU) had been formed in April 1944 at Foulsham to develop, test and produce a wide variety of radar and radio equipment.⁶ Apart from the technical development and production facilities, there were also nine Mosquito aircraft for flight trials work related to fighter equipment. That aggregate task was most impressive. By no means least, the assorted aerials had to be mounted on the aircraft to provide the required coverage for the various narrow-band and wide-band receivers. It was a matter of great importance that the equipment fit for a particular sortie could be changed at very short notice.

Within the online talk there were some errors either of fact or interpretation, 'the more important include:

- The use of SERRATE certainly preceded the formation of 100 Group, but it by no means dominated the activities through the rest of WW2.
- 100 Group did not have Lancaster's and 101 Squadron was never part of the Group.

³ PRO, Air 14/1350

⁴ War in the Ether: An Account of RCM conducted by Bomber Command during the War 1939-1945, paragraph 363-4

⁵ Despatch on War Operations, by Sir Arthur Harris, Appendix E, para 87

⁶ Air 14/2968: BSDU Report No. 40 covering April 1944 to April 1945

- The jamming programme for OVERLORD did not serve as a template for subsequent 100 Group operations, which were progressively adapted to meet the evolving threat as presented by the German Air Defence system.

At the end of WW2, 100 Group was transformed and re-named as the Radio Warfare Establishment (RWE) at RAF Watton. Soon afterwards, with expanding activities, the RWE was disbanded and became the Central Signals Establishment (CSE). There was a heavy flying schedule in support of the Berlin Airlift. It was becoming appreciated that the Russians were not so technologically inferior and there was pressure on CSE to advance their work on Radio Warfare equipment and technology. There was considerable political sensitivity in the early 1950s about the resumption of the so-called 'Radio Proving' or 'Ferret' Flights. There is much correspondence up to and including the Prime Minister which covers these issues.⁷ During March 1954, the Prime Minister Mr Churchill approved a series of Radio Proving Flights into the Caspian, Black and Baltic Seas, to obtain Intelligence on the Russian Air Defence organisation.⁸ These flights were regarded as the major source of accurate and up-to-date information on:⁹

- The organisation and efficiency of Soviet Air Defences.
- The Order of Battle of the Soviet Air Force.
- Soviet radar countermeasures.
- Developments in various technical fields, especially Guided Weapons.

The Central Signals Establishment was disestablished in July 1965 and was re-formed into the new Electronic Warfare Support Wing at RAF Watton. This Wing moved to RAF Wyton in 1971 and later to RAF Waddington in 1993, where it remains today within the Air and Space Warfare Centre.

The Signals Intelligence Collection work by 192 Squadron and the coordination with Bletchley Park and the RAF Y-Service, formed a significant aspect of the work by 100 Group. It would have been illustrative to have said that 192 Sqn continues to operate today, having been re-badged to 51 Sqn in 1958 and now based at RAF Waddington using 'KC-135W Rivet Joint' dedicated Electronic Surveillance Aircraft, that can be employed in all theatres on strategic and tactical missions.

In effect, the purpose and activity of 100 Group lives on.

Skipping backward in time to 1959, there was a most significant statement by the Commander of CSE. At that time, he wrote:

*"The importance of Electronic Warfare as a modern weapon of war, is not always appreciated by Operational Commanders for whom that weapon is designed. Of one thing we can be reasonably certain. Any future war is likely to come swiftly, and we must therefore be capable of making our best moves from the beginning. Without effective Electronic Warfare, for both offensive and defensive forces, we will not succeed."*¹⁰

John Stubbington,

Wg Cdr ret'd

4th August 2021.

⁷ Air 19/1105

⁸ Air 19/1105: Note to the Prime Minister dated 8 Mar 54, bearing the initials WSC.

⁹ Air 19/1105: Note to the Prime Minister, dated 6 July 1955.

¹⁰ CSE Report No. 42, July-December 1959.



My Dear Kindred Spirit Family,

I am writing to thank you for your wonderful gifts of time and love wrapped in such a variety of ways ... paper, boxes, cards, gifts, and flowers. Every one of them is cherished. Every one speaks of your love. And they could not have come at a more appropriate time as I grapple with new health problems caused by Cancer.

In reading your words from hearts shared openly, I need to say that I am still here with arms wide open, looking back at times shared. From the very start of this Association, Mum and I were always made to feel part of a Family, enriched by writings we received, and phone calls where I was able to see, hear and share the heartfelt love she still felt for her 'Dearest Vic' ... her wartime fiancé who will always remain 22 years old. The sparkle in her eyes with a faraway look illustrated how remembering times past still had effect, and words they made their own:

*'LIFE and DEATH
Is but an END and a BEGINNING,
and it matters not whether we live or die
but HOW WE LIVE and WHY WE DIE.'*

The Silver Fleet 'I shall not die'

The love they shared lasted a lifetime and beyond, as did the love shared by my father and mother. Part of my mother died with Vic on the night of 26/27 November 1944 flying as Spec Op/Navigator with Jack Fisher, his Pilot. But she loved my father, as he did her, despite his own agony of living with wartime pain while serving in the RAF. I feel privileged to have been part of this enduring Love, which forged my own Dream, needing to emulate what they shared. Sadly, for me, it became the Impossible Dream. The quotation which has haunted me through life comes to mind now:

*'A man's reach should exceed his grasp
else what's a heaven for.'*

Robert Browning

It is with this kind of deep eternal Love I write now, and in answer to your questions voiced on paper, no, I have not moved on, neither am I leaving you ... at least not yet. I resigned from the Association Committee on 1 June this year because, now in my fifth year of living with terminal Cancer and the

chronic exhaustion it brings alongside other disabilities, I could no longer dedicate time and energy needed to fulfil the roles of Secretary and Editor of the magazine.



For 27 years it has been my pride and joy to be part of this family, and to watch it grow from humble beginnings which dear Eileen and Martin her brother founded in 1994. Both were passionate about people, particularly Veterans of RAF 100 Group of which Eileen's husband was one. He was killed after only 3 months of marriage in December 1944, and, like Mum, it was a tragedy which cast a long shadow over the rest of her life. Eileen and Martin went out of their way to give from their hearts, helping and supporting in whatever way they could, feeling an affinity with the Group in which her husband, Pilot Officer Stafford Sinclair, had served in 214 Sqn. We became close friends, and with Evelyn and Len Bartram, they did much to complete the circle of life for Mum before she died of Cancer in 1996, putting us in touch with those who knew and served with her wartime fiancé Vic Vinnell of 192 Sqn.

There are no words to describe my feelings each time I receive contact from you, and in answer to your queries, this is something I am not giving up. My response may come in slower time, but please, be patient with me? I am still here for you and remain part of your Family. I have received so much from you and would take this opportunity to say a very special thanks to Group Captain Bob Kemp of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force Foundation. How extraordinary that you cherish fond memories of Filey from the air, spending most of your life flying Buccaneers over our Country Park! Your comments relating to the magazine were truly valued.

My health is worsening. After a slow growth over four years despite no treatment and little medical support, now in the fifth year it's as if it has changed gear. So it is with much sadness that I leave the role of Secretary and creation of our magazine in the capable hands of my firm friend Stuart Borlase. Initially daunted at the prospect, please know I have every faith in him, and he has my blessing. I hope he will settle to his own way of doing things, while upholding the old. You can write and share with him also. A lovely, gentle man, he too shares from the heart. God Bless You All, my Worldwide Kindred Spirit Family. Thank you again for your wonderful letters in which you continue to share your own lives and help me feel equally included and involved.

Love & Hugs,

Janine xx



Features Section

A BLOOD RED SKY RAF Plane Crash over Holt, 1968

On a stormy August night in 1968 at the height of the Cold War, Ted Buxton a farmer in the Heydon area witnessed a terrible collision between two RAF aircraft. An RAF Victor from RAF Marham on a training flight crashed into an RAF Canberra returning to its base located in RAF Bruggen Germany. The incident was a tragedy and since skies became so crowded with aircraft during the Cold War, it is likely a disaster of this nature was to be expected.

Buxton captured the incident by means of photography that evening when gut instinct told him to get his camera (NRO, ACC 2017/66). Upon retrieving it he was inside with his father and younger brother when the sky suddenly turned crimson. The first of his pictures was just a mass of red while another depicted the moment in which the flaming fuel tanker spiralled toward the town of Holt below. His last photograph showed the Canberra just poking down through the clouds. *'That was just like a premonition'*, Buxton described, as he recalled his feelings towards the incident in a 2017 interview. Upon hearing the sound of the air crash which according to Buxton sounded like *'glorified thunder'*, his family stepped out to investigate.

The photos taken that night are chilling as the silhouette of the Norfolk countryside is lit up by a Hellish crimson light. It would not be farfetched to believe that many of the locals mistook the blood-coloured sky as signifying the start of the fallout. Indeed, two eyewitnesses who were driving through the rain were shocked as the *'whole landscape was lit as daylight'* and wondered if the sight before them was the tell-tale signs of was a nuclear first strike. Others in the area were making their way towards Holt itself before being turned away. In some of the pictures a distinctive fiery orange light is visible, pinpointing the location of the explosion and the falling remnants of the aircraft.



Taken from Norfolk Record Office, ACC. 2017/66

One plane landed in a field and according to Ian Jarvis, a police constable at the time, the flames were so hot that the force was unable to get anywhere near it. It was only when firemen snuffed out the flames when four bodies were discovered, and the human cost of the incident was revealed. All seven crew members, ages ranging from 24-39 sadly perished, despite much effort made by the towns Emergency Services to recover potential survivors. One of the victims landed in a pine tree which twisted due to the impact of the falling body. A helmet and scorched papers were discovered in the playing fields of Gresham School while a more gruesome discovery, a glove with a hand in it, was recovered in Sheringham.

Remarkably, nobody in the town below was hurt by falling debris and buildings suffered minimal damage. Local newspapers described it as '*a miracle escape*', for the people of Holt. MP Merlyn Rees was astonished that nobody perished on the ground. To commemorate the fallen airmen a Memorial was erected in the Church of St Andrew reading, '*Indeed you did not grow old. We will remember*'. In 2018 another Memorial was unveiled at Holt Country Park where the twisted tree still stands as a '*living Memorial*' to the disaster.

Written by Rebecca Hanley, NRO Research Blogger

Posted: May 28th, 2019 by [cbolsterNRO](#)

Sources:

'The Miracle of Holt – Remembering the men who died when two RAF planes collided 50 years ago', 18th August 2018, Rowan Mantell, Eastern Daily Press

Airmen killed in the crash of the Victor from the RAF Marham were:

- Pilot William Gallienne, a 36-year-old married man from Essex.
- Co-pilot Roger Morton, aged 26, from Hertfordshire.
- Navigator Kenneth Peacock, aged 31, from Cornwall.
- Navigator Michael Doyle, aged 39, and married.

The Crew in the Canberra were:

- Stuart Cowie a 24-year-old married man from Yorkshire.
- John Woolnough, aged 24, from Essex.
- Johan Slabber, a 25-year-old married man from South Africa.

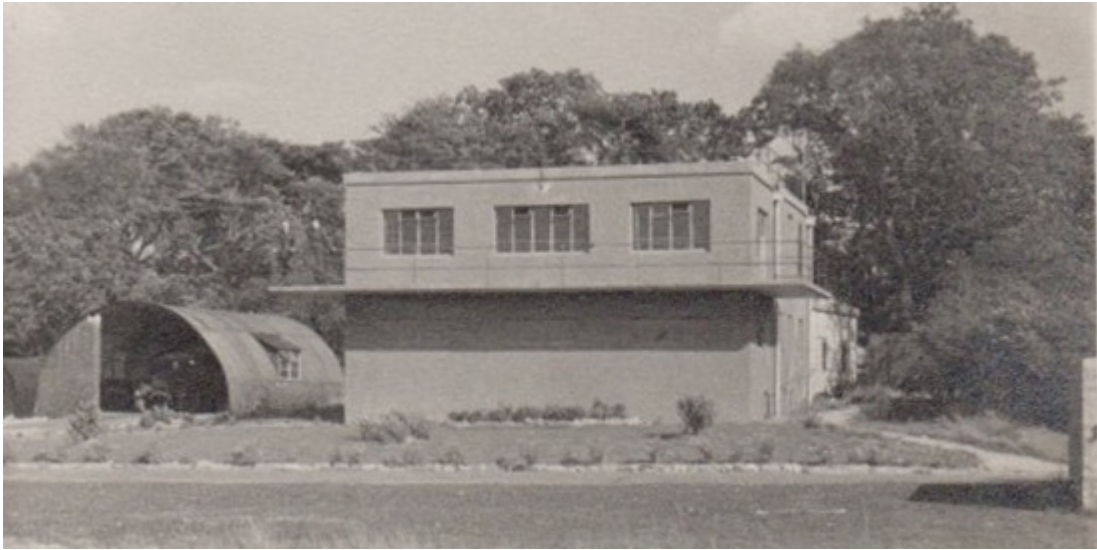
A plaque at St Andrews Church in Holt commemorates the airmen of the Victor tanker and the Canberra aircraft which crashed over Holt.

A piece of RAF aircraft wreckage will be exhibited at the City of Norwich Aviation Museum for the future. As Colin Kerrison, Chairman, explains:

"Our aim is preserving Aviation heritage related to Norfolk, and this very tragic story needs to be recorded as a lasting memory to those who lost their lives".

The North Creak Tower

New Beginnings...



The Control Tower, RAF North Creak, 1945.

It is nearly ten years since Claire and I bought the former Control Tower on RAF North Creak. Bed and Breakfast guests staying with us frequently ask what motivated us to buy it. They generally assume that they'll be an RAF connection and it often comes as a surprise that neither Claire nor I have any strong military connection, with the exception of my uncle, who was an Armourer with the RAF during the war. I never spoke to my uncle about his wartime experiences; I was interested to hear many stories second-hand through my dad, and on reflection, I would have dearly liked to have talked to him about it while he was still alive, but I seldom met him, as my dad and he were not close. This distance between them was a symptom of the war; my father was 10 when his brother went away, and he didn't return for the duration, being, as he was, posted all over the world. By the time he came back, my dad was 16 and a stranger to his brother, a distance they would never overcome. I know this was a source of regret for my father, but he just didn't know how to bridge the gap. So, without a military connection, what brought us here?



In fact, the motivation to buy the Tower was one of style; we're huge fans of modernism and the airfield architecture of the war really captures that modernist aesthetic for us. We had actually been looking for a 1943 Operations Block and I found the Control Tower after a very bad day at work.

Steeple Morden Operations Block.

I worked as an academic and subject leader at a London University, and I had just been holding consultation meetings with colleagues who were being made redundant. I'd worked with them for twenty years and it was a difficult and upsetting process for all of us. I sat staring out of the train carriage on my way home pondering a better life with burgeoning desire for change growing ever more desperate. The closer I got to home the more realisation grew that our plans for an Operations Block would not come soon enough and I could not face work at the University for much longer.

When I reached home, I typed 'control towers for sale' into google and up popped the Control Tower. This was in June 2011; by October we had moved in.

I was aware of a deep interest in the war within me; the subject area I taught involved politics, history and economics, so the wartime period would be of obvious interest. What I hadn't realised was my latent interest in aircraft and my potential for obsessive interest in Bomber Command and particularly the RAF 100 Group. I would argue, it's impossible to move into a building such as this and remain unmoved by its history, but many friends would tell you that the emergence of this passion was no surprise to them. Both my dad and grandad worked in the aircraft industry (de Havilland's in Hatfield), my grandad joined in 1935 and my dad in 1945 and he remained there until 1987. You can imagine my childhood was full of talk of aircraft, my dad's favourite, understandably, being the Mosquito. It's amazing how much information you absorb without knowing and everyone that knows me will testify that I have always been reduced to childlike excitability at the sound of a Merlin engine. However, this came as a particular surprise to Claire the first time she witnessed it. Having never previously seen the merest hint of interest from me, on a quiet woodland walk in Lincolnshire, mid-conversation, I cried 'that's a Merlin', and started desperately looking for the nearest area of open sky. Running through the wood with Claire trying to keep up, we emerged into a field in time to witness the BBMF Lancaster flying extremely low overhead. I stared up with wide eyes exclaiming uncontrollably with colourful language (much of it involving four-letter words I'm afraid)!

Luckily, this condition would appear to be readily contagious and some 15 years later we would be standing at the edge of another field (an airfield in this case) watching the Canadian Lancaster flying with the BBMF, I turned to Claire and her eyes were full of tears. For me, with the purchase of the Control Tower, this thinly veiled interest, became a full-blown passion.



When we moved to the Control Tower, we established three primary objectives:

1. Restore the Control Tower back to the modernist iconic look
2. Make a business that would sustain both us and our lives here
3. Honour those that served at RAF North Creak

We weren't sure how we'd achieve any of these objectives, but we felt sure we'd find a way. In breaks from sledgehammers, chainsaws and a whole myriad of tools, I spent time trying find out what I could about the history of the airfield. As you will all no doubt be aware, the history of a RAF 100 Group station is not necessarily easy to discover and I found books on the subject were few and far between, in spite of the glut of Second World War histories. Joining the RAF 100 Group Association was a boon, not just because it made me feel more 'normal,' but for the leads on books and the wealth of information gleaned from fellow members and by the coverage of the magazine; all of which was eagerly consumed.

Gardening at the Control Tower can also prove instructive, as we often literally dug up the past. Possibly, the most surprising garden discovery was some original WINDOW that Claire found under a post-war concrete yard we were taking up. We imagine it was in one of the sheds and it was swept out before the concrete was poured, thus preserving it.

Searches of archives turned up some good stuff and discovering written nuggets buried within texts discussing other subjects could also reveal useful detail. However, living in a Control Tower means that often history comes and knocks at your door. We promoted this activity by appearing in the local press and suggesting that if you had any connection please drop by.

This was further enhanced by opening-up through Heritage Open Days, meaning that we heard many untold stories from the visitors that came. Subsequently donations of artifacts and documents started to appear. This experience was heightened by the establishment of our B&B, as this meant the arrival of numerous relatives of veterans eager to stay where their relative served and share their stories. **(Viewing Day - right)**



And then there are the veterans themselves... I can't describe our excitement at meeting the first veteran from RAF North Creake at an event organised by the Stirling Society shortly after moving here. We had quite given up on meeting someone who served here and when Bernie How casually informed us, that he was a Flight Engineer who served on Stirling's and Halifax's at RAF North Creake, we weren't sure we heard him correctly. However, within an hour he was standing on our roof looking over the old airfield!

Bernie How in front of the RAF North Creake Roll of Honour on Dedication Day.

We would meet a number of Veterans over the next few years and we're still making new contacts. Most recently about a month ago we met a Meteorologist, who like his fellow Veterans was fascinating to talk to and very able to fill in gaps in our knowledge. A relative of Norman Turnball, who was a Caravan Controller here, kindly sent us his wartime photographs. Norman was a keen photographer and this communication provided us with the first view we'd seen of the wartime Tower (included with this article) and unpublished. This was a wonderful moment as we never thought we would get a good photograph. It also confirmed we'd got the detail right with the reinstatement of the roof (unusually our tower has hoppers rather than guttering).

By 2014 the renovations of the Tower were far enough forward for us to formally 'open'. We planned a large event to coincide with the nearest Sunday to the 70th anniversary of D-Day; the first operation from RAF North Creake. The day before the opening we invited Veterans and their families to the Tower for tea and cake. It was a privilege to see them gathered around the dining table talking of their time at North Creake and we learnt so much from them.

The Tower pictured in 2014.



The following day we had our opening; we had arranged for Lord Peter Melchett to cut the ribbon as he was the earliest resident of the Tower we could find; born in 1948 he was a child here when his parents lived in the Tower while his father worked as the director of the animal feed plant that had been established directly after the war (and still occupies the South Hangar today). He was a charming man who was opposed to hereditary peerage (the only hereditary peer that voted against hereditary peerage in the House of Lords vote), a former Cabinet Minister and long-time Chair of the Soil Association. I dug up and restored a 1930s toy car in garden which must have surely been his, sadly he died before I could ask him. In the same way as many of our veterans, it was an incredible loss. As a footnote, on 'Last Words' the obituary programme on BBC Radio 4, they played an excerpt of his interview on Desert Island Discs where he talked fondly of his childhood living in the Tower – a view, he told me his mother didn't share!

We were unsure of the level of interest we'd have in our opening; we promoted it as widely as we could, got in three casks of ale, organised for a vintage fair in the Nissen hut, a 1940s DJ, 1940s hair and make-up and history tours of the Tower. We hoped for, in excess, of a couple of hundred, it was some shock however, when the crowds descended and over a thousand came through over the course of the day. It was wonderful to see many people fascinated by the history and enjoying the Tower and garden. A perfect memory of a sun-bathed day.

The next few months were spent on continuing renovation projects alongside our fledgling B&B business, but we were now increasing turning our thoughts towards the third element of our plan; how to honour those that served here. Indeed, the sales of the 'Stirling' beer at the opening (kindly donated by Beeston Brewery), had been, in effect, our first fundraising exercise. In 2017 we came up with an outline plan, or more probably loose ideas of what we could do but with enough shape to make them public. We held an event in October 2017 where we gathered together people in the Control Tower from the local community who we thought might share our aims. I gave a talk about the history of the station and what we hoped to achieve. The estimated aim of fundraising was £30,000 (considerably under the approximate figure of £50,000 it eventually cost) and we were delighted with the level of support from this cross-section of the community. Two days later we received a pledge from Lord Leicester of Holkham Hall, the owner of the airfield site, of £5000. We were off to a good start.

Claire and I then set about organising fundraisers with a renewed vigour. They ranged from history talks, to any group that wanted to hear about the station locally, to a fundraising beer by Beeston Brewery called 'Drink to Remember', to jazz nights on the anniversary of D-Day, an auction on the centenary of Great War armistice, a talk at Holkham Hall, an all-day history tour of the airfield etc. We also applied for grants and were successful in raising £5000 from the Big Society Fund, and £5000 from the Bomber Command Association. While these sums moved us ever closer to the target, the ones that touched us the most were from members of the local community who had never really thought about the airfield before, but after hearing its history felt moved to donate. From small sums to incredibly generous amounts the fund grew. You may have been at the 100 Group Association Annual Dinner where I gave a history talk and witnessed me shaking a National Dried Milk tin; many hundreds of pounds passed through that slot in the top of that tin over the period of fundraising!

All the while we were fundraising, we were also considering exactly what it was we wanted to achieve. Walsingham Estate, the owners of most of the airfield dispersed sites, designated the land for the memorial site. The planning process was needlessly difficult and although North Norfolk District Council Planning Office were always supportive of our aims, the centralised planning system is not set up for achieving permission for a war memorial – I eventually became exasperated when asked to submit a waste strategy and a lighting pollution statement and pleaded my case to the planning officer

who eventually conceded that they would accept me stating that ‘there will be no bins and no lights!’ Thereby, the project moved forward.

We found what we thought was the ideal commemorative sculpture on a Facebook post from RAF East Kirkby. It was a mild steel skeletal Lancaster and we approached the artist, Andy Knighton asking if he’d consider doing a stainless-steel Stirling for us – he readily agreed, and we settled on a price. Ultimately, it was the perfect decision as the sculpture is magnificent and Andy did us proud. The Roll of Honour was a more troublesome decision. Eventually, when we saw what the International Bomber Command Centre were achieving in Lincolnshire, we were able to take inspiration from them and our ideas took shape.

Planning was approved, work commissioned – and then Covid struck. The builder, Paul Bishop, who had agreed to do the siteworks for the cost of materials alone, laid the foundations for the sculpture but then, as lockdown commenced in March 2020, Paul became the first confirmed case of Covid that we knew locally. It hit him hard, and he was on a ventilator for seven weeks; the worry about him put our plans into perspective. Nonetheless, the Stirling had been delivered in the December before lockdown and Andy was keen to ‘move it on’. When restrictions were lifted a little, he came over and



“ Home Safe”– The Stirling Sculpture at the Memorial

finished the foundation pad by laying a plinth and in September, the Stirling took to the air. I’m delighted to say Paul was out of hospital, and although still ravaged by the effects of Covid, he was there to see it.

The Roll of Honour was placed in position after the third lockdown’s restrictions eased, and Paul was now very much back in charge of the operation, but it was, as with the raising of the Stirling, a collaborative effort from dedicated supporters.

Our original plans for the memorial dedication day held on the 75th anniversary of the disbandment of the station had been scuppered by the first lockdown, now as the 76th anniversary approached it still looked as if restrictions would not be fully lifted. When we first considered the dedication day it was to be a large event with a street party and a special guest cutting the ribbon on the Roll of Honour. Very early on it had been obvious that the person to ask would be Bernie How – the first veteran from RAF North Creak we met. When asked in 2017, he had looked himself up and down and declared himself fit for the job. Now, after what had proved a hard lockdown for him, we were determined to

have him to cut the ribbon in 2021. We therefore planned for a much smaller dedication in June, once again near to the anniversary of D-Day.

On the day the sun shone at the memorial site. I gave a short introduction to the thirty people gathered there (restrictions were still in place), and Air Vice Marshal Sir Stuart Atha made the dedication on behalf of the RAF and the memorial was blessed.

The Stirling sculpture, now titled 'Home Safe', stood representing all those that served at RAF North Creak and the Roll of Honour was dedicated to the 73 that did not return. Our 100 Group Association Standard gave the focus for the Act of Remembrance and as the sound of the bugle faded, wreaths were laid. Finally, Bernie cut the ribbon.

We returned to the Control Tower garden, where a marquee had been erected for a wonderful afternoon tea (kindly provided by the Assembly House in Norwich). Speeches by Lord Leicester of Holkham Hall, Clovis Meth Baker of Walsingham Estate and myself were made and talk and relaxation came easily. It may not have been on the scale we had originally intended, and we were sad not to have been able to invite everyone who helped make this happen, but the dedication had been fitting and intimate and, somehow, better for it.

On the 10th anniversary of us first viewing the house we, with a great deal of help from a multitude of people, concluded our three primary aims for our move to Norfolk. This was meant to be the conclusion of our project, but it seems it may just have been a milestone, as there are further plans for this airfield site being hatched between us and Walsingham estate that I will report upon as they develop. It would seem you can't hold a good idea down.

As ever, if you have any connection with RAF North Creak you would like to share with us, please do get in touch or perhaps you could even come and stay!

Nigel Morter



Taken in May 2018 on a damp and foggy day.

Remembering Test Pilot Squadron Leader 'Wimpy' Wade



On the afternoon of Tuesday 3rd April 1951, former Battle of Britain pilot and legendary test pilot Squadron Leader Trevor 'Wimpy' Wade was flying the experimental Hawker P1081 jet high above the Sussex countryside. At Plashett Park farm, Ringmer, Bob Peters and his staff were busy in the yard. The events that followed on that Spring afternoon, are remembered clearly by Bob, who still resides at Plashett Park farm to this day.

Robert 'Bob' Peters was born in the county of Dorset in 1925. It was there his father Arthur (a former British Army Captain of the Great War) had taken up work in farming. By the time Bob was eleven years old in 1936, Arthur had applied for the tenancy of Plashett Park Farm in Ringmer. Since then, this 213-acre farm, originally part of the Glyndebourne Estate, is where the Peters family have called home.

By 3rd April 1951, Bob and his father were running the farm. The cattle had been returned to their pastures and the growing summer crops swayed in the Spring breeze. Out in the yard with some of the staff, Bob's attention was suddenly caught by a loud bang like thunder. Turning to the south-west and looking to the sky, they saw a jet plane plummeting earthward at great speed - the ejector seat and pilot of which had just left the plane.

Trevor Sidney Wade was born on 27th January 1920 in Wandsworth, London. Educated at the prestigious Yardley Court & Tonbridge School in Kent, at the age of eighteen in 1938 he signed up for the RAF Volunteer Reserve. Earning his wings with No.19 E&RFS based at Gatwick aerodrome, by May 26, 1940 Wade was a commissioned Pilot Officer with 92 Squadron RAF. To say something of P/O Wade's character and flying ability, on one of his first flights in a Spitfire he amazed onlookers by performing a low-level roll immediately after take-off! Based at Biggin Hill during the Battle of Britain, P/O Wade had a very eventful flying career. Forced to make emergency landings three times after receiving return fire from the German Luftwaffe (one Spitfire flipping upside down on landing at Lewes Racecourse) he was also one of the many 92 Squadron pilots who became 'Fighter Aces'. P/O Wade's own score at the end of 1940 stood at seven confirmed 'kills' and five 'probable'. Even during the fighting of 1940, there were times of happiness. On August 2nd, P/O Wade married Ms. Josephine Gibbins -many of his fellow 92 Sqn fliers attended the wedding and reception. It was around this time that Wade also earned a nickname that would stay with him the rest of his life- 'Wimpy', after the popular character of the Popeye comics and cartoons.

Awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) in June 1941, by September his career as a fighter pilot had ended. Wounded in combat while flying with 602 'City of Glasgow' Squadron, he nursed his damaged Spitfire back from the French coast to Kenley. After recovery, P/O Wade spent the war as an Instructor, eventually promoted to Squadron Leader. For his services to pilot training, in September 1944 he was awarded the Air Force Cross (AFC).

Before demobilisation in 1946, S/L Wade was sent to America to fly and evaluate captured Japanese aircraft during 1945. It was during this time he had his first flights in jet aircraft, evaluating early USAF efforts. For a brief time after demobilisation, Wade joined the staff of 'The Aeroplane' magazine. However, in October 1947 'Wimpy' Wade was to join an elite group whose names were to be known

in households all over Great Britain and beyond. Recruited by Flying Officer William 'Bill' Humble, Chief Test Pilot to the Hawker Aircraft Co, Wade as assistant, set to work.

In the first ten years after the Second World War, the British Aviation industry went through dramatic changes. Swapping propellers for jets, there didn't seem to be a week go by without a new speed, altitude, or long-distance record set by a British pilot in a British plane, often a new, futuristic design. In an age before computer modelling and simulation, risking life and limb these men took untested aircraft to the skies and flew them to their limits - the goal, breaking the elusive and mysterious Sound Barrier. Pilots such as 'Bee' Beamont, 'Mike' Lithgow, 'Jan' Zurakowski, 'Jock' Brice, 'Bill' Waterton and 'Wimpy' Wade caught the public imagination. British aircraft and their pilots were now widely believed and acknowledged to be the best in the world!

Working alongside 'Bill' Humble, Wade helped test and evaluate the Hawker Aircraft Company's first jet plane, the P (Prototype) 1040, which would eventually go on to become the Sea Hawk, the Royal Navy's 2nd carrier-based jet fighter entering service in 1953. As well as the testing of the P1040, Wade's main job with the Company (until June 1948) was testing production line Hawker Sea Furies.

At the above-mentioned date, Humble became Sales Manager for the combined Hawker-Siddeley Group. With his experience in many different types of aircraft, Wade was next in line for Chief Test Pilot, leading Hawker further into the jet age. 'Wimpy' Wade's first Press appearance was a public demonstration of the P1040 (Serial No: VP401) in August 1948 at Langley Airfield.

Three months later, Hawker rolled out two new prototypes of their latest fighter design, the P1052. Not designed to go supersonic, but faster than previous 'straight-wing' designs, the P1052 was the Hawker companies first swept-wing aircraft using the Rolls Royce Nene engine (the same used in the P1040). On November 19th, Wade took the P1052 (Ser No: VX272) for the type's maiden flight. Satisfied with performance and handling, VX272 was handed over to the Fleet Air Arm for Carrier trials whereas the 2nd P1052, VX279, remained with the company while 'Wimpy' continued trials. The P1052 proved popular with all who flew her.

As well as Wade, other pilots such as Captain Eric 'Winkle' Brown and S/L Neville Duke, all commented on the well-proportioned cockpit, clear view from the canopy and positive handling. One complaint from all concerned however, was the uncomfortable ML Aviation ('Malcom') ejector seat, a rival company to the more well-known Martin Baker Co.

By the end of 1949, Wade had achieved much acclaim for the Hawker Co. Firstly, on May 13th, he broke the London-Paris air speed record in VX279 – pushing the Nene engine to its limit, he smashed all previous records covering the 221-mile journey in just 21 minutes, 28seconds, averaging speeds of 618mph. The two great cities had never been closer! In August, he took part in the SBAC Challenge Cup race flying the 'standard' P1040. Averaging speeds of 510mph, Wade won the race and earned Hawker the coveted Geoffrey de Havilland trophy.

In 1950, Wade continued to test and evaluate Hawker's jet fighter designs and showcase the company's achievements. Both prototypes VP401 and VX279 were taken back to the factories of Armstrong-Siddeley & Hawker for modification. In the hands of Armstrong-Siddeley, VP401 was rebuilt to be powered by both the Nene jet engine and an Armstrong-Siddeley 'Snarler' rocket motor.

The 'new plane' was designated P1072. After a promising start to testing, during the sixth flight, the Snarler rocket exploded, causing serious damage to the tail. Only Wade's quick thinking and experience with the plane brought her back to the ground safely. The P1072 project was cancelled.

On the other hand, VX279 had seen a complete re-design at the Hawker works. The tail unit was re-built to a swept design and the outlet for the jet engine was completely new. Instead of the previous two outlets either side, VX279 was to be equipped with the more powerful Rolls Royce Tay engine, venting through the tail with an afterburner. Re-designated P1081, VX279 never received the Tay engine due to development trouble, so the Nene engine was re-fitted - but the plane created was a huge leap forward towards 'trans-sonic' flight.

Taking the P1081 for its maiden flight on June 19th, 1950 at Farnborough, Wade then spent the next three days further testing before flying to Antwerp for the 'International Air Display'. Over the course of the Show, loud-speaker announcements would herald 'Wimpy' Wade's approach in the new Hawker P1081 where he amazed both military and civilian spectators alike with fast rolls, near vertical climbs and an awe-inspiring top speed of Mach 0.95-695mph! The P1081 was widely rumoured to be Britain's fastest jet, maybe even the fastest in the world.

Over the next few months, various modifications were made to the P1081 to further improve performance and it remained at Farnborough where Wade continued testing into 1951. On Tuesday 3rd April 1951, Wade was detailed to take the P1081 for high-speed trials. Before taxiing to the runway, he was chatting to ground staff, engine running, his characteristic smiling, cheerful self.

High above the Sussex countryside, something went wrong. Exactly what happened will never be known, but Bob Peters and his staff saw the tragedy unfold. From Plashett Park farm, they watched as the jet approached from the south-west in a near vertical dive. Taking cover by some buildings, Bob watched as the jet plummeted into the fields a few hundred yards away and exploded, the wreck of the plane burying itself within the earth. People from nearby Little Norlington, who had also witnessed the crash, converged on the scene. No one, including Bob, had seen where the pilot came down. By the time police arrived, the locals had organised themselves into a search party 'combing' field by field to try and find the pilot, possibly tangled up in his parachute or laying injured somewhere. Late in the afternoon, S/L Wade was found in a wooded copse near Clayhill Farm, still strapped into the ML Aviation ejector seat partially embedded in the ground. He was pronounced dead on the scene.

Thus ended the life of one of Britain's most well-known and popular pilots of the 'new age'. At the inquest held a month later in Lewes, the Jury heard evidence from many eyewitnesses; including police who had attended the scene and aviation industry representatives. Returning a verdict of 'Accidental Death', no counts of negligence could be attributed to either S/L Wade or the Hawker Aircraft Co.

Something had gone wrong during a high-speed flight, exactly what, may never be known. Wade had activated his ML Aviation ejector seat which operated as it should, but unlike a Martin Baker seat, his did not have automatic release. Possibly knocked unconscious leaving the P1081 or by the resulting spin of the seat at such high speed, he was unable to release himself.

The jury paid their respects to *"A gentleman who unfortunately gave his life so tragically."*

S/L Trevor 'Wimpy' Wade (DFC & AFC) was 31 years old, leaving behind his wife Josephine and their three children. He, however, also left a clearer pathway for those who followed, having trod the knife-edge between success and failure in some of Britain's earliest jet fighter designs. Designs which eventually led to the Hawker Hunter - tested and made 'his own' by S/L Neville Duke. The Hunter is arguably one of Britain's most successful, long lived and possibly the most 'beautiful' fighter plane of post-WWII skies, a Spitfire of the jet age!

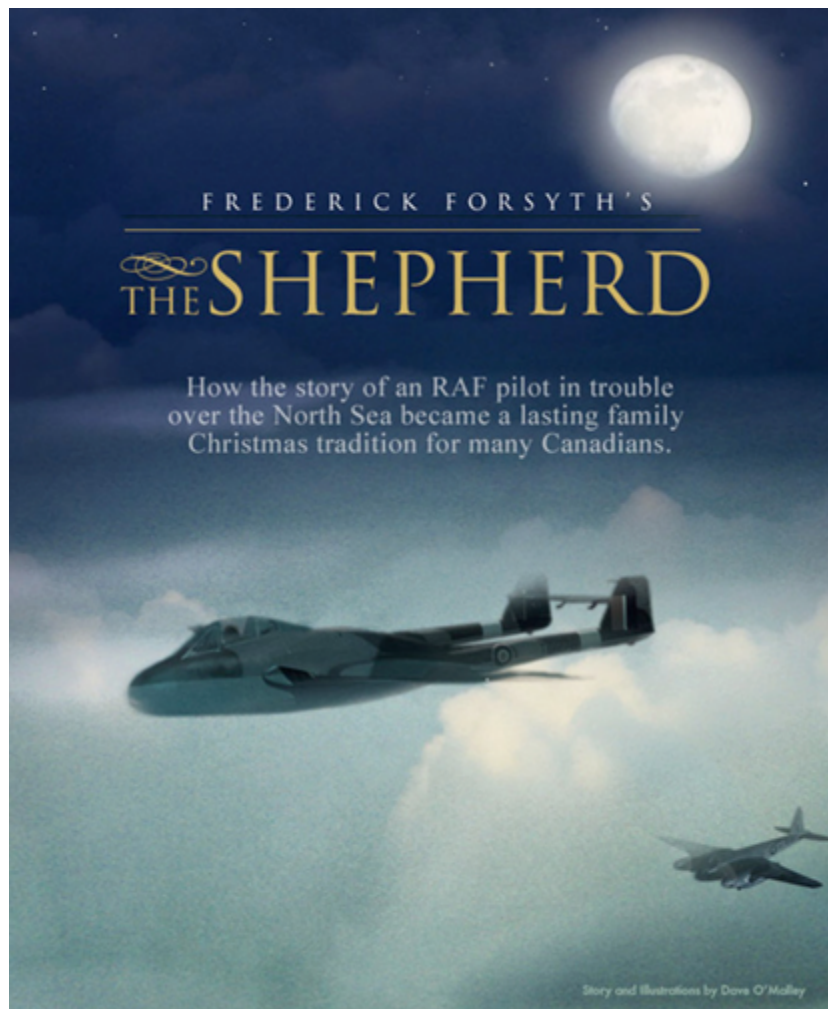
To 'Wimpy' (and all test pilots), 'Pathe News' paid this tribute:

"They look for the answers that Science and the drawing board cannot give. Up there, alone, they find it. Often at a price that a man can pay but once."



Wimpy' Wade with the jet and rocket powered P1072. Photo courtesy of Mr N Corbet.

**Ed Tyhurst,
Visitor Experience Assistant,
Newhaven Fort,
Newhaven.**



... with thanks to David and Lauren O'Malley

It is Christmas Eve and though just early evening, the dim light of winter is long receded, replaced by the orange vapour darkness of an urban night. Outside my house a Canadian hibernal front descends like a northern spirit to hush the city under a blanket of snow. Pressing my forehead against the windowpane, I feel the cold scrabbling at the glass and hear the faint swish of a trillion snowflakes crashing onto Adelaide Street. High above the walk, veils of snow sift across the streetlight's reach. It's a Christmas Eve most see only in greeting cards and the cinema. It's a Canadian Silent Night. On nights like this I am envious of no one.

Behind me, in the living room, a fire snaps loudly and cheerfully flings a spatter of embers at the fireplace screen. Light flares over my shoulder and I turn towards it, with three fingers of Bushmill's in my hand. Firelight throws an aurora borealis of shadow and light across the darkened room and onto the walls and ceiling. Along the mantle hangs the gleam of twenty-six silver Christmas ornaments dangling on red and green satin ribbons, each an annual gift from the family of a Mississippi fighter pilot friend. They represent to me what is wonderful about life and friends and aviation.

I watch my two beautiful daughters coming down the staircase now, dressed in their pyjamas and happy to be home. They skip past the glow of our little Christmas tree with the froth of wrapped gifts piling from its base and fight in jest over which couch they will occupy. They bring their pillows as they have always done and drag their duvets behind them like children. They are not children, however. They are now beautiful, serene, and grounded women living on their own. But tonight, they are home with me and Susan and about to share a tradition that, for them, goes back as far as they can remember. It's the night of '*The Shepherd*'.

Each Christmas Eve since it was first read nearly four decades ago, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation plays a recording of a forty-minute broadcast of Frederick Forsyth's supernatural and haunting ghost story called, *'The Shepherd'*. Forsyth, known worldwide for such fast-paced thrillers as *'The Day of the Jackal'* and *'Dogs of War'*, wrote *'The Shepherd'* in a day as a Christmas gift to his wife. As it turned out, it was a Christmas gift to the world, to Canada and to my daughters. One we have enjoyed together more than any.



"It's a very lonely place, the sky, even more so the sky on a winter's night. A single-seater jet fighter is a lonely home, a tiny steel box held aloft on stubby wings, hurled through freezing emptiness by a blazing tube throwing out the strength of six thousand horses every second that it burns"

The story cannot be explained or reviewed in finer terms than the stunningly perfect words Forsyth chose to tell it in, and relating its beauty, simplicity and imagery cannot convey its power over my family and our lives. So, I will not try. It is simply the short story of a Royal Air Force fighter pilot flying a de Havilland Vampire jet fighter back home from Germany in the winter of 1957. It is Christmas Eve in the story, as it is tonight, and the unknown pilot is trying to get home for Christmas when everything that could go wrong does. He finds himself over the North Sea at night, in winter, in the clag and without radio, navigational aid or time.

When all is lost and his fuel has thundered out the exhaust pipe and prayer is the only backup system still functioning, a ghostly silhouette of a de Havilland Mosquito fighter-bomber rises from the fog bank below him. And from this point, the finest-told ghost story of all time rises out of the mists along with the dark shape of the Mosquito.

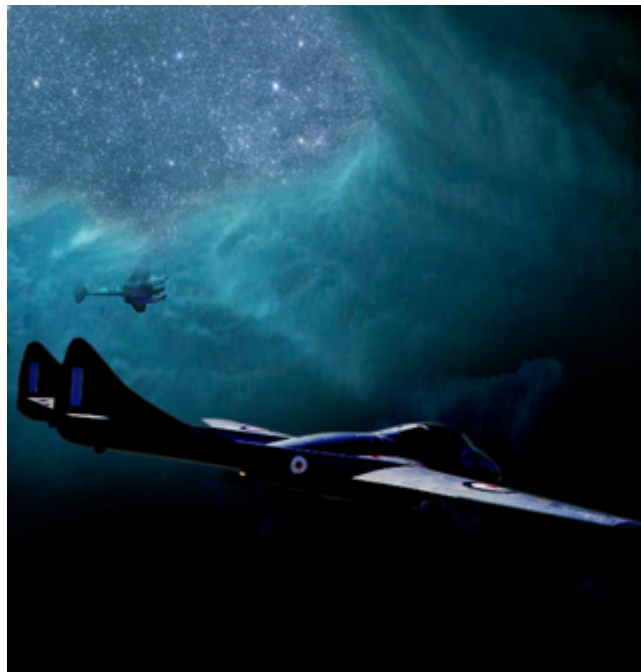
Each of us watches the same story with different eyes and emotions. That is the wonder of a radio play. I know what I see when the young pilot looks at the ghostly silhouette of the shepherd in the Mosquito's cockpit. I see clearly his hand signals and in the dark I make them myself. I often wonder what my daughters see. Over a decade ago, my eldest daughter, an art student at the time, painted for me a sketch of what she saw when she heard *'The Shepherd'*. The gift was not just the little painting, but the knowledge that these Eves before Christmas Day spent by the fire light listening to a

familiar tale, meant as much to my daughters as they did to me. My younger daughter even wears a tattoo of a de Havilland Mosquito on her skin. That's proof to me that those moments we shared in the darkness at home listening to 'The Shepherd' are now part of our family DNA.



Image by Lauren Grace O'Malley

The small painting of the moment the Vampire pilot sees *The Shepherd* emerging, along with hope, from the North Sea cloud.



"And then he came up towards me, swinging in towards my left-hand wing tip. I could make out the black hulk of him against the dim white sheet of fog below ..."

We have listened to it dozens of times now, but still, it grips us, raising the hairs on the backs of our necks. We sit in the dark, lit by firelight and the glow of the FM tuner and float in the darkness on the waves of chilling words that swell through the night. By now we can almost recite the story word for word, but we don't, preferring to shiver at the same places and smile in the darkness at the same place. My youngest daughter always gives a snort of laughter along with me at this pivotal moment—not for any humour, but for the staccato alliteration of its delivery. Such is Forsyth's skill, that we see

the barely distinguishable shape emerging from the cloud bank below, we hear the icy howl of the Goblin engine, and we feel the “*Bam, Bam, Bammity-bam, rumble, rumble*” of the fog-bound Minton runway. Frederick Forsyth was himself a National Service Royal Air Force Vampire pilot during the early 1950s—in fact the youngest in the RAF at the time.



“Without warning, the shepherd pointed a single forefinger at me, then forward through the windscreen. It meant “There you are, fly on and land”, I stared forward through the now streaming windscreen. Nothing. Then, yes, something. A blur to the left, another to the right, then two, one each side. Ringed with haze, there were lights either side of me, in pairs, flashing past. I forced my eyes to see what lay between them. Nothing, blackness.”

As the story ends and a tale of courage is told, Susan, my daughters and I are left silent at the end. While the music drifts away into the dark, we all lie there with our thoughts, and I know I feel as they do—that perhaps we are left a bit lonely and saddened knowing that a brave young man still flies the foggy night skies over the North Sea—never to come home, never to be warmed by fire or by love.

In those final moments, I sense in the faint light of a fire long since reduced to embers, the true nature of the supreme sacrifice so many young men made so long ago.

Young men who put the 20,000 beautiful days they were still due and the next 70 Christmas’s on the line for freedom and friends. It hurts to feel it in your gut, but it is a beautiful thing regardless.

When all is said and done, there is one great role a father can play for his daughters. That is to protect them, to bring them solace and hope, to lead them and to support them - to show them the way.

To be a Shepherd ...

Memories of Swannington

Written by Mike Hillier



Flight Sergeant John Arthur Leigh 1323194
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
157 Squadron
RAF Swannington

John was born on the 20th July 1923 in Croydon Surrey and was one of three children to parents Arthur Edward and Margaret Leigh.

John's father, known as Jack, was an office clerk working for an electricity company in Croydon, and when John left the John Ruskin School in Croydon, he followed in his father's footsteps also working as a clerk, but for a firm of chartered accountants in London.

At the outbreak of war, John was eager to 'do his bit'; however not being old enough to sign up for full military service, he joined the Local Defence Volunteer Force in Shirley in Surrey; the organisation of which, later became the 'Home Guard'. It soon became apparent, that John wanted to do more for his country, so when he became of age, he signed up to join the Royal Air Force. At this moment in time, the exact date of him signing on the dotted line is unclear, however, documents show that he enlisted in Oxford, sometime after November 1940.

After going through basic training and passing for aircrew selection, John was sent to Canada to attend the Elementary Flying Training School (EFTS), where he would do the obligatory 50 hours of basic flying instruction on a simple trainer like the De Havilland Tiger Moth, Fleet Finch, or Fairchild Cornell over an eight-week period of intense training.



Above – John sitting in the driver's seat surrounded by fellow flight school students.

Right – A Christmas postcard home, showing John ready to fly one of the de Havilland Tiger Moths seen in the background of the photograph.

The Elementary Schools were operated by civilian flying clubs under contract to the Royal Canadian Air Force and were staffed mainly by civilian flying instructors. For example, No. 12 EFTS Goderich was run by the Kitchener-Waterloo Flying Club and the County of Huron Flying Club. After eight weeks, the next step for John was the Service Flying Training School where he would finally gain his wings; he was then 19.





On completion of his flying training, and now proudly wearing his Pilot's brevet and with three tapes on his arm, John was posted to 157 Squadron of 100 Group based at RAF Swannington in Norfolk, where he would be flying the Mosquito XIX.

John (left) now qualified as a pilot. This was taken just before returning to Blighty to join his Squadron. Note the now official photograph stance for aircrew, standing with his hands in his pockets!

As RAF Swannington was less than an hours' drive away from home, John managed to get back to see his family whenever the opportunity arose. Here is as Best Man at his friend's wedding.



Seen here wearing his 'Sidcot' suit, a must for the high-level support sorties the Squadron so often flew.



(The name 'Sidcot' came from Sir Sidney Cotton, an Australian born inventor and aviation pioneer who flew combat during WW1. His experience with high level and low-temperature flying, led him in 1917, to develop his revolutionary new "Sidcot" suit, a flying suit which solved the problem pilots had in keeping warm in the cockpit. This flying suit was widely used by the RAF until the 1950s -Ed)

On the 12th September, 1944, he joined 157 Squadron at RAF Swannington and was teamed up with Sergeant Leonard Reginald Johnstone Lucas, a Navigator Radio/Operator, who was also posted to the Squadron on the same day.

For the next six months, John and his Navigator flew various mission sorties, which included High- and Low-Level Bomber Support and High-and Low-Level Intruder sorties. On the night of the 17th/18th December 1944, they chased and shot down an Me.110, which was confirmed as being "destroyed".

On the night of the 14th/15th January 1945, they once again chased and shot down another Me.110, which they claimed as “destroyed”, but which was later downgraded to that of “damaged”.

John and Leonard flew together as a team until the 4th March 1945, when both airmen were killed in action. Their aircraft, Mosquito XIX TA404 RS-M, one of six Mosquitos from 157 Squadron on a High-Level Intruder raid over Kamen in Northern Germany, was shot down.

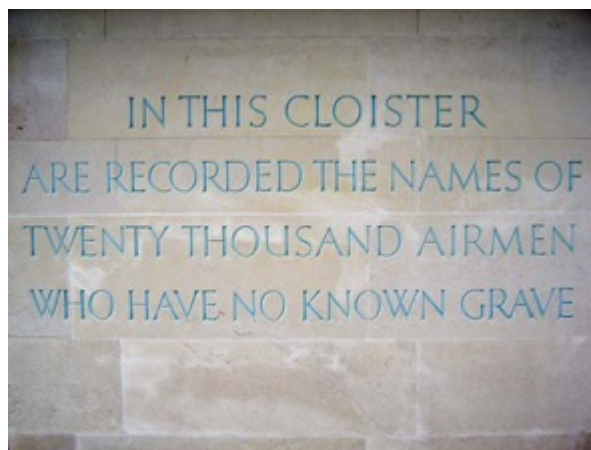
This was the 31st Operation they had flown together. Their aircraft and both airmen were lost without trace.

This photo shows John at home in Surrey with his mother, Margaret. This was possibly the last time she saw him alive.



Both men’s names are inscribed together on panel 271 of the Runnymede Air Forces Memorial in Surrey, England. This magnificent Memorial commemorates the more than 20,000 Service men and women of the Commonwealth Air Forces who died during Operations from bases in the United Kingdom and North and Western Europe, and who have no known grave.

Photographs by kind permission of Mike Leigh, Rob leigh and David Jeal.



The Air Force Memorial, Runnymede, Egham, Surrey, England.

F/Sgt. Leigh
Sgt. Lucas

INTRUDER PERSONAL COMBAT REPORT

A Night 17th/18th December 1944.
B "B" Flight, No.157 Squadron.
C Mosquito XIX.
D 2012 Hrs.
E 30 Miles N.N.E. of Ulm. (approx.)
F Fairly low cloud: good visibility: snow seen on ground.
G Nil.
H Nil.
J 1 Me.110 destroyed.

GENERAL REPORT.

One Mosquito XIX of 157 Squadron, Pilot F/Sgt. Leigh, Navigator Sgt. Lucas, was airborne Swannington 1738 hours on 17th December 1944 on High Level Support Patrol East Ulm. Patrol was reached at 1945 hours and after ten minutes a contact was obtained.

F/Sgt. Leigh reports;

"The patrol area was reached at 1945 hours. At 1955 hrs. Sgt Lucas gave me a contact, range 5 miles, slightly above in a position West of Ulm, which was chased to the target and lost in "window". At 2200 hrs. At 12,000 ft. another A.I contact was obtained on an aircraft orbiting the fires. We closed the range to 4,000 ft. when a fourth A.I. contact was obtained, range 4 miles, 30 degrees starboard on same level. Fortunately decided to chase second contact on a vector of approximately 030 degrees. We closed the range to 1,500 ft. where visual was obtained, believed to be a Me110, with long-range tanks. On closing range to 400 ft. this was confirmed by my navigator with the aid of night glasses. I gave it a two-second burst from about 100 yards, dead astern, and the fuselage immediately burst violently into flames. We broke away starboard to avoid debris. As we passed enemy aircraft by the light of the fire, we clearly saw the markings and radar aerals (FuGe202), and a member of the crew with a back-pack parachute was observed to bale out of the top hatch. At 2012 hrs. A brilliant explosion was seen on the ground in position approximately 30 miles N.N.E. of Ulm."

Claim: 1 Me110 Destroyed

Aircraft landed bases 2217 hrs.

Ammunition Expended:

S.A.F.I. 44
H.E.I. 36
TOTAL 80 rounds

Cine-Camera exposed automatically.

F/Sgt. Leigh
Sgt. Lucas

INTRUDER PERSONAL COMBAT REPORT

- A. Night 14th/15th January 1945.
- B. "B" Flight, No.157 Squadron.
- C. Mosquito XIX.
- D. 2330 hrs.
- E. 5030/1020.
- F. Visibility fairly good: 6/7 tenths of very patchy very low cloud or ground mist.
- G. NIL.
- H. NIL.
- J. 1 Me110 destroyed.
- K. NIL.

GENERAL REPORT.

One Mosquito XIX, Pilot F/Sgt. Leigh, Navigator Sgt. Lucas, of 157 Squadron, was airborne Swannington 2120 hrs. on 14th January 1945 on High Level Support MEININGER area (5035/1030). While on the way to patrol at 2305 hrs. a contact was obtained in the vicinity of the bomber stream.

F/Sgt. Leigh reports: -

"At 2305 hrs. while on route for our patrol point at about 5030/0900 Sgt. Lucas picked up two contacts, range 8 miles, slightly to port, of which we decided to chase the nearer. We quickly closed in on an aircraft weaving moderately showing no Type "F", which appeared to be "beacon-hopping" coastwards. I had quite a bit of trouble getting a visual at first as I had previously been suffering from oxygen lack, but after a while, with oxygen at emergency, I obtained a visual at about 800ft. On closing this proved to be a Me110 showing a small blue resin light between the starboard engine and the fuselage, confirmed by my navigator with the aid of Ross glasses. At 2330 hrs. height 13,00 ft., position 5030/1020, dropping back from 50-150 yards, I fired a 2-second burst observing many strikes on the fuselage and starboard wing root. As I fired a second burst the aircraft nosed over into a steep dive. Following, to give it a third burst, but no results were seen from either of the bursts. At 8,000 ft, the enemy aircraft still going straight down, we lost visual. We orbited for about five minutes hoping to see an explosion on the ground or to regain A.I. contact. Visibility in the area of the attack was fairly good, and there seemed to be 6/7 tenths of patchy very low cloud or ground mist. Seeing nothing we set course for our patrol point."

Claim: 1 Me.110 destroyed.

Mosquito landed at Woodbridge 0250 hrs.

Ammunition Expended:

S.A.P.I. 140

H.E.I. 140

Total 280 rounds

AMENDMENT TO INTRUDER PERSONAL COMBAT REPORT.

SW/157/47.

F/Sgt. Leigh & Sgt. Lucas.

This report should be amended in the Claim to read: - " 1 Me.110 damaged"

“Notable Quotes”

In 1944, the Air Officer Commanding No. 100 Group, the then Air Commodore Edward Barker Addison, said this of the activities of his unique command:



“No less valuable, however, have been the results obtained by those units, whose job it is to confound our enemies or to probe into his technical secrets. Although not so spectacular, these latter roles are of vital importance and frequently produce results, whose value either cannot be fully appreciated at the time, or, if known, cannot always be divulged for reasons of security.”

Photograph by kind permission of Rights and Images Department,
The National Portrait Gallery.

The impact of the Second World War on the Rural Landscape of Norfolk

By Stephen J Nunn BA, MA

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of History, University of East Anglia March 2019.

<https://ueaeprints.uea.ac.uk/id/eprint/79294/1/2019NunnSPhD.pdf>

Page 136

... The First World War airfield at Pulham, famously used for airship operations in the 1930s, though not an operational airbase in the Second World War, was used as a major aircraft salvage and disposal facility for the east of England during and after the Second World War.

The site is generally known to be contaminated by large numbers of scrapped, buried airframes. Press reports confirm findings of radioactive contaminants at Vaunce's Farm on the site. In particular, Radium-226 was used for luminosity in dials and instruments on military aircraft before and during the Second World War. Elsewhere, Fersfield, Little Snoring, North Creak, Oulton and Swannington airfields were all used for redundant aircraft storage postwar. Seething was also used post-war for munitions storage. Whilst similar direct correlations with Pulham cannot be made without forensic investigation, storage of materiel and associated degradation should not be discounted when considering the subsequent re-use of airfield sites. Environmental contamination of the airfield landscape is an issue that will undoubtedly be investigated in even more detail in the future...

See: Eastern Daily Press 19th Sept 2012 and the Diss Express 27th Sept 2012: Traces of a radioactive material were confirmed at a Norfolk airfield after seven artefacts were sent away for examination by scientists.

... With thanks again to Mike Hillier.

R.A.F SWANNINGTON.

Below the derelict Control Tower.

Some station events 1944--

5 Jun Operations commence 12 Mosquitoes 85 sqdn and 4 from 157sqn

Station cinema opened film 'Washington slept here'.

11 Jun First blood W/C Miller F/O Symon destroy a Me 110.

23 Jun New Merlin 25 engines being fitted to the Mosquitoes.

27 Jun First ENSA concert held.

30 Jun Station strength 128 Officers and 1206 other ranks.

July Squadrons 85 & 157 away at West Malling operating against V-1s

29 Aug Both sqdns returned to Swannington, 15 Dakotas brought back personnel. A V-1 Flying bomb was also brought back to the base where it was on exhibition until after the end of the war.

29 Aug New concert hall opened ENSA presented the Ralph Reader gang show.

3 Sep National day of prayer service held for all personnel at the Haveringland Parish Church on the airfield..

7 Sep A.O.Cs Parade. Russian Red Star presented to W/O Bushwell.

17 Sep Battle of Britain station parade and march past, salute taken by W/C R.G Slade station C.O, Band of The Royal Dorsetshire regiment led contingents from 85sq, 157sq, SHQ, WAAF and The Home Guard in the march past This was followed by a religious service taken by Rev Luscombe of Reepham Parish Church.



*This is the Swannington page from the Booklet about 100 Group, written by Mr Len Bartram.
With thanks once again to Mike Hillier*

A Letter from Arthur (Bomber) Harris



Some years ago, when the late Group Captain Hamish Mahaddie visited New Zealand on a lecture tour, he passed this letter on from Harris which members might find interesting.

Harris was getting old, hence the mistakes and amendments, but he said it as he saw it.

Photo courtesy of Stuart Borlase.

"Persuading Hamish Mahaddie to revert to his wartime Pathfinder role on my behalf during his present itinerary, I welcome this opportunity to send my greetings and my warmest regards to all Bomber Command "Old Lags", Aborigines, Maori's, and Whatever's or Whatareyou's. Not forgetting that 40% of Bomber Aircrew and 49% of Bomber Pilots came to our aid from the Dominions and Colonies, mainly as volunteers.

I would assure them all, that if they still need any such assurance, that their wartime efforts were a major cause of the enemy's defeat, in the Air, on Land and at Sea. If you want incontrovertible proof of that statement, you can now read it, repeated over and over again in the statements of Adolf Hitler, Goebbels and Albert Speer in the *Goebbels Diaries* and in Albert Speer's two books.

Not to mention Monty taking the opportunity of vast banquets in London and Cape Town, to publicly assert that *"The Bombers did more than anyone to win the War"*.

Rommel, Germany's best General, informed his superior once our invasion had got well established ashore in France: *"Stop the bombers or we cannot win. All we can gain by going on, is the loss of another city every night. If we have the Atom Bomb, drop it, or make peace!"*

But the Atom couldn't stop the bombing and they hadn't got the Bomb, because Hitler turned down the idea of producing one, saying it was all *"Jew Science"* and you know what happened to Rommel for speaking the truth!

General Sepp Dietrich, commanding the armoured spearhead of the Ardennes breakthrough on which the success of the whole enemy offensive had depended, was held up at Bastogne, and as so-called 'history' relates, an American General, who when called upon to surrender, replied with a mild four letter word, which it seems so shocked those tough and so nearly victorious soldiers, that they gave up, burst into tears, and went back home to complain to *Mother* about that rude man – or so 'history' infers!

However, when Hitler's urgent messenger, Albert Speer reached Sepp Dietrich's Headquarters and said, *"The Fuhrer's orders are, that you must not stop, you must go on at all costs"*, Sepp Dietrich replied *"Go on! How can we go on?! We have no ammunition left and all our supply lines have been cut by air attack!"*

In the atrocious weather during those critical few days and nights, only the night Bombers of Bomber Command were in continuous action, or at times at all. Tedder refers to that work.

Of the Bombers in his book 'Beyond Praise', Eisenhower said, in writing, *"Goddammit, they have achieved the impossible"* and Sepp Dietrich confirmed it to Albert Speer that night, as they listened to the continuous roar of the heavy four engine bombers overhead in the dark and mist, by saying –

"People don't realise, that not even the best troops can stand up to this heaving bombing! After an experience of it they lose all fighting spirit". (The Medico's call that shell-shock).

The General who surrendered Boulogne with 8,000 fit men also confirmed that, by writing in his diary which was captured with him –

"Can anyone survive when a carpet of bombs has fallen? One is driven to despair when at the mercy of the RAF without defence. All our fighting seems hopeless, all our casualties in vain".

Eisenhower also described Bomber Command as *"One of the most effective parts of his whole organisation, always seeking new ways of using their types of aircraft to help the Armies forward"*.

As for Goebbels, he and Albert Speer repeatedly assert in their writings that the strategic bombing was *"the cause of all our setbacks"* and Albert Speer further asserts in writing, that all the Allied War Books he has read miss that obvious fact and conclusion. He refers to the Strategic Bombing as, for Germany, *"The greatest lost Battle of all"*. The bombing destroyed and/or contrabanded hundreds more submarines and small war craft and more capital ships than the Royal Navy. It also annihilated the enemy merchant fleet on which their heavy war industries depended for the import of essential Scandinavian Ores (sic). In the air, bombing prevented the Germans from ever building up a worthwhile bombing force and made them concentrate entirely on the production of fighters and the training of day and night fighter pilots in a despairing effort, which failed to protect the Fatherland.

The anti-aircraft defence of Germany which failed to deter you "Old Lags", deprived the German armies on all fronts of 20,000, i.e half their vitally needed anti-tank guns and the 900,000 fit men needed to man those guns in Germany. Men who would otherwise have manned those essential anti-tank weapons on every enemy front, a major cause of the German armies defeat on every front.

Railway repairs to bomb damage kept another 80,000 skilled men fully employed in Germany and thousands more for repairs to bomb damage to essential war industries. All of those men, but for the bomber offensive, would have been additional highly skilled soldiers in the German armies in the field.

Speer also states that it was the very heavy RAF bombs that did the 'irreparable damage' to industrial plants and he has also expressed his astonishment at the extraordinary and ever increasing accuracy of the RAF's bombers on such small targets as Benzole plants, sometimes bombed blind through thousands of feet of cloud during the final stages of the war.

Our Official History describes the result of the Bombing of Berlin as 'not a failure, but a defeat'. But before any allied soldier got within 50 miles of Berlin, the Central Government of Germany had been virtually reduced by the bombing, to two maniacs – Hitler and Goebbels, cowering deep underground beneath the widespread ruin of the Capital city, issuing voluminous orders to practically phantom armies which either no longer existed or were in such position and condition as the make obedience to such orders impossible.

Meanwhile, those two maniacs were testing poison pills on a dog to see if they would suit their purpose, which they shortly carried out, murdering their own wives and children and committing suicide.

If London and the top Government of England had been reduced by German bombing to similar conditions and say, Winston Churchill and Brendan Bracken to the same position, state and the intentions (which is of course inconceivable), I wonder if any German Official History would describe that bombing as *'not a failure, but a defeat'*!

I leave that to your judgement and to the verdict of real history. Take my tip and get those Goebbels' and Speer's books and when your grandchildren ask you what you did in the Great War tell them to read them.

They'll get the true facts!"

Arthur Harris.

Reproduced with the kind permission of Lindsay Mouat,
New Zealand Bomber Command Association.

"Notable Quotes"– *Winston Churchill.*

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal - it is the courage to continue that counts."

"It is not enough that we do our best - sometimes we must do what is required."

"Never give in. Never give in. Never, never, never, never—in nothing, great or small, large or petty—never give in, except to convictions of honour and good sense. Never yield to force. Never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy."

"We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give."

"If you cannot read all your books...fondle them ... peer into them, let them fall open where they will, read from the first sentence that arrests the eye, set them back on the shelves with your own hands, arrange them on your own plan so that you at least know where they are. Let them be your friends; let them, at any rate, be your acquaintances."

"You have enemies? Good. That means you've stood up for something, sometime in your life."

Memories of a Meteorological Officer,

The Control Tower, RAF North Creake, 1944 -1945.



189888 Flying Officer R.W.Berrill
Meteorological Officer 1944-45.

I arrived at Wells next-the- sea station at the age of nineteen, to be met by a small RAF van which took me to RAF North Creake. My billet was a Nissan Hut shared by about 10 other men. The Hut had an iron stove in the middle of it, which was red hot during the winter evenings before going to bed, but in the morning any water in my portable washing bowl was frozen solid! We had to fetch water in a jug from the kitchen.

I was one of three Meteorological Officer's, and we worked the following shifts:

Day 1. 1pm – 10pm
Day 2. 8am – 1pm 10pm – 8am
Day 3. Free

Occasionally on free days, I would tour the area on my RAF bicycle.

The Control Tower

The main office was in the downstairs of the tower building, the only brick place built on the airfield. Other facilities in this area included a restroom for staff on shift.

Our Traffic Control was upstairs in the complex, complete with the viewing balcony. All our information came by Teleprinter in coded form – five sets of five numbers. The first three designated which station reports were coming from.

These reports included, Air pressure, wind speed and direction, ten designations of cloud at three different levels, dry and wet bulb temperatures and visibility. Visibility was extremely difficult to assess at night, especially if there was total cloud cover together with the blackout.



Four Stations UK wide reported separately, sending up balloons to record temperature, wind speed and direction. Weather Stations at sea were reporting also, these were never attacked because the Germans used the same information.

We notified Air Traffic Control daily of air pressure at sea level (QFE) and ground level (QFF), to enable the calibration of aircraft altimeters. All this information was decoded and plotted on a weather map by an Assistant and Isobars were drawn for the forecasting map. Maps were created every six hours for the local area and with as much information as we were able get, every twelve hours for Europe. Following D-Day, some reports came from France.

Thanks to Janet Hall for the photos of Roy Berrill.

Briefing

After following the weather during the afternoon, Group Headquarters sent the Official forecast for Operations that night. On one occasion an incident occurred when we at North Creake spotted a thunderstorm over South Lincolnshire. The Group forecast did not mention this and a few hours later the thunderstorm developed over North Creake and all Operations for that night were cancelled.

Forecasting was worked out on winds at 2000 feet, whereas today it is based on the Jet Stream. We knew about this but did not have the technology to make use of it. Aircraft flying in from the United States to Prestwick, flew across the Atlantic making use of the Jet Stream winds.

Some Incidents

One day I flew in a Stirling aircraft with a Canadian pilot on a test flight, he was going on 'Ops' that night. The Stirling was an awkward bomber, it had a very high nose and had to be stalled (pancaked) on to the runway. The pilot, "Tiny" Thurlow, 6'3" went out that night and was accidentally shot down by American gunners over Europe. He never returned. **(See Autumn/Winter issue 2020 for a detailed account of what happened. It's rather poignant that our Author was among the last to see Jack Thurlow alive. This reminds me of the story told by Winnifred Seeley, another of our Veteran family, when she drove a young Kiwi pilot, Colin Ashworth and his crew to their B17 one evening in November 1944 at RAF Oulton. He was in the cab with her chatting happily as she drove them out to the Dispersal. She watched them take off and climb away into the darkness but moments later something happened, and control of the aircraft was lost. The memory still brings immense sadness. The crew are buried at Cambridge City Cemetery – Ed.)**

Another Stirling on a test flight landed badly, crashed and burst into flames on the airfield, with machine gun ammunition detonating all over the area.

One night, the runway was lit up by rags dipped in cans of used engine oil; returning aircraft were followed in by unseen German night fighters, shooting up the airfield, but with very little damage.

One aircraft came back with some damage from ice, so we had to forecast icing levels: temperatures at which would allow ice to form on the aircraft and propellers.

Another problem North Sea Stratus cloud – ‘Fret’ or ‘Haar’. This is very difficult to forecast and on one occasion, all our aircraft had to be diverted because of a sudden ‘Fret’.

(A ‘Fret or Haar’ is a cold sea fog. It occurs off the east coast of England - and of course North Creak, usually between April and September and is caused when warm air passes over the cold waters of the North Sea and moisture in the air above condenses. It can drift several miles inland and can cause a significant drop in temperature – and visibility! -Ed)

V.E Day was an interesting one. The airfield was shut down, but the weather forecasting continued, with a Scots Station reporting visibility reduced by flying clods!

I was ordered by the Officer in Charge to buy as much beer as I could from the Breweries around. I managed to get one single barrel! Another result of V.E Day was that Ground Staff were offered a ‘Baedeker’ tour over Germany to see some of the damage. I went and flew over Cologne.

After V.J Day I was posted to a Station near Cambridge, thence overseas to Bombay, Singapore and Japan. I arrived in Hiroshima just one year after the atomic bomb had been dropped. I was demobbed in 1948.

R.W Berrill, July 2021.

R. W. Berrill



In Memory...

TRIBUTE TO DOROTHY MAY HUDSON

RAF Swannington Weather Girl

By daughter Kath Guthrie



I write a few words in memory of my late mother Dorothy May Hudson - 'a Met Girl' as she liked to be known. Sadly, she passed away on 13th June 2021.

My husband and I live in Suffolk some 240 miles away and the A14, M6 and all roads in between are a nightmare, but from January this year to date we made nine visits, some on my own, some with two cars and some together to give Mum the love and support she deserved, staying several weeks at a time in her lovely bungalow. She was a fighter as can be seen by her determination over the years with a no nonsense, no fuss, and 'get on with it' attitude.

She had been taken ill on Boxing Day, although despite her protestations, she had been failing during the lockdown and when we were able to visit her in July last, she was still fiercely independent and lived in her beautiful bungalow and wasn't going into any Home or have anyone live in with her! Too long a story to tell but she went into hospital with various ailments, missed by the GPs who had them sorted and under control. But whilst in hospital she caught Covid albeit asymptomatic. They sent her home without appropriate care. She battled on while I tried to arrange something more appropriate. But it was clear she couldn't stay at home, so her wish of dying in bed looking at her spring garden couldn't be met.

We managed to find a beautiful Nursing Home overlooking the River Dee and I took a five-minute video of her beautiful spring garden. She then kept asking to 'take me round my garden' on her iPad

when we went in, saying '... beautiful, beautiful ...' and indeed it was. So, we did our best and achieved at least part of her request.

Her funeral on the Wirral was a splendid affair and the wicker casket looked magnificent with a large arrangement of white roses and white and yellow freesias, which I always used to buy for her, a friend's yellow spray of roses, a small posy and the RAF red, white and blue tribute along with the RAF Standard which was very moving indeed.

Thank you all!

More about Mum:

Dorothy May was born in Birkenhead on 9th March 1926. She had two brothers and a sister, a dog named Rip, and a parrot named Polly to complete the family, along with her father and mother. She survived the Blitz giving first aid to those injured as her mother and she set up a First Aid Post shortly after five bombs dropped in Argyle Street Birkenhead.

Aged just short of her 16th birthday, she joined up and was posted to Speake, Sealand, County Durham, and on to RAF Swannington in Norfolk. Interestingly my late brother Keith attained his gliding pilot's licence and his PPL at RAF Sealand.

She has written several articles as a Met Girl for your Association under the title 'Bombers Moon' one of which is displayed in St Peters Church, Haveringland. Another request she had was that her ashes be scattered by the Memorial stone for the brave RAF men and women who served in Bomber Command as she was affiliated in Mosquito Squadrons 157 and 85 as a Met Girl. She would often relay stories of those times and her eyes light up as she told them with a glint of some of the mysteries she kept!

We used to join her at the Associations Reunion Dinners in Norfolk on Saturday nights, and you could see her in her element regaling those stories.

After demob she worked as a head typist for a local paint firm, but unfortunately fell down a flight of stairs which was to blight her in later life. She had the first of many operations being a pioneer for spinal fusion.

She worked at the Birkenhead News and Advertiser as the only secretary, working fast and furious as they met deadlines going to print. She then worked for Vestric, a subsidiary of Glaxo and in her later working life went to work for Wilson King Flour millers as assistant to the director whose family was known by us as I used to ride their pony! Dot had been very happy there until she retired.

Dorothy had a son and a daughter, Keith, and Kath. They went on many camping holidays and, despite not owning a car, bought a caravan and spent many a weekend in Llandudno junction and the Welsh hills enjoying the countryside and walking.

Her love of flowers and nature came through as she joined the U3A and spent many hours painting wildflowers. Mum was a talented artist, seamstress, flower arranger and knitter.

Sadly, her son, Keith, was killed in a car crash in 1988, six months after he had remarried. Despite her best efforts, time stood still for Dot, and she was never the same.

After my father died, she became a cruising widow with school friend Mildred and even whilst mum was so poorly, she kept asking how Mildred was and they sent each other good wishes and birthday cards.

She didn't suffer fools gladly and even took on Ken Livingston after being accused of not paying a congestion charge while in hospital having a hip operation. *Nonsense!* Someone had cloned her registration number. But they wouldn't back down even after being presented with all the evidence, so it was a twofold victory. They had to send a Barrister to Birkenhead and mum won!

She was indeed a bionic woman having had three new hips, two new knees, spinal fusion and two shoulder cuff repairs. They made them tough in those days! Sadly, she just couldn't overcome a small operation to remove a cancerous tag which, in fact, became a much bigger operation than expected.

Her body and she just gave up and I am so grateful I was able to spend quality time with her, particularly as many during the lockdowns in this pandemic could not.

I am hoping with the kindness of Mike Hillier, the Association and the landowner to achieve mum's final wish that her ashes be scattered at the Memorial Stone for RAF Swannington. I also have dried petals from funeral flowers to scatter with them.

Fly high Mum. Fly high.

Kath Guthrie

kathieg@btinternet.com



The old Control Tower complex at RAF Swannington in May 2018.

The building is now looking really sad.

Dorothy's office was behind the far window, ground level – Ed.

TRIBUTE TO 'DOT' HUDSON

From Janine Harrington



I was deeply shocked and saddened when Kathie wrote to me, telling me of her mother's death. For many years, 'Dot', as she was known, came to our Association Reunions and, as Kathie says above, had so many wonderful tales to tell as Weather Girl at RAF Swannington during wartime. Every morning when she opened the front door, her immediate reaction was to gaze up at the clouds, while she summarised what the day might bring in terms of weather. I loved listening to her recount the names of the clouds and tell me something about her role as Weather Girl. She kept saying how young she was, surrounded by so many young men, especially when pay day came around.



Dot and I became best friends. We shared so much. But then, with my cousin Guy living just a few doors down from her in Birkenhead, I spent many happy hours exploring her wonderful garden. I felt just like the little girl in the children's story: *'The Secret Garden'*, there was always so much to see and find. But then, the more we talked, the more we discovered we had in common. We both painted, both loved Nature and walking ... although both of us were hampered by various physical ailments. From her past, Dot also drew out information about Heswall School which she had attended in her younger days, and I realised suddenly that she and Mum might well have known one another as Mum attended that school also.

Dot's particular gifts were of Friendship and Support, of Compassion and Sharing. She would stand up for the underdog, without being afraid to knock against authority when needed. She'd speak how she felt. And the more I came to know her, the more I wanted to know. We would both burst out laughing when it came to 'Pill Parties'. Her laughter was infectious and could carry us through a whole day.

When she told me she didn't think she'd be coming to Reunions any more with the travel making her too tired to enjoy it properly once she arrived, it was sad. Saying our final goodbye drove us both to have tears in our eyes. Somehow, I knew we might not see one another again. But we kept in contact for as long as we were able. And when her daughter Kathie sent to say my dear and very wonderful friend had died, it still hurts today as I write this. We grew so close. I miss her like a close friend, a Soulmate, but also like a mum.

We shared some wonderful times together. Thanks, Dear Friend, for the memories. Know that I love you, that you will always have a special place in my heart.

Remember the Reunion, we took you by surprise, presenting you with the medals you didn't receive after the war? I knew Mum had received them and could not understand when you said you hadn't got yours. I'm just happy that particular wrong was righted, and you were able to show them off with pride.

The delight on your face says it all!

Finally, you have your wings and can fly high ...

Rest in Peace, Dearest Friend.

Love you xx

Janine



....and from Chris Lambert.

Hi Janine and Mike (Hillier),

How strange, I was only looking at a photograph of Dorothy yesterday, from a previous Reunion.

I too was a weather person, but in the Met office, so we had that in common.

I remember giving her a lift to revisit Swannington and we had a ride round the old Base. She remembered getting fish and chips from Cawston and the old Gym/sports hall.

Her memories were so warm, and she was so happy to return.

I am so happy she got the medals she so deserved, although somewhat late.

God bless You Dorothy.

Chris.

Chris Lambert, Oulton



*This will be a fond memory for some, a visit to RAF Swanton Morley back in 2007.
Some old familiar faces with Dot in the foreground.*

TRIBUTE TO PEGGY POLLARD

... from Janine



Peggy with Janine during the Summer of 2017

I was shocked and saddened when I heard from Geoff that his mother had died on 6th June this year. Peggy Pollard was a lovely lady, and I will always treasure the hours Stuart and I shared with her at her home. Geoff would join us from Brighton, especially during the filming of Peggy telling some of the many stories she had of wartime experiences. She was a WAAF based at RAF 100 (Bomber Support) Group's Headquarters at Bylaugh Hall, where she was a Clerk GD Shorthand Typist to Group Captain Porte.

After Reunion Weekends, Stuart and I would head off for four & five weeks to visit Veterans and their families around the UK ... while Stuart went on to extend these visits to include Canada, the U.S., and New Zealand. We share a passion for stories, especially those told by ordinary people who did extraordinary things. These were golden times for me, jetting about the countryside and cities, my competent driver, Stuart, at the wheel. We must have covered some 500 miles and more, and at times it was difficult even then, fitting in Pill Parties with Stuart having to plan about where to stop so I could take pills with a drink and something to eat. Oh, but it was so worth it! At every home we visited we were treated like Royalty, and it was an absolute joy to meet people I've been writing to for years over my 27 years with RAF 100 Group Association.

Peggy and I kept in contact and became firm friends, sharing everyday lives, speaking of things we'd do if we could, and generally keeping up with what was happening in the world. But then, it was something else again, something very special, to be able to sit there, in her lovely home, and share the joy, the privilege, of hearing her stories over a cup of tea and something naughty-but-nice to eat!!

God Bless You, Dearest Kindred Spirit.

Thank you for the memories ... the laughter, the joy of meeting, and with your son, learning so much more about your family. Geoff, you remain in my thoughts and prayers at this sad time.

Janine xx (and Stuart.)

Tribute to Mr James P Ostler – ‘JP’

DFC, French Legion of Honour

... with thanks to Jim Ostler and Stephen Hutton.



JP Ostler was born April 28, 1920, in Melrose Park, Illinois and was the youngest of three sons of English immigrant Charles Ostler, a house painter, and Johanna Murphy, who came to the U.S. from her native Ireland. J.P.'s future wife, Audrey Cahill grew up in Brooklyn. They were married in 1948 and moved to Arlington Heights, Illinois and raised their seven children, James Jr., Ray, Tom, Nancy, Bob, Kathy and Mike. JP worked as a Production Manager for Time Inc., the publisher of Time and Life magazines. He retired in 1985. His wife died in 2012. They were blessed with 12 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.



In my book *'Squadron of Deception'*, I recorded that J.P., as an Eight Air Force B17 Navigator, flew the first mission for the 803rd Bomb Squadron (Prov.) alongside RAF 100 Group aircraft flying from Oulton on the morning of D-Day. Captain Richard Obenschain and his crew were tasked to jam Nazi radar ahead of the Allied invasion. Once at their assigned position their B17 lost its #3 engine, but luckily were able to complete their flight on three engines.

JP is crouching 3rd from the left, looking directly at camera, with his fingers on the map.

By jamming the enemy radar, it has been officially recorded that this historic D-Day mission contributed materially to the success of the landings on the beachhead.

It must also be noted that J.P. and Airmen of the Capt. Obenschain crew, had already completed a hazardous tour flying 25 missions in the 388th Bomb Group, before joining in the Radar Counter Measures Program. Before D-Day, his services in the 388th had already earned him a Distinguished Flying Cross.

Then in August of 1944 with the formation of the new 36th Bomb Squadron Radar Counter Measure Unit now based at Cheddington, Commanding Officer Lt. Col. Robert Hambaugh appointed J.P. to his staff as Squadron Navigator. Because of his great services with the RAF 100 Group, J.P. was awarded the British Distinguished Flying Cross. The award was given by the Air Officer Commanding RAF 100 Group, Air Vice Marshal E.B. Addison.

At a special ceremony on 21st November 2019, JP received from the Honourable Guillaume Lacroix the Consul General of France, in Chicago, the 'Legion of Honour', the highest French order of merit, for both military and civil. The Consul General spoke for about 15-20 minutes before presenting J.P. with his medal. As reported in the *Daily Herald*, Lacroix when presenting the award said;

"What you did sir, as part of America's greatest generation, for us is a debt that we owe you ... and a debt that we cannot repay."



Photo courtesy of Brian OMahoney, Pioneer Press

So, now J.P. is honoured by three nations for his heroism. As reported in the '*Daily Herald*', J.P. summed it up when he said:

"The people to be honoured are the ones who didn't come back. When the guy who had the bunk next to you doesn't make it back and you did, you think about life and death differently."

"This is what we signed up to do. We're going to do it the best we can. And that's it. Nobody was particularly frightened; nobody was particularly joyful about what we did. It was a job that our generation had to do, and we did."



On a more personal note;

I met JP first on October 29th 2018 at his home in Arlington Heights and had the pleasure of spending time with him, his daughter Kathy and son-in-law Bob and had the opportunity to meet most of his family over the nearly two days I spent with them.

I remember arriving in a cab and being greeted by sight of three flags waving in the breeze from the front veranda; the US flag, the flag of the 8th Airforce and – the Australian flag!

The greatest pleasure for JP was being around his family and the warmth of the Ostler family's welcome, their generosity and wonderful hospitality shown me, will always be remembered and deeply appreciated.

JP passed away at home on the 17th June, aged 101 years.

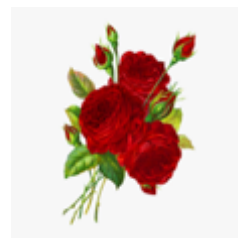
Stuart.



FINAL POSTINGS

Friends we've had to say goodbye to:

**MARTIN ALBERT STAUNTON,
EILEEN BOORMAN (NEE STAUNTON),
LEN AND EVELYN BARTRAM**



Founders of RAF 100 Group Association – Remembered in love

2018

- 9 Squadron** Rex Waters, New Zealander, took part in raids on *'Tirpitz'*, died February 2018.
- USAF 36th BS** Sergeant Lester Jones, Liberator B-24 Aerial Gunner, Sgt Landberg's crew, flying night missions w RAF 100 Group, died 16.1.2018, remembered by his family & all who served with him
- 223 Squadron** Dr Peter Lovatt, Squadron Leader, died in hospital 5.3.2018. Remembered with love by daughter Nina & Family. A well-known, well-loved Association member who regularly attended Reunions.
- 171 Squadron** Ernie Hughes, Flight Engineer. Died 11 June 2018. Remembered by crew member Jim 'Ginger' Fawcett, post-war friend Mel Carey, with fond memories carried by Janine H. & Stuart Borlase.
- 223 Squadron** Pilot Officer P. G. Nash. Died 5th May 2018. George is remembered with love by daughter Barbara, and friend Richard Forder.
- 223 Squadron** Ron Simmons, Mark Levy's Navigator, Mark Levy's Navigator; Aircraft: A for Apple, Name: AD LIB died November 2018. Loved & missed by all.
- 199/171 Sqn** Peter Sclaverano, W/O in 171, 199, 462 Sqns at North Creak. Died June 2018. Remembered with love by Janine as a good friend and all who knew him.
- 214 Squadron** Paul Henry, Navigator died Aug 2018. Remembered with love by cousin Victoria, & all on the Association. Attended Reunions regularly with wife Peggy, as a Founder Member.
- 214 Squadron** Flt/Lt James Wharton 'Dinty' Moore DFC died Aug 2018. Founding member of Association.
- 214 Squadron** Wing Commander John Wynne DFC died 19 November 2018. Remembered with love by wife & daughter. Son died just over one week previous to his father in a farming accident.
- 192 Squadron** Stanley Forsyth DFC, Special Operator. Died night of 22.9.2018. Remembered with love by his Family, Janine & Stuart, and all who served with and knew him. God Bless, till we meet again xx
- USAF 36th BS** S/Sgt Deacon Joseph 'Joe' Melita, Radio Operator on B24 *'Lady in the Dark'*, died 2018. Remembered for his 40+ years in the Roman Catholic Church, his deep faith, courage and love.
- USAF 36th BS** Art Brusila, Pilot, died 2 June 2018. Remembered by all who knew him.

2019

- 169 Squadron** Brian Odam, Groundcrew, died 7 Feb 2019. Missed & loved by daughter Rosemary.
- 171 Squadron** Jim 'Ginger' Fawcett died 1 March 2019. Remembered with love by wife Ruth and family.
- 171 Squadron** Henry 'Harry' Freegard died 8 July 2019. Lovingly remembered by son Alan & family.
- 214 Squadron** Wing Commander John Wynne DFC died 19 November 2018. Remembered with love by wife & daughter. Son died just over one week previous to his father in a farming accident.
- 214 Squadron** Flt Lt Vern L. Scantleton DFC died 11 April 2019. Received Legion D'Honneur in 2015
- 214 Squadron** WAAF MT Driver Daphne Rowlands serving w Win & Irene: *'The 3 Musketeers'*. Much loved xx

- 92 Squadron** Flt/Lt Signals Officer [Arthur Baxter Reid](#) died Saturday 14 Sept 2019. Remembered with love by son Arthur & Linda & his family; together with all who knew him. God Bless, till we meet again x
- 199 Squadron** Flt Lt [Roy H. Smith, Navigator](#) died 1 Aug 2019. Remembered in love by family.
- USAF 36th BS** [Donald Burch, Lt Boehm crew.](#) Remembered with love by all who knew him.
- USAF 36TH BS** [John 'Des' Howarth, Lt McCarthy crew in Lt. Boehm's B24 'Beast of Bourbon' when it crashed on Feb. 19, 1945.](#) Died Sunday 9.6.2019. Remembered with love by son Brian & all his family.
- USAF 36th BS** [Sgt Jack Hope, Tail Gunner for Lt Brookshire crew.](#) Remembered with love by wife & family.

2020/2021

- Co-Founder** [Evelyn Bartram, co-founder of this Association w husband Len, Martin & Eileen; has died.](#) Loved & remembered by family & all who knew her.
- 192 Squadron** [Warrant Officer Frank Elliott](#) died 16 April 2020. Missed & loved by son Paul & family, together with all in the Association who knew him.
- 192 Squadron** [Leading Aircraftsman Joseph Henry Sayers.](#) Joe died in January this year and is loved and missed by wife Mary and family, as well as his worldwide Family of Kindred Spirits.
- 171 Squadron** [Squadron Leader David Butler DFC, Rear Gunner,](#) died 2 February 2020. Missed by wife Edna and family, together with all who knew him.
- 214 Squadron** [Ken White, known as 'Chalky', served as Air Gunner,](#) died 21 May. Chalky was the final survivor of his crew who he remained in touch with through his life. Loved by son Ken and family.
- 223 Squadron** [Mr Len S Davies; passed away 25th August 2020. Served at RAF Oulton](#) and is believed to be the last of Flight Lieutenant Brigham's crew.
- 214 Squadron.** [Cyril Piper. Passed away December 2020.](#) Known as "Pip", he served with Sid Pike in F/Lt Don Austin's crew at RAF Oulton and then with F/Lt John Wynne until May 2nd 1945.
- 223 Squadron.** [Andrew Barron, aged 97 years and 9 months.](#) Served with 223 out of Oulton. Passed away peacefully on Saturday May 1st 2021, with his Wife Dorothea and Daughters Kati and Fiona by his side.
- 100 Group HQ** [Peggy Pollard aged 98 years.](#) Passed away June 6th. Served at Belaugh Hall, RAF 100 Group HQ as an Administrative Assistant to Group Captain Porte. Loved by her sister Pat and son Geoffrey.
- Swannington** [Dorothy Hudson left us on 13th June, 2021 aged 95 years.](#) Dearly loved by Daughter Kath and husband Richard. Dorothy served as a 'Weather girl' at Swannington and had a deep love for flowers and nature and became was a talented artist, seamstress, flower arranger and knitter.
- USAF 36th BS** ['JP' – James Ostler, passed away on 17th June, 2021](#) peacefully at his home in Arlington Heights. He served as a Navigator on B-17's and was awarded the DFC (US), the DFC (UK) and the French Legion of Honour. He is blest with a large family and is dearly loved and missed.

100 Group Order of Battle

SQD	AIRCRAFT	1st 100 GROUP OPERATION	BASE	SORTIES, LOSSES ROLL
192 US RCM	Mosquito, Halifax Wellington Lightnings	Dec 1943 Aug 44 – March 45	Foulsham	2171/5 Losses Electronic Intel/Elint
141	Beaufighters, Mosquito	Dec 1943	West Raynham	1214/11 Losses 80 EA, 58 Trains, 7 Ships Destroyed
219/239	Mosquito	Jan 1944	West Raynham	1394/9 Losses 51 En AC Destroyed
515	Mosquito	March 1944	Little Snoring	1366/21 losses 29 En AC Destroyed
169	Mosquito	Jan 1944	Little Snoring, Great Massingham	1247/13 Losses 25 En AC + 1 V1 Destroyed
214	Fortress	April 1944	Sculthorpe, Oulton	1225/13 Losses Electronic Jamming
199	Stirling, Halifax	May 1944	North Creak	1707/6 Losses Electronic Jamming
157	Mosquito	May 1944	Swannington West Malling	1336/6 Losses 37 En AC +39 V1 Destroyed
85	Mosquito	June 1944	Swannington West Malling	1190/7 Losses 71 En AC+30 V1 Destroyed
23	Mosquito	July 1944	Little Snoring	1067/8 Losses 18 En AC Destroyed
223	Liberator Fortress	Sept 1944	Oulton	625/3 Losses Electronic Jamming
171	Stirling, Halifax	Sept 1944	North Creak	1583/4 Losses Electronic Jamming
462 RAAF	Halifax	Jan 1945	Foulsham	621/7 Losses Jamming/Windows
36 & 803 BS	Boeing B-17F P38	Jan 1944	Sculthorpe, Oulton	1211/0 Losses Electronic Jamming
857 & 858 BS	Consolidated B-24G	Jan 1944	Oulton	280/2 Losses Electronic Jamming



Closing off this magazine, the 36th Bomb Squadron Crest, serves as a reminder of how RAF 100 (Bomber Support) Group and the 36th Bomb Squadron of the United States Air Force, working in joint Operations as two support forces, together, prosecuted the battle against Germany, from November 1943 to the end of the War in 1945'.

Created by Stuart Borlase. Jointly edited by Janine Harrington.

The front cover features the Halifax 3 that our President Mr Phil James MBE, served in as Flight Engineer, flying Operations out of Foulsham, in Norfolk.

Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped bring this magazine together with a collection of rare and wonderful stories & photographs.

To Arthur and Linda Reid,
with their effort in overseeing the packaging of this magazine and the logistics of seeing it posted to the four corners of the Globe.

To David and Tracey Mortimer and their team at
PRONTAPRINT in Scarborough, North Yorkshire,
a special thanks for their diligence, dedication and faithfulness
over many years in printing this magazine.

*'All content published within this magazine is copyright to the individual Author and represents their own views and beliefs.
This should be respected.'*

You are all very much appreciated.

