



Confound & Destroy

The magazine of RAF 100 Group Association

Spring 2019



RAF 100 Group Association Chairman Roger Dobson: Tel: [REDACTED]
RAF 100 Group Association Secretary Janine Harrington: Tel: [REDACTED]

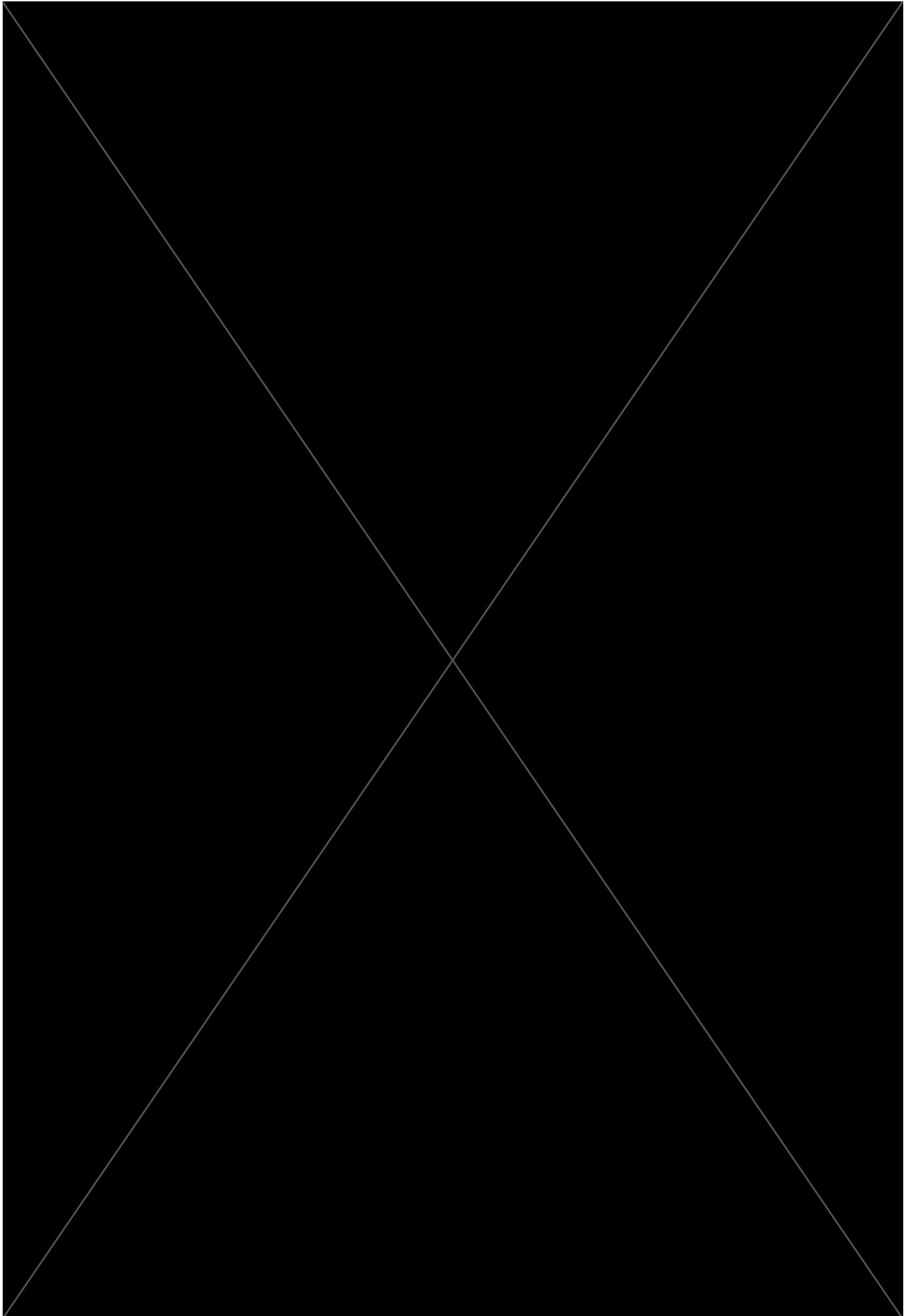
Email: raf100groupassociation@gmail.com

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



Dearest Kindred Spirits,

A very Happy, Healthy & Peaceful New Year to you all!

Christmas and New Year were filled with mixed blessings for me, and my heartfelt thanks go to the many who provided such an amazing wealth of cards, gifts, flowers, writings, etc. My daughter and her husband shared Christmas week with me, which is always special as I don't get to see them often due to work commitments and distance. We made the most of our time playing board games inherited from my own childhood, which in turn, Jo my daughter was brought up on. We have a tradition of adding to our collection each year, and this time both Jo and I contributed, me with '*Labyrinth*' and she with '*Top Secret*' both now firm favourites. However, this Christmas was always going to be that much more difficult given my diagnosis of Cancer now almost two years ago. I get exhausted quickly, sapped of energy and strength. Everything happens in slower time. Life is frustrating. I'm not having treatment, choosing to go for *quality* rather than *quantity* of life. Besides, I needed to bring out: '*RAF 100 Group – Reasons to Remember*' last year, a book marking the 75th Anniversary of the Group's formation. It was published on 23 August 2018. Now, my 29th publication is also published as of 11 January 2019: '*Always Believe – A Personal Journey of Faith*'. The publishers were worried I wasn't going to finish the latter, and we worked right up to Christmas Eve to get it to the printer from whom my first hard copy should arrive shortly before going into bookshops and Amazon. For those of you who know about my health issues, THANK YOU xx Your ongoing support and love remain more valued than words can say ...

It is with deep sadness I also need to share news of the deaths of two more veterans last year: [Vic Flowers](#), who served at North Creake and sadly passed away early 2018. Thank you, David Lang, as Vic's valued friend, for letting me know and sending his written memories of wartime. [Wing Commander John Wynne](#) of 214 Squadron died on 19 November 2018. Thanks, Peter Holness (Horsham St Faith) for the Obituary. Much appreciated. A brief summary can be found in the pages of this magazine. Both veterans are added to our Final Postings on the back pages.

This magazine provides a rich and very mixed bag of delights which I hope you will enjoy. I always feel so humbled by the tsunami of writings and emotion shared. I must also say a special THANK YOU to Stuart Borlase, our Australian representative and a firm friend who has been supporting me over the past few years, but especially this year in bringing together the Hotel Menu choices for our Reunion gathering in May. We'll be hoping as many as possible can come together for this not-to-be-missed event which, this year, has as our Singer at the main Saturday evening dinner, Fiona Harrison, known as '*Voice in a Million*', with her partner Paul Marsden who sings in Frank Sinatra style. They are both known for their 1940's theme in dress and song, and we look forward to meeting them. Our Speaker for the evening will be Nigel Morter of North Creake Control Tower. A full Reunion 2019 Programme accompanies this magazine.

I should also mention, before leaving you to enjoy the rest of this magazine packed with goodies, that I have a few [Special Edition 2019 Calendars](#) left for anyone who would like one: £15 including postage & packing, which offers cameos of the past, and memories of bygone Reunions.

Thank you one and all for the joy you bring, the love we share!

*Love & Hugs,
Janine xx*

Items for the magazine should be sent to:

Ms Janine Harrington

7 Ashley Court, Filey, North Yorkshire YO14 9LS

Tel: 01723 512544 raf100groupassociation@gmail.com

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

Firstly, on behalf of Vera and myself, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year.

The year 2018 proved to be another challenging one for us, and consequently we were unable to make the May Reunion due to health issues.

As I write this letter, I am currently recovering from a broken neck due to a fall at home and am glad to say that, with the continued support of my family and dedication of one of the top spinal consultants at Morriston Hospital, I am well on the way to recovery, albeit a little slower on my feet.

However, from what I have heard and read, the Reunion last year was another successful weekend thoroughly enjoyed by all. The Flypast by my good friend David Nock looked amazing once again. A lot of hard work is put into organising these weekends so that we can all be together and have a catch up, and thanks to Janine for her endless efforts to make sure we do!

Many celebrations took place during 2018 and it gave us all time to reflect, remember all those lost, and give thanks for all who survived the 1914-1918 war. As schools included World War II in their curriculum, it gave us another opportunity to relay our stories and experiences, and as a Veteran, I had the pleasure of being involved in projects at my grand-daughter Tracey's school, and was humbled by the interest and respect shown by the pupils.

The past year once again saw the passing of some members, our dear friend Stan Forsyth DFC included, and he will be sadly missed by us all.

I was fortunate enough to be invited to attend the Opening of the International Bomber Command Memorial in Lincoln in April 2018 and to see the Spire and the walls containing the names of the 50,000+ people who lost their lives in Bomber Command. It was very moving, but I was able to meet up with some fellow Veterans and we were all very well looked after.

To the Chairman, Committee, and indeed everyone in RAF 100 Group, I say keep up the good work. To the staff at the City of Norwich Aviation Museum I say: '*Thank You*', talk to everyone and listen. Many visitors have wonderful stories to tell. To the residents at Oulton and Foulsham, thank you for your continued support, your kindness is much appreciated. To all of you who are involved in so many ways I say: '*Keep the Association going!*' It is important for our future generations.

Finally, best wishes to you all. Hope you have a healthy and happy 2019. And to Janine, keep up the excellent work on the magazine. It is read worldwide and enjoyed immensely.

Regards,

Phil James MBE

Phil James MBE
President RAF 100 Group Association

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



Dear Friends,

The festive break is almost over. At home in Anglesey we are enjoying an unseasonal warm and dry period. This is the first time that I have been mowing grass in January! Alongside celebrations shared with friends and family, we were treated to old favourites on television – this year, we had rediscovered footage of early 'Morecombe and Wise' shows. For me, there was special interest in a documentary about the sinking of Germany's mighty battleship, the '*Tirpitz*' (sister to the '*Bismark*').

The '*Tirpitz*' was the most powerful warship of its time and posed a major threat. Churchill described it as '*The Beast*'. The RAF made several attempts to neutralise the '*Tirpitz*'. In 1941, it was bombed in dry dock. In 1942, Halifaxes and Lancasters tried again, but failed to cause significant damage.

The Royal Navy attacked with miniature submarines and carrier-based aircraft but had little effect upon the double-layer of armour-plating. Barnes Wallis, of '*bouncing bomb*' fame, designed a massive 12,000lb bomb capable of piercing the '*Tirpitz*' armour plating. '*Tallboy*' exceeded the speed of sound in its descent and a near miss would still cause considerable damage.

'*Tirpitz*' had been moved into a fjord in northern Norway where she threatened the Arctic convoys. This was too far north to be attacked by air from the UK. The task of sinking her was given to No.9 and 617 Squadrons, which were to go to Yogodnik, near Archangel, a staging base in Russia, to attack '*Tirpitz*' with Tallboy bombs.

On 15 September 1944, the RAF bombers struck the battleship in the forecastle, which rendered her unseaworthy. She was sent to the Tromsø fjord where temporary repairs were made and she was anchored on a floating battery. This fjord was in range of bombers operating from Scotland, and it was from there in October, she was attacked again, but cloud cover thwarted the attack. The final attack took place on 12 November 1944. Thirty Lancasters from No.9 Squadron led by S/L A. G. Williams DFC and No.617 Squadron led by Wing Commander J. B. '*Willie*' Tait DSO, DFC took off from Scotland. The weather was clear as the bombers flew at 1,000ft to avoid early detection by enemy Radar prior to rendezvousing at a lake 100 miles south-east of Tromsø. The attacking force then climbed to bombing height – between 12,000 and 16,000ft – and the warship was sighted from about 20 miles away.

For some reason, despite frantic calls for air cover to the German fighter base at Bardufoss, not a single fighter seems to have taken off. There was no smokescreen as the Lancasters passed over the last mountain and the fjord as the '*Tirpitz*' came into view. When the bombers were about 13 miles away, the anti-aircraft guns of the '*Tirpitz*' opened fire and were then joined by shore batteries and two flak ships. The bombs were released, and crews waited thirty long seconds for the result. The first bombs narrowly missed the target. But then a great yellow flash burst on the foredeck and the '*Tirpitz*' was seen to tremble as it was hit by at least two Tallboys. A column of steam and smoke shot up to about 300ft and within a few minutes, the ship had started to list badly. It then suffered a tremendous explosion as the ammunition stores magazine went up. She rolled over to port and capsized. About ten minutes after the first bomb struck, the '*Tirpitz*' had completely turned turtle with only the hull visible from the air. Approximately 1,000 of her crew were killed. None of the attacking aircraft were significantly damaged and all returned safely to Base.

The TV Documentary speculated that the RAF achieving this success without loss was not simply down to good luck and that an anti-Nazi German Officer in charge of a key Radar Station may have deliberately delayed alerting the fighters. I suspect that another contributor was probably the secret work of RAF 100 Group. We know that our own Stan Forsyth DFC was instrumental in locating the '*Tirpitz*' and that our President, Phil James MBE of 192 Squadron, supported the bombers on this raid. One of the German fighter pilots was interviewed and asked about his reflections on the raid. He was clearly frustrated that he arrived on the scene too late to attack our Lancasters. However, with the passage of seventy years, he expressed his sadness at the needless loss of life by brave combatants supporting their respective causes.

2019 commences with greater uncertainty than we have known for many generations as we await the result of seemingly intractable Brexit negotiations. It seems to me that one important dimension of the debate has been largely neglected. Europe has probably enjoyed a longer period of peace than we have experienced since we played host to Norman the Conqueror. The architects of the original EEC were motivated by a belief that, if economies of Europe were integrated, then the risks of war would be much less. And so, it has been – I am the first generation of my family not to be called to arms. I hope that abandoning our European friends will not be judged by history as an act of folly.

Very best wishes,



Roger Dobson

Tir A Môr Uchaf, Cemaes Bay, Isle of Anglesey

8th AIR FORCE REPRESENTATIVE

Stephen Hutton



Hello Friends,

News from the States is truly one of Friendship and Fellowship. My wife Pam and I were very happy to host our RAF 100 Group Australian friend Stuart Borlase during his trip to the States last October. You may recall that, during past years, Stuart and our Association Secretary Janine travelled about Great Britain interviewing and filming Association WWII veterans. For



some time now, Stuart desired to visit the U.S. to do the same for the American Gremlins. So then, for a week last October, in order to help him accomplish his task, we entertained Stuart to give him a taste of our part of the country during his travels here.

Stuart began his U.S. Adventure visiting 36th Squadron Tail Gunner Rafael Ramos and his lovely wife Kitty at their home in Bradenton, Florida, where he enjoyed a splendid time. Both Rafi and Kitty, you may recall, attended our 2017 Annual Reunion Celebration.



Rafi & Kitty Ramos taken 2017 by Stuart

After spending a few days being wined and dined by Rafi and Kitty, Stuart then flew north to join us here in North Carolina, just in time for 'Hurricane Michael'! 'Michael' had fortunately narrowly missed Rafi and Kitty but was now headed our way. Where it would hit in our State was still unknown, so then, of course, Pam and I felt with Stuart coming, it would be wise to head for higher ground. When Stuart arrived, we headed west the next day for our cabin in the mountains. That turned out to be a good decision because, as it happened, the ravaged path of death and destruction from 'Michael' did pass between our home outside Raleigh and our coastline.



Wining & Dining at Pam's Kitchen

Once at our cabin, we settled in for some quality R&R and for only a short time, watch the harmless wind and rain from 'Michael'. Being inside wasn't bad either in that we relaxed and watched some classic old war movies and better still, savoured some of Pam's delicious cooking – like spaghetti and meatballs! The weather did improve after a few days and we were able to get out and roam about our property where Stuart got to work the buttons on his camera to capture some of nature's sights.

On leaving our cabin for home, we made a stop at 'Pamz Produce', one of my favourite spots for local honey (*which Stuart simply craves!*) and southern style boiled peanuts (*that I crave!*). There we met our friends Donny and Pam, the Proprietors and great people.

They were chatting with a couple of locals, the fellow of which entertained us all with a song he sang with such great meaning and spirit entitled: 'Three Crosses and a Flag'. Wow! It was simply terrific! The man had quite a voice. We all enjoyed it so much that, on request, the fellows came back and sang another verse for us.

We returned home to find our house safe and sound, with only a bunch of tree limbs, sticks and leaves strewn about by the storm. Seeing my messy yard, Stuart lent a hand and grabbed the wheelbarrow, filled it up, and dumped it on our brush pile more than once.



Not wanting to work Stuart his entire visit, Pam and I loaded him up in our car and headed south toward Savannah, Georgia, to see the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum there. That's one fantastic Museum to take in – a must-see for WWII history buffs! The aircraft, artifacts, interactive displays, videos, library, gardens and Chapel are done very well and truly magnificent. Stuart was like a kid in a candy shop! Not seeing all the exhibits and everything the first day, Stuart sweet-talked the Museum cashier into letting us in for free the next day. Boy, we really got our eyes full!! What a BIG TIME!



Stuart at 8AM Memorial Gardens

Yes, Pam and I were only part of Stuart's special mission in America for he had to leave us and continue on to visit and interview more Gremlins. His next stop was to Philadelphia, PA to see another 36th Squadron veteran – George Eberwine, Tail Gunner for Lt Norman Landberg crew. George survived the take-off crash of their B24 Liberator from Cheddington on the morning of Nov 15, 1944 when two of his fellow crewmen were killed.

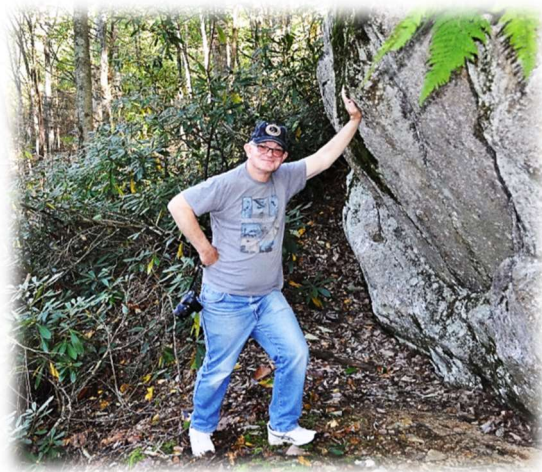
From there, Stuart would move on toward Chicago, IL, to interview and capture the experiences of James – 'J.P.' Ostler, the 36th Squadron Lead Navigator who flew on D-Day. Finally, Stuart was able to press on into Canada and arrange an especially valuable interview with 214 Squadron pilot Murray Peden, DFC, QC, LLB. Murray is the noted author of many books, including: *'A Thousand Shall Fall'*, a book about his exciting days flying in RAF 100 Group. That book is a terrific read, one of my favourites and most highly recommended!

Wow! What a fantastic whirlwind journey for Stuart! He's a great guy! And oh, how we enjoyed the wonderful fun and fellowship. The reports back that we heard from Rafi and Kitty, George, J.P. and Murray were the same as to how much they also enjoyed his company and great interest in hearing their tales from those thrilling World War II days.

There you have it – my story from across The Pond!

Let me end and say – Stuart, thank you for visiting us and for interviewing and capturing on film the personal experiences of those noble and brave RAF and 8th Air Force Gremlins. Your DVD video, ‘*Memories of May – The RAF 100 Group 20th Anniversary Reunion, Norfolk, England 2017*’ was just super and we anxiously anticipate feasting our eyes on your next video production!!

Thank you for being our Friend. Come back and see us again!!



Stuart at Huttons Hill Rock



Pam & me at the 8AF Museum

With love,

Stephen & Pam Hutton

Author: ‘*Squadron of Deception*’

8th Air Force Historical Society Unit Contact

36th Bomb Squadron RCM

Website: www.36rcm.com. Email: smhutton@36rcm.com

Tel: [919-772-8413](tel:919-772-8413). Cell: [919-413-0876](tel:919-413-0876)

LETTERS PAGES



SPRING FINDS GAJETY—AND A SHEPHERD—IN LONDON'S PARK



Hyde Park, London, 1949

'In Hyde Park the Spring sun shines. Not even the prospect of another austerity year for Britons could spoil the joy that has come with it, the kind of joy that expresses itself among women in the donning of a saucy, gay hat and colourful dress.

While in the greensward of Kensington Gardens, an extension of the famous Park, young Patrick Milne from Aberdeenshire, tends his sheep as is customary at this time of the year, the dress parade in Rotten Row is reviving.

Clothes rationing has ended. Not for ten years, since grim 1939 put paid to a lot of colour in London life, have Londoners celebrated the coming of Spring and going of Winter in that careless, happy parade when new kaleidoscope fashions combine with smiling faces and sun-lit gardens, when couples link arms and brush against famous stage and film stars, when the Serpentine glitters and the boats are newly painted. So, the personal etiquette has not been too carefully scrutinised. London shops have sold lots of women's hats trimmed with bright colours, straw hats with ribbons, bright ties for men, brown brimmed hats, gay sticks. The dogs in the Park wear collars and leads in Scottish plaid patterns. And it is tulip time in Hyde Park.

Here and there among the crowds a particularly well-dressed girl walks with handsome escort. We saw five of them within a few yards, they were mannequins, the fashion designer had not been slow to grasp a pleasant advertising opportunity; and one highly popular actress has given notice of her latest hat – which will have a bird swinging on a built-in perch.

In other words, a welcome light-heartedness is in the London atmosphere.'

Newspaper clipping saved by my mother, Nina Harrington, from 1949.



Dear Janine,

On 24 December in the late afternoon, volunteers of the Aeronautical and War Museum Texel (initiated by Mr Bram van Dijk and me) together with several school children and parents, placed candle lights in front of all the war graves at the Texel (Den Burg) Cemetery.

We are not the first cemetery here in Holland to place candles in front of graves. It was done in Holland for the first time in 1991 at the Holten Canadian War Cemetery, and there are some 300 locations (most CWGC cemeteries) where they do it. As this is our first year, you could say we're even a bit late in doing so, but as from now, it will be repeated every year! This is a custom 'imported' from Finland where it is tradition to place a burning candle on the graves of loved ones.



Jan

Jan Nieuwenhuis

jan@airwar4045.nl

Texel Island, The Netherlands. Website: <https://www.airwar4045.nl>

Dear Janine,

Many thanks for yet another informative Winter edition of the magazine. You never know where a small piece of information in it might lead. On page 26, you have a link with a Dutch website of crashed aircraft. In it is the crash in which my partner Lalla's father, Wing Commander V.Q. Blackden, died near Lemmer in Holland. It even provides information that we never had before.

I did follow up on what I said I would do in asking The National Archives for special access to any information they have for RAF 100 Group and its Squadrons. But they said all they have is now digital and available online - free, if you go to The National Archives, but otherwise you pay quite a large sum to view each page, although indexes are free. I really wanted to set something up whereby we could answer questions for those without computers or are unsure how to search, but it seems not to be.

If anyone wants to look, start here: <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C590353>

Regrettably,

Eric

Eric Dickens

edickens@virginmedia.com



Dear Janine,

I wanted you to know how I remembered Ernie (RAF 100 Group veteran Ernie Hughes, Flight Engineer, 171 Sqn, died 11.6.2018). To celebrate 100 years RAF, our area in Wales had a token going from branch to branch. To raise awareness, we were going to organise an 'Event'. We had the token arrive at a social gathering where I gave a brief word about RAFA. During the Presentation, I read one of Ernie's poems. The Chairman of Brecon was there, and he wanted a copy. I also read excerpts from tributes paid to Ernie in the Association magazine.

The week before Battle of Britain Sunday, I was taking the service in our Chapel, so I used it to pay tribute to the RAF and the work of the RAFA, and in that service also paid tribute to Ernie, highlighting the debt we owed to the 'Ernies' and men and women of that generation. Again, I read one of his poems.

Can I take this opportunity to thank you for all the work you do for the RAF 100 Group Association. I enjoy reading the magazine and find it very informative about an aspect of the RAF I knew nothing about. I know you do not enjoy good health at present, but hope you have an enjoyable Christmas.

With good wishes,

Vivien

Vivien Williams

RAFA Welfare, Llanidloes, WALES

NOTE: My heartfelt thanks to Vivien, who was the sole voice to actively respond to my urgent calls for help and support for Veteran Ernie Hugh desperately in need (171 Sqn, North Creak), visiting him often in the Care Home where he resided. Her visits were always warm and welcoming, something Ernie looked forward to and, in turn, became a topic of conversation during evenings when Ernie and I spoke on the phone. She became his one bright star amidst the gathering gloom of despair and darkness which surrounded him. On behalf of my dearest friend Ernie, thank you, Vivien, for the patience, love and care you gave to him.



Kevin & Geraldine McCann, w Stan Forsyth DFC centre

Hi Janine,

As you know, my late father Wilf (Geordie) McCann was a crewmate of the late Mr Stan Forsyth who was with 192 Squadron and a Flight Sergeant at the time of spotting the 'Tirpitz'. My father would have been the W/O who reported the historical sighting of the German battleship which Stan spotted.

When I was a teenager, I would say (and believe me, I asked him a hell of a lot of times!) 'What did you do in the war, Dad?' 'I listened to Glen Miller, Kev,' was all he'd say. So, he respected the 100 Year Secrets Act. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr Stan Forsyth DFC in Southport at his lovely bungalow where his daughters very kindly provided a nice buffet for my kid sister Geraldine and I. We talked, looked at photographs, while our Gel fell in love with Stan. She wanted to take him back to Geordie-land! I really enjoyed talking to him, and what a memory he had. He told me about my father when he was a young lad (22). Stan was as sharp as a tack! I still keep in touch with Linda, Stan's daughter, who is coming up to Newcastle with sister Ali. They fancy going to the Metro Centre five minutes from my house. I'll drop them off at the Metro, but I ain't going shopping!!

Regards

Kevin

Kevin McCann



Good morning Janine,

Thanks so much for your emails. You write with such lovely eloquence ... I wish I had that talent! Yes, we were so sad to hear the news about Stan. We all so enjoyed meeting him and his lovely caring family last year, their care and love for Stan was so evident. I just loved and took to his cheeky sense of humour, I could have taken him home! You were so kind having a surprise party, arranging an Oscar (*created specially for Stan because of the easy gentle way in which he shared his wartime experiences on film with Stuart Borlase*). It clearly brought such great joy to him and so many others. I have such fond memories of last year's Reunion. We speak about it to everyone, telling how welcoming we were made to feel, and what a truly wonderful lady you are ... I also love the Special Edition 2019 Calendar, and was tickled to see Ms and Misters December, with a great photo of you and the boys. I remember you saying those words as it was taken: 'A rose between two thorns' ...

Linda, Arthur Jnr, Arthur Snr (Veteran 192 Squadron, Foulsham)

The Reid Family

NOTE: Don't miss the article featured in later pages of this magazine of Arthur Reid Snr receiving an Official Award, with news of how other veterans can apply!



Dear Janine,

It is so good to receive your letters and the RAF 100 Group Association Magazine. They make me feel I still belong to the outside world. Sometimes we can feel as if we're in a confined space, when really, I live in a wonderful Care Home with many friends here. But hearing from you is a connection with the past, and friends I shared very different experiences with in wartime. I'm sending you the photo of Win ([Winifred Seeley](#)), Daphne ([Daphne Rowlands](#)) and myself, [Irene Houghton](#). 'The Three Musketeers' seems very apt! We certainly have many memories.



*The Three Musketeers
Win, Daphne, Irene*

I sincerely hope your health problems will not cause too much pain over winter months. I feel so lucky that my health is quite good and am still able to get about a little. The Lord has taken great care of me, and I believe always will, as He does everything and everyone.

I am so pleased I became a member of the Association. I think of what happened during the war and things we conjured up to make ourselves happy together. They were good days, taking in all the considerations of life in wartime. I find myself splitting my life into sections. School was learning education. Teenage was spoiled by war and war years then became a part of life. Thank the Lord the rest of my life has been exceptionally good and happy. So now we come to the last few years. I'm trying to keep things positive and as they always have been as much as I can, trying to have a little walk every day and gentle exercise. This is a Care Home and I'm settled; but now I have a wider network of friends to think about again.

I often think of the time I was in Shropshire. I didn't know Daphne then, but Win and I were friends. We had to bike from the Billet to the Cook House. It was through a wood, and coming from a town originally, we marvelled at seeing red squirrels and woodland creatures running around us.



Every night I say my prayers and thank the Lord for a wonderful life, while spending quite a few hours reliving everything I can remember, hoping I still have a few more years to recall all the good ones. It's always good to receive your letters, but I pray each night that you and all people living with pain and heartache will get lots of help from the Lord and feel much better. You do a brilliant job with the magazine. I was particularly interested in the section about Blickling Hall. Win and I were also stationed there.

The WAAF Billets were in grounds at the back of the Hall. I have a photo of Patricia Roc with some of the MT Section taken there ([shown above](#)). Those memories never go away, do they. But as the years pass it is so good to relive them.

Sadly, with Winter upon us, I'm not able to walk out very much, but we are all so comfortable in this house and looked after well, with lots of Christmas trees and trimmings. So, I'll say 'Goodnight' now Janine, and I would like to wish everyone in the world much joy and happiness over the festive season. My prayers to everyone for the New Year ahead.

Love [Irene](#)

Irene Houghton

Dear Janine,

The Winter Journal was marvellous as usual and thank you for your hard work. Also, thank you for publishing my letter where I ended up drawing attention to the Association supporting the work that's going on in respect of the Stirling. This letter is just to inform members that we have a new Secretary for the Stirling Aircraft Project and I hasten to correct my previous statement. The new Secretary/Editor is Mr Cliff Fowler, 'Newstead', Spur Rd, Barnham Broom, Norfolk NR9 4BY. Their latest newsletter is full of progress on this complex aircraft, and they are asking for more helpers to get the job done ... any help would be appreciated.

As an additional note of interest, I was reading your book: 'RAF 100 Group – Kindred Spirits' when, on getting to page 487, the same day I was reading the *Daily Mail*, I spotted a news item reporting that a Mr Blumlein was being remembered with a badge attached to the house where he lived all those years ago. He was being remembered for his invention: stereo speakers to improve the listening of music. The item also recalled his death whilst working on Radar for the RAF. It was uncanny to be reading your marvellous book and simultaneously see an article in the paper, knowing the man you wrote about is not forgotten.

Your book gave serial numbers for the Halifax, and I was able to discover an article referring to the crash and terrible loss of life in 'Flypast', June 1992. A summary of this article is as follows:

'It was to become a little-known tragedy of national importance, possibly the worst ever in experimental military aviation in both loss of life and the inhibition it created in an already critical timescale directed at the urgent requirement for a vital target identification device for RAF Bomber Command. This was required due to the total inability to mount an effective strategic air war over Europe.

This tragedy happened on Sunday 7 June 1942, and involved an experimental Radar trials Halifax II, V9977, a new aircraft – the second of 2,000+ constructed by English Electric, Preston. Its loss was initiated by an extremely rare case of fatigue failure of a cylinder inlet valve stem in the starboard outer Merlin engine, causing a major engine fire, which rapidly ignited the adjacent wing fuel tanks. In the final stages of a forced landing, the outer wing structure failed, causing the Halifax to roll and crash inverted in a ball of fire near the banks of the River Wye at Welsh Bicknor, Herefordshire, killing all eleven personnel on board.

The loss of this research aircraft was never divulged due to the secrecy of the activities of its holding unit, the RAF Telecommunications Flying Unit (TFU), which was the dedicated flight trials organisation of the Government's Telecommunications Research Establishment (TRE).

Halifax V9977's historic importance was that it carried and proved the world's first Radar ground mapping bombing aid operating on the new 10cm wavelength, designated 'H2S'. A. D. Blumlein was Project Leader of the EMI Team, which encountered equipment problems inherent in any advanced technology research work. Bernard Lovell arranged for EMI scientists to fly in the prototype 'H2S' Halifax for a demonstration. It was he who set up the equipment in flight on the day preceding the arranged demonstration, totally unaware of the ongoing metal fatigue which would destroy the aircraft in a matter of a few flying minutes.

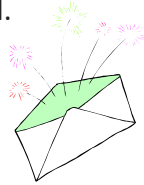
The destruction of Halifax V9977 on 7 June 1942 killed Bernard Lovell's close colleagues. The human aspect of the crash was devastating to a very small team of TRE scientists on whom so much depended under urgent military needs. Not only did they lose those with whom these pressures could be shared in the immediate future, but equally their only piece of prototype Radar

hardware. The situation was compounded as, although Halifax R9490 was available, A. D. Blumlein and his team who knew this other experimental system were also killed.'

Why so many Boffins had to be in the aircraft, all to be lost in this terrible accident, I don't know. I would have thought the pilot might have objected to that number of men standing and moving about, making the plane difficult to control.

Ron

Ron Durand



NOTE: In our December 2018 magazine, letters were featured both about the building of a Short Stirling aircraft, and someone seeking landing gear for an A380 in salvage condition. These letters created a wave of responses, including one from John Beeching in New Zealand (Veteran, 169 Sqn, Gt Massingham) who sums up both his and others' thoughts. For those not familiar with aircraft, this photo shows an Emirates A380 Airbus, offering readers a clearer understanding of the magnitude of the developing project. It is the rarest wide-bodied plane in the BA Fleet, due to become extinct if Emirates don't order more. Note the extensive landing gear being asked for! Letters asking for hardware such as this are passed onto the City of Norwich Aviation Museum:



Dear Janine,

I almost fell out of my chair when I read that somebody is going to build a Short Stirling replica as mentioned in the last magazine. I just couldn't get my head around that. The cost alone would be into the millions. Certainly, won't be in our time! They have just about finished the third Mosquito up at Ardmore and I guess 'The Peoples Mosquito' in the UK must be getting close to leaving the ground. Who could have ever visualised these ultra-ambitious endeavours? Also, on the same page of the Winter edition, somebody is looking for the landing gear from an A380 Airbus. An A380 Airbus?!? Am I going mad? Hardly the sort of thing one is going to have lying around in the shed, is it? Salvage? There haven't been any 380s wrecked yet, heaven be praised! Try Emirates, it has a fleet of them. A 380 must have about ten wheels on its landing gear.

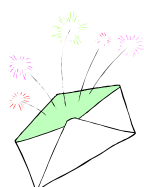
Sorry, I think I must go and make a cup of tea ...

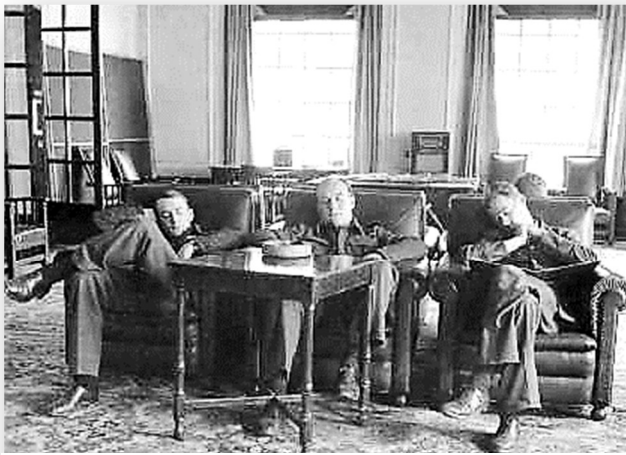
Y'know, Janine? I've become completely obsessed now with this Airbus undercarriage thing. It defies all imagination as to what someone is going to do with it if it becomes available. The A380 landing gear would tip the scales at about three tons at a guess. When I clicked on the website given, it is a firm of fastener manufacturers ... so the plot thickens. Stuart phoned me the other evening and we had a bit of a chat about it. It certainly makes for a good topic for discussion. A loaded A380 goes about 400 tons I'd love to know more about this ...

Cheers for now,

John

John Beeching, veteran 169 Sqn.





The Sleeping Pilots

Hello Janine,

I am Michael Prendergast, Volunteer Curator for RAF Benson's Heritage Facility (formerly known as History Room).

A few years ago, while researching a photograph of sleeping pilots, I read on the Web the story of Squadron Leader John Harry MacKellar Chisholm, a pilot on 157 Squadron at RAF Swannington, Norfolk. Looking through the story, I saw the photograph of three pilots fast asleep in the Officers' Mess marked up as Swannington. Unfortunately, the picture

is not of RAF Swannington, but RAF Benson's Mess here in Oxfordshire. I tried contacting the original story writer, Mr R. Gibbons, but he had died, with his wife unable to alter the story on their website.

I was just reading his story again today in our Heritage Rooms and decided to have a look at Swannington airfield as I enjoy looking at old airfields, thinking if the peoples' spirits are still around, wondering of times gone by, and came across your personal blogsite. I thought I would contact you to let you know about this photograph. Maybe you could alter the wording that goes with it, and let people know:

Sitting left to right:

Flt Lt Peter Harding bailed out of Spitfire after engine stopped working and became PoW in Stalag Luft III. **Flying Officer, later Squadron Leader Roy Whitehead**, crashed on take-off at Benson in 1944 due to strong cross wind. Crashed into a dispersal hut killing his best friend, Flight Lieutenant Brian McMaster and Leading Aircraftman Bedford.

Flt Lt John 'Chris' Chisholm killed 15 September 1944 in Mosquito TA 396 RS-W in the Kiel area.

It is a lovely picture of tired photographic reconnaissance pilots, but at Benson not 157 Squadron.

This is another photo of John. It comes out of a brown photo album, but I do not know who it belonged to or its exact location. He is possibly going into the dining room in a Mess with a young lady, so would have thought it was a Social Night as there are three other photos of Officers and guests. On checking my Records, I see he was on No.1 PRU when they moved to Benson from Heston in December 1940.

It sounds like you have a lot going on with your Association and a lovely magazine which was nice to read. We have been unfortunate in that two Benson pilots were shot by Gestapo after they escaped from Stalag Luft III, better known as 'The Great Escape'. Flt Lt Alastair Gunn and Flt Lt Hall. Unfortunately, I have nothing on Hall, but do have photos of Alistair, even taken inside the PoW Camp. I am pleased there is a display for him.



Flt Lt John 'Chris' Chisholm

Kind regards,

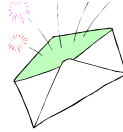
Mick P.

Michael Prendergast

Volunteer Curator: RAF Benson's Heritage Facility

Comment from John Beeching:

'You mention Benson. This must have been quite a place from where they launched the agents who were dropped into France and Europe generally. The PRU aircraft operated from there as well. I have a couple of books which go into all that. They should have quite a story to tell ...'



Hi,

I'm starting some research on a family member, who I believe served in 85 Squadron in WWII. I have read of a 'Hun Scoreboard' and wondered if you guys had a photo of this? Any information on this would be greatly appreciated.

My research involves Grandma's male cousins. Two of them are twins and both served as Navigators in Mosquito Squadrons. The elder brother served as a Lancaster pilot. I'm just starting research on the twins. Their names are Cecil and Albert Bryan. I have Cecil's RAF number, but not Albert's. I understand Cecil's pilot's name was a Flight Lieutenant Walter John Baker. They both died in a flying accident, in a Mosquito, on 16 April 1946.



The photo above shows Cecil Bryan to the left, Albert on the right – both Mosquito Navigators. Their brother Howitt is centre – a Lancaster pilot.

So far, this is all I have, but I hope to find out lots more. Once again, thank you for responding so quickly and I hope we can both add more information to 85 Squadron for the future. Thanks for your time.

Happy New Year!

Lloyd Clarke

murphy2121@icloud.com



Good Evening Janine,

I would like to join the RAF 100 Group Association. My Father-in-Law, [Ft Lt William Hewitt Power Mitchell RAAF](#) was a Halifax pilot with 192 Squadron who was shot down and killed along with his crew (except for Special Operator Sgt Reginald Powell, who bailed out and became a PoW). Bill was killed four months before my other half Margot was born, and so she never knew her father. Bill is buried at Durnbach Military Cemetery, near Bad Tolz, in Germany along with the other members of his crew killed that night.

Please advise the procedure to join the Association.

Kind Regards,

Phillip

Phillip Dawe phillip.dawe@btinternet.com

NOTE: Phillip now has the necessary New Member Form to join our Association.

Hi Janine,

My name is Brian Robinson and my Dad Eric flew with 192 Squadron in 1943 on Halifaxes. He told me about one sortie when they lost nine aircraft in one night, but I've not found any information of this anywhere.

Do you have any information?

Picture right, shows Dad, Eric Robinson, in flying gear 3rd from right. Photo below at Cadet level, he is in the second row, 4th from right.

I hope these photos jog someone's memory who can tell more.



Crew set against aircraft named: 'A Virgin's Prayer'



Eric Robinson in second row, fourth from right.

Kind regards,

Brian

Brian Robinson

robinsongas@aol.com



Hello Janine,



157 Mosquito Sqn, RAF Hunsdon

Nearly ten years ago, I was given a photo of a group of Servicemen in front of an Airspeed Oxford. On the reverse, in pencil, was clearly written the words: '157 Mosquito Sqn, RAF Hunsdon'. I cannot recall how it came my way, and in due course I sent it to the RAF Museum Archives with some unrelated pictures. Having done that, I have now begun to wonder about the group. Online research has provided some context but does not explain everything. Here is some information I found, collected with no particular knowledge of 157 and its environment:

- Oxfords were at Hunsdon with 1530 Beam Approach Training (BAT) Flight from August to November 1942 (Ref 1).
- Elsewhere, we read that BAT aircraft at some stage had yellow triangles on the nose (2), perhaps as per the RAF Museum's Oxford (3). The aircraft in the group photo appears to be marked with what could be the leading edge of such triangles.
- So potentially, we have a three-way connection: Hunsdon, the Oxford, and 157.
- Unfortunately, elsewhere (4) we see that 157 was at Hunsdon from 13 May 1943 to 9 November 1943, well after 1530 and its Oxfords went elsewhere in late 1942 (1).
- At least three of the men in the photo have aircrew wings, so I'm wondering whether it shows the air and ground crew that flew and serviced the Oxford as a Squadron 'hack' or as a local trainer.

References:

1. <http://hamg.co.uk/raf-hunsdon/>
2. <https://forum.keypublishing.com/forum/historic-aviation/125291-1521-beam-approach-training-flight>
3. www.rafmuseum.org.uk/research/collections/airspeed-oxford-1/
4. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No._157_Squadron_RAF

I am sending this on to you in the hope that the photo will prove to be a missing piece from somebody else's historical jigsaw.

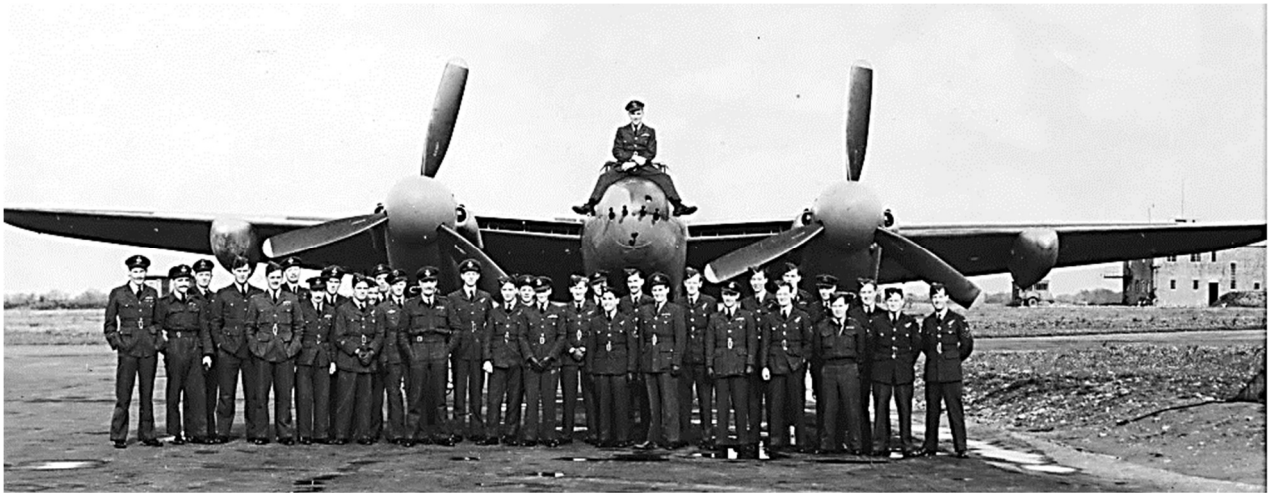
Yours sincerely,

Jerry

Jerry King KingDevizes@aol.com 01380 723830

Hello Janine,

My name is Peter Wood and I am trying to help a friend of mine, Paul Smith. We are both from St Helens in Merseyside. I have offered to create a decent-sized print of the attached photograph of RAF 23 Squadron. Paul's Dad is shown as the last person on the right of the picture. He is Sydney Francis Smith. Paul tells me he was a Navigator. Paul's family came across the picture on the internet and I have attached it for clarity.



I would like to obtain the original scan of the picture, so I can make a large print to have framed for Paul Smith (son of Sydney Francis Smith) and am happy to pay for any work you have to do.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Peter Wood

St Helens, Merseyside.

mrpw@blueyonder.co.uk

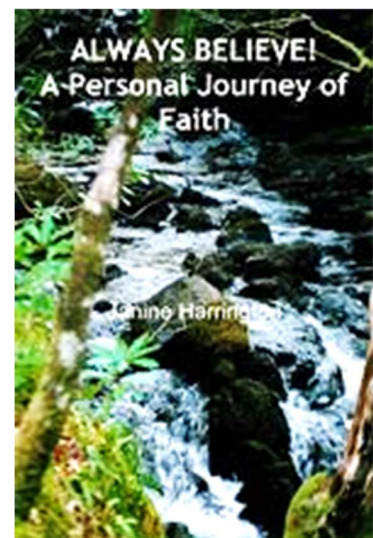
NOTE: As Association members will be aware, this photo is on the front cover of my book: *RAF 100 Group – Kindred Spirits*, published by Austin Macauley. I believe the original is with George Stewart who sits astride the nose of the aircraft in the photo. George, can I ask if you can help Peter Wood?



A stone thrown into a pool of water creates a ripple effect, interrupting calmer waters beyond ... so it is in Life!

This is a book borne of personal courage, compassion and experience, as the author has lived every word, thought, deed and emotion shared through these pages. She challenges readers to join her roller-coaster journey of Life, asking what they might do given the same situations. Opening her heart, she explores when bad things happen for no apparent reason – a betrayal of trust, a fragmented marriage, a life destroyed. Where is God when someone is stripped of all that is familiar, leaving them vulnerable, afraid, abandoned, alone? The answer can be surprising!

'Out of every Negative must come a Positive ... the greater that Negative, the more that Positive must be' – a contract made with herself years ago after a particularly bad crisis. This book represents the Positive coming out of her current battle with Cancer.



Published: 11 January 2019, FeedARead, available through Amazon and all good bookshops: £7.99.



Evening Janine,

I'm wondering if you'd be able to help or know someone who can. I'm the great nephew of [George Thomas Ormandy, an Air Gunner in 180 Squadron](#), (seen left). He died in a collision with another B-25 in January 1944, not far from Dunsfold. It was only in January last year we found out about George's fate. The family never knew how he died until then. The reason for contacting you is that we currently only have a single image of George, and I'm hoping there are some Squadron images from 180's early days at West Raynham or Foulsham.

Alas, I have no idea where they would be held, or who to contact regarding this. He was stationed at West Raynham from 9 October 1942, moving to Foulsham from 24 December that same year. He was one of the crew who flew Mitchells' first mission for the RAF.

Yes, I'm aware they weren't part of RAF 100 Group, but as you have written the '*RAF Foulsham – A Brief History*', I thought you would be worth contacting or know someone who can help. All information regarding George's death can be found here:

<https://dunsfoldairfield.org/crash-two-raf-b-25s-pallinghurst-rudgwick-7th-jan-1944/>

The post was originally put up around this time in 2017. I found it, oddly enough, on the exact date of the accident 74 years to the day. Since then, it's become my mission to find out all I can, with the final intention to place a Memorial near the crash site for both crews. This year, 2018, we've managed to locate and recover pieces of both aircraft and have pieced together even more about the crew history. We've even managed to find the location of the V1 site in France they went to bomb on their last mission.

If there are any veterans who flew in B-25s, it would be incredible to speak to one of them.

George would have been 18 when he was at West Raynham and Foulsham. He was 20 years old when he died, and with 180 Squadron from the start. He was originally from Beckenham in Kent.

Any help you or Association members can offer would be massively appreciated.

Since first writing to you I have found another image of George with his crew. I'm also visiting the graves of each of the crew, the first one being the member furthest south, so I headed there in October. My main reason is to pay my respects, but then I had the idea of leaving something by each grave giving more information about the crew and the crash. On the reverse I wrote my contact details in case anyone ever visited.



[Leonard Taylor - Navigator / Charles 'Bob' Forsyth - Wireless Operator Air Gunner / Earnest Fooks - Pilot / George Ormandy - Air Gunner](#)

In early December, I received a phone call. It was from the second cousin of Charles 'Bob' Forsyth whose grave I'd visited. She had been to the grave about

a month after me to lay flowers as it was his birthday. It turns out she had an image of Bob and

his crew, which included George. I'm sending you the photograph in case you can include it with the rest of my writings. The photograph was taken at RAF Foulsham in 1943.

Work on the Memorial in memory of this crew is now coming along. I have the costings and will be heading down to the crash site on Monday next, 7 January, as that day marks 75 years since the accident.

Thanks again for your help. I look forward to seeing the magazine. Oh, and a Happy New Year to you too!

Adam Tudor-Lane,
adam.tudor.lane@gmail.com



Janine,

My grandfather in the 1960s wrote a Memoir of his three years with the Canadian Army on the Western Front building railways with the CORCC and flying over 400 hours with the RFC/RAF. The manuscript was never published. In the hope of preserving his story and to mark the 100th Anniversary of the end of the First World War, I edited his manuscript, added some content including his personal history both before and after the war, and had it published. The following is a fact sheet about the book:

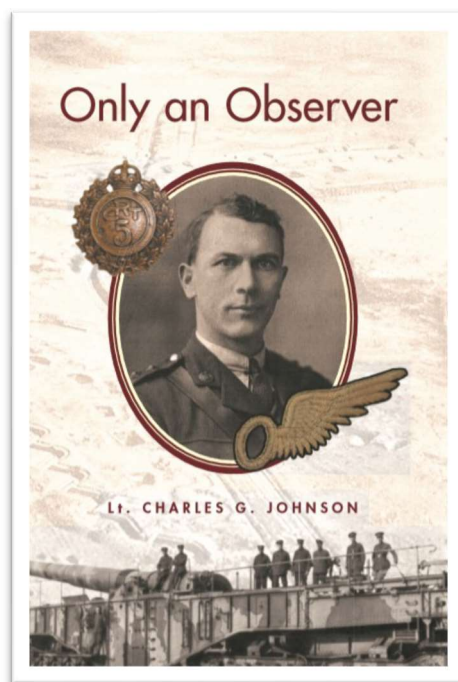
Only an Observer

By: Lt. Charles G Johnson

Forward and edits by: Brian P Johnson

One hundred years ago Charles Johnson from Hope BC, Canada, was at war, World War 1, The Great War of 1914-1918, He spent 3 years on the Western Front with the Canadian Army building railways and in the last 6 months of the war he flew over 400 hours as an Observer in No. 2 Squadron of the Royal Air Force (the oldest fixed-wing Air Force Squadron in the world). Forty years after the war, Charles wrote about his experiences from memory. His manuscript, reflecting his sense of duty mixed with detailed descriptions of places, people and events in his own unique writing style, was never published.

Now nearing the 100th Anniversary of the end of World War 1, wishing to share Charles' story with a larger audience and better preserve his first-person memoir, his grandson Brian has edited, added some context to Charles' manuscript and had it published.



Charles served in two areas that have been somewhat lost in the history of WW1 but were nevertheless important to the way the war was conducted: the use of railways, and the role of observation airplanes.

In two years building railways on the Western Front, Charles dug sand from Bray Dunes at Dunkerque (where the British and French Armies would be evacuated from during WW2) to build foundations for huge railway guns near Ypres (where the first gas attacks of the war took place) and he worked on both narrow- and standard-gauge railways near Dunkerque and across the Somme battle fields.

During the final year of the war Charles served in the Royal Flying Corps (RFC), which in April of 1918 became the Royal Air Force (RAF). After a period of training in England he was posted to No. 2 Squadron RAF in France as an Observer with training in wireless and machine gun and 7 ½ hours of flying experience. During the final 6 months of the war he flew over the battlefields daily and sometimes at night with 25 different pilots and survived being shot down and crash landings due to mechanical failure and pilot error. In 3 weeks after joining the Squadron he became a Senior Observer due to the high rate of casualties. He may have had aerial combat with Herman Goering, Head of the German Luftwaffe in WW2 and Hitler's Second in Command and he was Mentioned in Dispatches signed by Winston Churchill for directing artillery fire on an enemy attack. He also organised parties, learned how to make hospital beds, dropped Paris newspapers to people celebrating the liberation of Lille, France, celebrated the end of the war with the crowds in Piccadilly and met and married his lifetime love.

The book titled "*Only an Observer*" can be purchased on-line at Friesen Press, Amazon Kindle Store, Google Play, iTunes Bookstore, and other popular sites.

ISBN: 978-1-5255-2341-0 (Hardcover) 978-1-5255-2342-7 (Softcover) 978-1-5255-2343-4 (eBook)

Contact: [Brian Johnson](#). Phone: 604-535-9622 Cell: 778-886-3956 Email: bjohnsonnn@shaw.ca



Hi Janine,

Thanks for the magazine. I have just finished reading it, and you had a picture of 171 Squadron aircrew. My father – Flight sergeant Wilf Thompson – is on the back row, third from left; while his Bomb Aimer and Navigator are on the front row, second and third from left.



171 Squadron, RAF North Creak: Flight Sergeant Wilf Thompson third from left, back row; Bomb Aimer & Navigator of Flt Sgt W Thompson's crew sit second & third from left, front row

Great magazine as always!

All the best,

Pete

Pete Thompson

HalifaxPete690@aol.com

Hello Janine,



Memorial Garden CNAM

Thank you for the 'Confound & Destroy' Winter 2018 magazine; very well put together despite the deep sorrow you must have been feeling. It was very moving and hard for me to keep from welling up as I read through some of it. You're a woman of amazing strength and fortitude.

During August last year, 2018, Biker Veterans Rides of Remembrance (BVROR) visited the City of Norwich Aviation Museum with a mix of motorcycles and classic scooters as well as a few cars to lay a wreath of Remembrance (seen left).

Who are we?

We are a group of motorcyclists, predominantly ex-servicemen, who ride **to Remember, to Recall, and to Raise Funds for Veteran Charities.**



What do we do?

- We organise various **Motorcycle Remembrance Rides and Tours** ... this is the fun bit – getting together with other bikers to ride to places, events and sites of Military relevance.
- We recall **stories of servicemen and women** and of sites of Military history. We research many of the places and sites we visit and record these here on our website. We also offer a research service that supporters can access to find out more about a relative with a Service History
- We raise funds for **charities that support servicemen and women and their families.**

We're not a Charity, but ultimately, we have a charitable purpose and 100% of any money we raise goes directly to the charities we support.

We're not a Membership Group, but we do have a virtual community here on this website and on Facebook which helps us promote events, ride-outs and fundraising activities:

<http://www.bvr.or.uk/>

<https://www.facebook.com/Biker-Veterans-Ride-of-Remembrance-472212996494583/>

During the eight days on the road recently, this Group travelled over 500 miles, visited 9 of the 10 Museums they had planned to, and carried out numerous acts of remembrance along their route, including the laying of a wreath in our Museum's Memorial Garden. To date, they have raised over £2,000 for the three Charities they chose to support.



BVROR visits CNAM, Thurs 30 Aug 2018

Yvette, CNAM

ADVENTURES ABROAD

Stuart Borlase



As you all know, the efforts of RAF 100 Group back in 1944 and through to the end of the War, were a combined effort, a collaboration between the RAF and the 36th Bomb Squadron, *'the Gremlins'* of the United States Airforce.

Scientists, Engineers, Intelligence People and Technical Personnel both in the UK and across the Atlantic, along with the Crews and Aircraft on the Squadrons on the Front Line, all worked together to ensure the European Victory that came in May 1945. Their work, their efforts both shortened the War and was instrumental in directly saving upwards of 8,000 Aircrew and countless others on the Ground and at Sea.

I have been involved with a Documentary project since 2015, which seeks to tell the RAF 100 (Bomber Support) Group story in a Documentary format, the first time this has been done. There are a handful of very good books published about the Group and its History and Janine's books: *'RAF 100 Group - Kindred Spirits'* and *'RAF 100 Group - The Birth of Electronic Warfare'* are among the best.

To date around 20 on-camera interviews have been done with members of our 100 Group Veterans, but also, in addition to that, a number of Digital audio recordings.

The plan for this year, 2019, is to complete any outstanding Interviews with our surviving Veterans should they wish to be involved. If you are one of our RAF 100 Group Veterans and I have missed you to date or perhaps now, after all these years, you feel you would like to share your story, please, please contact Janine, or if you prefer you can write to me direct. We both would just love to hear from you and your interest will be treated in the strictest confidence. Your story, your memories are so important and neither of us want to see them lost in the mists of time.

This year too I would like to reach out to family members of our Veterans no longer with us. If you have memories and stories you would like to share, I would really appreciate hearing from you too. Some of you I know, so I'll be writing over the next few weeks, but for those of you in the wider family that I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting, please don't hesitate to get in touch if you would like to be involved. My contact details I have included at the finish of this article.

Only a few weeks ago, I returned from the U.S. and Canada where I had the very great pleasure of meeting with some wonderful people, some for the first time, all except two being Gremlins of the 36th Bomb Squadron U.S.A.F. and part of our 100 Group Association Family.

I had the great pleasure of staying with a lovely couple [Rafi and Kitty Ramos](#) in Florida, who were over with us in 2017 for the 20th Anniversary Reunion in Norwich. Rafi served out of Oulton for a while during the War, also serving in Korea and Vietnam. They live in very beautiful tropical surroundings and have a playful little dog called Poochie who brings them a lot of joy!

[Stephen and Pam Hutton](#), from North Carolina, were my next port of call, where I visited with them the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Airforce in Savannah, Georgia. Stephen is the Association U.S.A.F. Historian whose Father, Iredell Hutton, was one of the Gremlins serving with the 36th Bomb Squadron. He is the Author of '*Squadron of Deception*' and they also love spending time in the North Carolina high country.



[George and Marion Stewart, left.](#)

George was one of the founding members of the Canadian Warbird Heritage Museum in Hamilton, Ontario, and was a Mosquito Pilot serving with 23 Squadron at RAF Little Snoring. They both have very busy social schedules and I can tell you both have great singing voices!!

[Rex Arnett, right](#), also lives near Toronto and served with 223 Squadron.

I found Rex clogged with a heavy cold when I visited, but he happily showed me some of his Artwork, including this one, still a work in progress, of an American Indian village.



[George Eberwine, left.](#)

I had the very real pleasure of meeting George and Roseanne Eberwine, for the first time while over in the U.S. He is also one of our surviving 36th BS Gremlins with a remarkable story to tell and pursued a very successful career until he retired.

I also had the immense pleasure of meeting [Mr. James P. Ostler](#), who likes to be known simply as 'JP'; along with nearly all his family. He served with the 388th Bomber Squadron, then joined the 803rd BS which later became the 36th Bomb Squadron so we can proudly say that he is part of our wider RAF 100 Group Association family. Congratulations are in order as JP was recently awarded the French Legion of Honor for his action in the skies above France in service as a navigator with the 388th Bombardment Group. He lives with a very supportive family and is completely surrounded by squirrels!



When I visited, there were three flags flying on the front veranda: The U.S. flag, the flag of the Mighty Eighth Airforce, and the Australian flag! It was a nice touch. Thank you, Kathy!

I also had the opportunity of meeting [Mr Murray Peden](#) in Winnipeg, Canada. He was a B17 Skipper based out of Oulton and is remembered fondly by at least two (perhaps three) other surviving 214 Squadron Veterans that I know.

He was telling me that the Fortress was so easy to fly that even his Grandmother could fly it! The B24 Liberator by comparison was not so well behaved.

He is the Author of '*A Thousand Shall Fall*', a book of his Wartime experiences. After the War he studied Law and enjoyed a varied and very successful career in the Legal profession. "*Getting into Law was the best move I ever made*" he said.



Murray Peden at home with Stuart Borlase

I would like to say that I do very sincerely regret the lost opportunity to meet [Jim and Ruth Fawcett](#), also Association Members and part of our Veteran family. They live some distance out of Toronto and having no vehicle while I was there severely curtailed where I could go, particularly in view of a tight time frame. I am so sorry that I was unable to meet you both.

I also want to express my sadness again to [Des and Brian Howarth](#) for the stuff-up in my original bookings to the U.S. As a result, I was not able to visit, nor catch up with Veteran [David Watson](#) who also joined us at our 2017 20th Anniversary Reunion.

I do sincerely regret the way it all happened.

Finally, I want to express my deep appreciation and gratitude to all of you in the U.S. and Canada who opened your hearts and homes to me, for your warm and welcoming hospitality, kindness and generosity extended to me during my visit.

I truly appreciate each and every one of you and want to say a very big THANK YOU!

Stuart

If anyone would like to contact me, you can do so either via Janine or write or email me direct at:

Stuart Borlase, 67 Woodvale Drive, Woodvale, Western Australia 6026

mosquitofbv1@gmail.com or livingfilm@amnet.net.au

Légion d'Honneur for British World War II Veterans



*Veteran Arthur Reid 192 Sqn
proudly displays his Legion d'Honneur Medal
with son Arthur & wife Linda*

Dad was awarded the Legion d'Honneur medal today in the French Consulate in Edinburgh. This was awarded for his input on D-Day Operations through the classified operations of 100 Group. I had not picked up on the Award until recently and they are looking for anyone who had an input into the success of D-Day, with sadly many of the applicants no longer with us.

I submitted the Application a bit unclear on whether it would be successful, with the intention of passing the results on to anyone else who flew under RAF 100 Group and might be entitled. For anyone wanting to know about this, the Application process is straightforward, and I am happy to pass on any details if required. More about the Award follows. Meanwhile, this photograph was taken at the time alongside others receiving the Legion d'Honneur:



THE LEGION D'HONNEUR



The French Government has been awarding [the Legion d'Honneur](#) to D-Day Veterans from many different countries for several years, as a way of honouring and thanking those who fought and risked their lives to secure France's liberation during the Second World War.

On the 70th Anniversary of D-Day in June 2014, the French President announced that the Distinction would be awarded to all British Veterans who fought for the liberation of France during World War II but must have taken part in Military Operations in France between 1944 and 1945.

Since June 2014, more than 5,000 medals have been awarded. 400 more Veterans will receive their medals in coming weeks. Approximately 100 names are still being processed. The process should be completed in coming months. However, new applications will be dealt with as and when they are made.

HOW ARE APPLICATIONS PROCESSED?

Applications should be sent to the British Ministry of Defence, which checks that applicants fulfil the relevant criteria. These are then passed on to the French authorities. Applications should **not** be sent directly to the French Embassy or to the French authorities in Paris.

The French authorities subsequently endorse the names forwarded by the MoD for appointment to the Ordre National de la Legion d'Honneur, before an ad hoc decree is adopted.

Due to the vast number of applications received, a new administrative procedure was put in place in July 2015 in order to speed up the processing of applications. This new procedure has had the desired effect and applications are now being processed and confirmed at a much faster rate.

The French authorities attach great importance to ensuring each Veteran receives their medal, and they are working hard, in coordination with the British authorities, to ensure that all Veterans who have already sent their applications to the MoD receive their medal.

The Legion of Honour is the highest French Order of Merit for Military and civil merits. However, the Legion d'Honneur did use the organisation of the old French, a civil law code: the '*Code of the Legion of Honour and of the Military Medal*'.

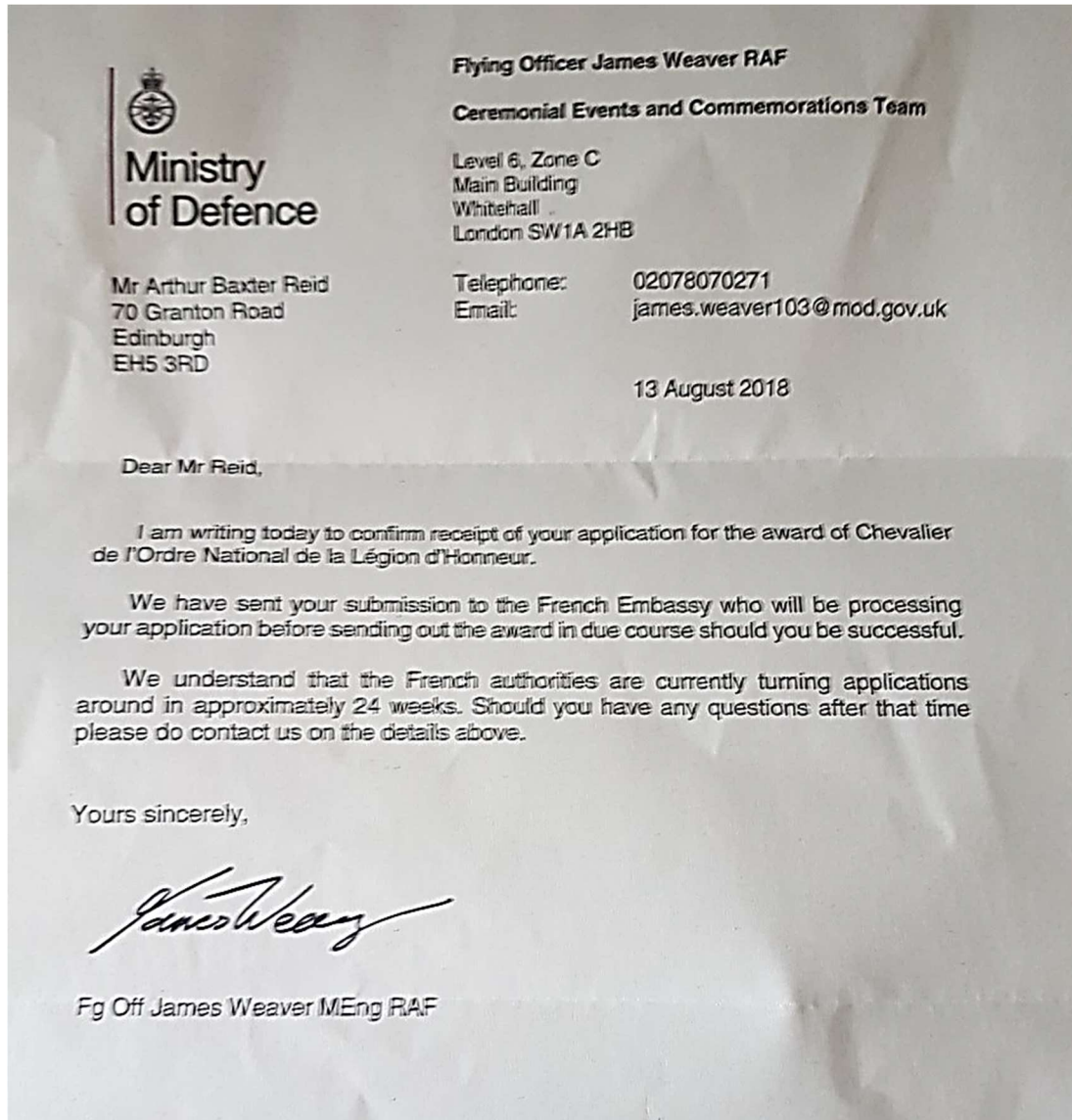
First Induction: 14 July 1804

Classes: 1 Grand-maitre; 67 Grand(s)-croix;

Established: 19 May 1802; 216 years ago.

Awarded for: Excellent civil or Military conduct.

Veteran Arthur Reid's letter confirming he would receive the Award:



Further information available from:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/d-day-70-application-form-for-award-of-the-legion-dhonneur

*Ministry of Defence, DC Sec Commemorations, 6-C-01 Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB

Love from

Linda & Arthur Reid

XX

lindareid1960@live.co.uk

NOTE: Anyone wishing further information or sight of the Application Form should contact Linda and Arthur direct. They are more than happy to help having already been through the process.

RAF WEST RAYNHAM



WRAF Cathy Weston lays a wreath at her wartime Station

Cathy Weston celebrated her 99th birthday in February 2018, and as a former Leading Aircraft Woman (LACW) stationed at RAF West Raynham during the Second World War, became Guest of Honour at an Event marking the 100th Anniversary of the Royal Air Force.

Paul Lloyd, Chairman of RAF West Raynham Association, shared his feelings of the day:

'What a great day. Our little celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the RAF, in which we all served and played a small part. Cathy Weston laid the wreath and cut the cake. She served here from 1941 until 1943. After a short ceremony, and wreath-laying at the Memorial, we retired to the building that was the Fire Section by the ATC Tower for food, drinks and entertainment provided by Richard Tree. Our Association provided and cooked the food and we raised funds via a raffle and donations.'

One of the aims of our day was to sponsor the Signal Square which depicts the current state of the former Station from the air. Jon and Shelly Booth, current owners of the Control Tower, allowed us to use the former crash bays as a place to celebrate festivities, for which we are very grateful. Guests were invited to tour the Tower to see the work in progress.'

West Raynham opened in 1939 as a permanent Station with Blenheim light bombers. Losses were heavy in the many raids carried out over occupied Europe in the early years of the war. In 1943, the Mosquitoes of RAF 100 Group moved in, flying night intruder and bomber support operations.

After the war, the Station became the base for the Central Fighter Establishment and later fighter Squadrons included Hunters and Javelins.

In 1964, the Kestrel Evaluation Squadron arrived, and from the 1970s Bloodhound surface-to-air missiles were based at the Station for air defence.

The airfield closed in 1994 and a Memorial was unveiled in 2014.

****Thanks Eddy Tomblinson for bringing this Event to our attention and sharing the Eastern Daily Press article published about it on 8 April 2018.**

RAF CRASH OVER HOLT



In Memory, courtesy: The Holt Chronicle

On 19 August 1968, seven young airmen died in a tragic mid-air collision over Holt and were remembered exactly fifty years to the day.

The New Farm Aviation Heritage Group, in association with the North Norfolk District Council, brought together an event in Holt Country Park which was attended by many local residents, together with members of various Associations. A number of relatives of those involved in the crash were also present, including brothers of three of the airmen. Two of these brothers, Conrad Slabber and Michael Woolnough, unveiled a 'story board' which is now on permanent display in the Park's Visitors Centre.

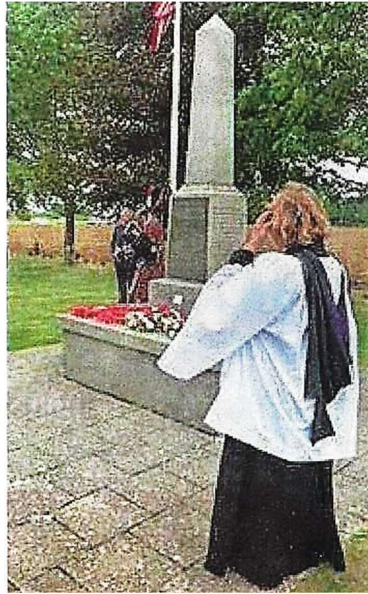
A small exhibition of remnants of the aircraft revealed the force of the explosion, which showered the town and surrounding area with wreckage. It was remarkable that no-one on the ground was killed or injured. But all thoughts were of the seven brave men who gave their lives in service of their country, as Standards were lowered and heads bowed during the poignant notes of 'The Last Post' followed by a one minute's silence.

Following the Event in Holt Country Park, Evensong was sung at St Andrew's Parish Church to commemorate the men who died in the 1968 mid-air collision. The Rector of Holt, the Rev Canon Howard Stoker, conducted the service attended by a packed congregation, which included representatives from RAF Marham, the RAF Association, ex-servicemen, local residents and relatives of the men who died. Refreshments were served in the Church Meeting Room and Terrace after the service.



Relatives of the deceased with (far right) PC Ian Jarvis who made first 999 call, and second from right: Dennis Woodcock, Event Organiser

MEMORIAL AT BEESTON



Remembering: courtesy Hugh Scott

The final notes of *'The Last Post'* hung in the air, quivering poignantly among the gathered crowd which swelled with emotion as the roar of engines from the country's last surviving Avro Lancaster was heard making its way towards them. Two hundred heads turned skywards to watch the aircraft fly at low level, making three circuits around the village of Beeston and its former airfield.

The 392nd Bomb Group Memorial at Beeston, near Dereham, was established in 1945 to commemorate the 747 aircrews killed in action. When the 392nd Bomb Group left Beeston after the war, it had lost 832 men in 24 months. A total of 285 missions were flown from what was then officially RAF Wendling, which came into being on 15 August 1943. It lost 184 of the Bomber Group's B-24 Liberators.

Over 200 people gathered on Sunday 9 September 2018, with a 30-strong group of relatives of those who had served with the U.S. 8th Air Force's Bombardment Group who travelled to Norfolk from the States for this extraordinary Memorial Service and Flypast.

One American visitor, Ron Pierre, of LaGrange, Ohio, spoke movingly of finding the crash-site of his Uncle's Liberator just three days previous near Norwich. Waist Gunner S/Sgt Martin Egler was on his 22nd and final mission, returning from Germany on 22 March 1945. The youngest of three sons, who all served with the USAF, he was just 22 when his Liberator crashed at White House Farm, Horstead. Mr Pierre said that by chance he had just found the location of his plane named: *'I Walk Alone'*. He said he could now tell his six children and twenty-four grandchildren and write the last chapter of his Uncle's career.

Rev Canon Heather Butcher conducted the service, with eight wreaths laid at the Memorial. Pipe Major Roger Bayes of Norwich Pipe Band led members of the Royal British Legion who paraded eight Standards, from branches including Kings Lynn, Haddiscoe, Costessey, Wymondham and Coltishall.

A service held earlier at St Mary's Church, Beeston, had a packed congregation with voices raised to sing both our National Anthem and the U.S.A.'s: *'Star Spangled Banner'*.

Thanks, Evelyn (Bartram) for sending a clip from the Eastern Daily Press with full writings of this Event. I know our American veterans will find this particularly interesting as it includes the well-known Liberator: *'I Walk Alone'*.

HEROES OF OUR TIME

by
Donna Gray & Darren Rose



*Richard Gray during visit to Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre
riding in a Lancaster Bomber, © Donna Gray*

As a loving daughter, Donna Gray has set up the website 'Heroes of our Time' with her partner Darren Rose, dedicating it to her father, Richard Gray, who died suddenly on 5 August 2017 aged 66 years old. He was a Norfolk man, living at Hindolveston, whose passion was researching past wars, collecting stories of people caught up during those times. The website is based on more than 2600 documents and 6300 photographs her father gathered and honours the Hindolveston soldiers who served and died in the First World War as well as the crew of the Wellington BK440 which crashed just outside the village in December 1943.

Donna explains:

'Unfortunately, I lost my dad very suddenly. We always knew he was a great believer in respecting, researching and most importantly remembering fallen heroes of past wars, and following his sad passing, we started to go through all the research he left behind. We were both shocked at the lengths he had gone to, and immensely proud of what we found. It became very important to us to ensure his research did not go to waste. So, in his memory, and to mark the first Anniversary of his passing, our website came to be formed.'

For such a unique website, the interest and response has been fantastic. It is being viewed worldwide, which is a great tribute to a man whose pure goal was to ensure people who had given their lives for their country be remembered.'

One example of his great work was his research of a plane crash during the war in his village. He was so determined these lost pilots be remembered, that he built his own tribute outside his home so that people would stop and remember them also. Such individual actions by our own local community should not be forgotten, and in the poignant year of 2018 which saw both the Anniversary of 100 years of the RAF, and the 100th Anniversary of the end of the First World War, it is important these heroic endeavours of our ancestors are not forgotten by future generations.'

His final end came with the utmost and greatest respect, having the honour of his ashes being scattered by the thrust of the engines of his favourite plane 'Just Jane', the Lancaster Bomber at Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre.'

My dad was passionate about everything relating to the war and especially remembering fallen heroes, making sure our history is not forgotten. He very much wanted to see the restoration of the Lancaster NX611 'Just Jane' completed so that it could 'Return to Flight'. Unfortunately, he will never see this happen himself. But if anyone wishes to help make it happen, donating just one pound could go towards this worthy cause. Payment can be made on the donations page of our website. You could also use any of the website content to widen awareness about war and what it means, together with past stories shared, at schools, colleges and University projects. If doing so, please put a small donation in Richard's memory. Thank you.

These were my father's words used on his Tribute to the pilot and crew who perished in the Wellington BK440 which crashed in his home village of Hindolveston in 1943:



'They gave, what they gave.
So that you could have, what you have.'

My father was a great believer in researching and respecting fallen heroes of past wars. He dedicated a lot of his time to researching and ensuring those lost souls really got the respect they deserved and most importantly, were never forgotten.

Our website is dedicated to my late father, Richard Charles Gray, and all the brave and courageous souls who gave the ultimate sacrifice.

We shall never forget, these are all 'Heroes of Our Time'.

For further information visit:

www.heroesofourtime.co.uk/index.html

*Summarised from the Eastern Daily Press

* * * *

Personal Correspondence between Donna & Janine which shares unexpected connections and ideas:

Hi Janine,

A while back you sent some lovely emails in support of our website: '*Heroes of our Time*'. They really meant a lot to us, so thank you. I went on to read your book: '*RAF 100 Group – Kindred Spirits*' ... Well, what can I say! I simply could not put this book down. It was inspiring, and its sentiment is completely parallel to our beliefs that these times, heroes and lost souls, should never be forgotten. The area of Norfolk the book covers is particularly relevant to me as I was brought up in Hindolveston, working from the age of 13 in Foulsham and Reepham. I remember my first driving experience with my late father on the old derelict airfield of Foulsham. My late grandfather was employed by the company which built some of the airfields mentioned in your book.

Something strange happened today at Mum's 70th birthday party, when a lovely lady approached me. We had printed leaflets promoting the website as my Mother didn't want presents, but instead was keen for donations for the Lancaster plane restoration NX611 '*Just Jane*' at Lincolnshire in my father's memory. It was a difficult day for her. The lady had been reading one of the leaflets, and as she introduced herself, we discovered she was Mrs Evelyn Bartram, and a

half cousin of Mum's, who had spent time with my Nan in their youth. RAF 100 Group Association was mentioned, and links began to come together in my mind as she asked if you had been in touch. *(It was Evelyn who sent me the clipping from the Eastern Daily Press about the website).* We had quite a chat and were invited to her home to talk further. Whilst reading your book, I'd said to Darren the name 'Bartram' seemed familiar, but then, little did I know we were to discover a family connection ... which is wonderful! What a lovely lady she is ...

As an update, I thought it might be of interest to know that, during this particularly memorable weekend, we also managed to get another Memorial in Hindolveston for pilots of the Wellington which crashed all that time ago in the village and who sadly lost their lives. This is something my late father particularly wanted, so I'm just glad we can honour his memory, and more importantly, the pilots.

Finally, we just want to thank you for everything you do, and we are so glad you made contact, giving us the chance to read some of your work and come together for the future.

Kind regards,

Donna & Darren

Hi Janine,

Evelyn contacted me last night and we had a lovely chat. We are both really interested to hear more and are arranging a visit soon. It was because of Evelyn and this connection between us, unexpectedly discovering another family member; as well as working with the same passion about preserving history and stories of the past that Darren and I came up with an idea we'd like to put to you, about including a section on our website dedicated to RAF 100 Group.

The May Reunion sounds such a very special occasion, and although we may feel a little daunted to be in the company of such honourable people, we feel we'd like to become members of your Association, and as such, attend your weekend. It would offer the opportunity of catching up with you in person which we'd really love to do.

I will take a look at your next book, it certainly sounds an interesting read. Meanwhile, let us know your thoughts on the website once you've had the chance to talk with others, and we'll see what we can do for you.

With best wishes,

Donna & Darren

donna.gray@networkassist.co.uk

<http://www.heroesofourtime.co.uk/raf-100-group.html>

Contact: Donna Gray, Maybank, Greenways Close, Flordon, Norwich, Norfolk NR15 1QP

**** We welcome Donna & Darren as new members to this Association.**

NORTH CREEKE 2019

by Claire & Nigel

Happy New Year!

Hoping we get to welcome you to The Control Tower

We hope this finds you well and rested after a fun-filled festive season. We've had a super busy Christmas period filled with guests and are now ready to start the New Year with a little break to enjoy some family time and all that North Norfolk has to offer. Which for us means long walks from CTHQ along the coast, lanes and countryside; usually taking in a local hostelry ... bliss.

2018 has been a good year for both the B&B and our major project 'Time to Remember' (more on that below). We've got further on with landscaping and other garden projects too – we are almost fully fenced in now, so operation '*rabbit deterrent*' is underway. Our native hedge planted last year is growing and has been joined by 150 additional privet hedge plants which will form the perimeter around the front and side of the Control Tower.

2018 was a gloriously long hot summer – our CHTQ highlights are below; we thank all of you who came to stay and helped make our year – we wouldn't be here without you, so thank you for all your support, visits, reviews, social media interest and telling others about us. If you have been to stay and would like to leave us a review please do so on: [Trip Advisor](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Google](#) It means so much for others who have not been yet ... and for us too.



Our big task in 2019 is to have some major re-rendering work done to the Control Tower's north face – this is planned in mid to late March. We are not taking normal B&B bookings during that time, but if you wanted to come and stay for a reduced rate between 18th and 31st March, we're offering '3 for 2' to compensate for the ongoing work.

mail@controlltowerstays.com | www.controlltowerstays.com

Phone: 01328821574

* * * *

TIME TO REMEMBER

Time to Remember is our Project to build a Memorial to those who served at RAF North Creake during the Second World War.

2018 has seen a fundraising beer launched '*Drink to Remember*' along with several events – a Forties Fun Day at The Lifeboat Inn, Pie Week at Warham Horseshoes, Dinner and Jazz at The Carpenter's Arms and the Auction Night with Olly Day at The Black Lion Hotel along with history talks at local groups. This combined effort has raised over £7,000. With beer sales and pledges (£14K) and donations received thus far we are well on our way to reach our £30K target.





The last few weeks has been busy working with North Norfolk District Council planners to fine tune the Memorial site. We are just waiting for a planning decision now. As soon as we have permission, we will commission our Sculptor – Andy Knighton to get the Stirling sculpture underway. We have also asked Andy to design a beautiful curved stand for the Sculpture – we are delighted with his drawings for this and can't wait to see it.

Our next fundraising event is at Holkham Hall on Tuesday 16 April (*please note this date has changed*). Nigel will do a Talk about the airfield history and Lord Leicester has very kindly given us use of the Marble Hall and Saloon so that guests can have some refreshments after the Talk. If you want to come please let us know as places are limited, £20 per person.

Our aim during 2019 is to secure the rest of the funding for the Project and commission the other parts of the Memorial – the Roll of Honour walls, bench, display boards. Ready for Spring 2020 to start the ground works so that we can have everything ready to unveil the Memorial on 1 August 2020 – to coincide with the 75th Anniversary of the disbandment of RAF North Creak.

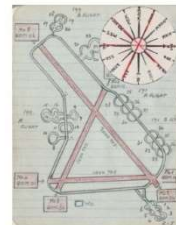
**Talk to Remember
- Fundraising
RAF North Creak
History Talk
By Nigel Morter**

**Tuesday
16th April 2019**

**Marble Hall
Holkham Hall**



Raising funds to build a memorial to those who served at RAF North Creak during the Second World War



Airfield Plan by Sgt Norman Turnbull – Caravan Controller at RAF North Creak

The RAF North Creak airfield was created on land acquired by the Air Ministry from Holkham and Walsingham Estates. The 'air side' was returned to Holkham at the end of the war and is now in agricultural use again along with green energy production. During the Second World War, this corner of North Norfolk was far from the rural sleepy place it is today. It was the site of a large heavy bomber base.

The history of that time is fascinating as this airfield was part of The 100 Group of Bomber Command and their mission was to carry out secret radio counter measures.

£20 per person including light refreshments
Arrival from 6.30pm | Talk 7pm sharp
Free Parking

Limited places mail@controltowerstays.com or phone 01328821574 to book
Find out more about the history: www.controltowerstays.com/history.html

* * * *

OUR ROUND UP OF 2018

In & around CTHQ, some great walking, new discoveries, cultural highlights & fun times

- ✚ New things in 2018 ... having the BBC Radio Norfolk team broadcast from the Control Tower twice!
- ✚ New arrivals ... our WWII bombs make great boundary markers!
- ✚ Finding treasure in the garden ... well, treasure for us anyway. You can't get better provenance than having the Station name and year pressed into it!
- ✚ Our beautiful 'Make Do & Mend Project'. The Bin Shed is a triumph!
- ✚ We helped to make beer and now it is raising funds for the Memorial (over £2K so far) please keep buying our 'Drink to Remember' ale.

Looking forward to welcoming you to
The Control Tower Bed and Breakfast in 2019

Claire & Nigel xx

NOTE: Nigel is Speaker at our May Reunion Dinner!!



WARTIME at NORTH CREAKE

Vic J. Flowers



When I was first posted to RAF North Creake I felt like *'a fish out of water'*. It was difficult to adapt to accommodation consisting of a *'bed space'* in a Nissan hut shared by NCOs of many trades and having my meals in the Sergeants' Mess. My job was Sergeant in charge of Station Signals Section, only remotely connected with Radio Countermeasures, but I found the new radio commitments and challenges quite absorbing.

I spent a lot of time at the Section to gain as much knowledge of what was completely new equipment to me and gained the confidence of most of the lads, so much so that when a new operational channel was required in the Control Tower, I decided, in order to gain experience, to do the job myself with back-up from a couple of tradesmen from the Section. Existing equipment could not be re-channelled, so a complete installation was necessary with cables to be run from Equipment Room to Control Desk and to roof for aerial. All was going well with only the coax to run from roof to Equipment Room to be completed. I was used to this type of work, so wearing my forage cap and khaki dust coat over my uniform, cleated the cable down the side of the building working from a ladder with its foot on the pathway. The job finished, I was lowering the ladder and trying to manoeuvre it clear of the path when, out of the corner of my eye, I saw an Officer in full flying kit approaching. Thinking he was interested in what we were doing and had just come down from the Control Tower to ask, I waited to give him the details, completely forgetting that I should observe the, unfamiliar to me, ritual of saluting a Senior Officer ... later found to be the C.O. Group Captain Bray! Using the full authority of his rank, he really *'went to town'* on me. I just stood there while, using the full extent of his vocabulary, he slated me for not saluting and not standing to attention.

It all started again when he found I was a Senior N.C.O. wearing a dust coat with no distinguishing marks. By this time, all my assistants and others were enjoying the spectacle of an N.C.O. being *'torn off several strips'* and I never lived the incident down. I had to report to the Senior Signals Officer for what turned out to be a much milder admonishment, ending in a few laughs, but I wished I was back on the *'friendly'* Units I had known so well.

Soon after, I thought I was *'for the high jump'* again!

I was driving the mobile D.F. (Direction Finding) van, an ungainly vehicle with its lattice aerial mast in the lowered position, but useful as transport for the Signals Officer to visit other RAF Stations in the area and for me to visit the D.F. Hut outside the Camp area, which is where I was going on this occasion. To get there, I had to go on a little-used road out of Camp and through a barrier

controlled by a guard in a sentry box. Usually, the guard saw me coming and had the barrier raised before I reached it, so I did not have to reduce speed. On this day, the guard must have dozed off and did not hear me coming. Too late to stop the vehicle, I hit the barrier full square, smashing the wooden structure complete with supports. The guard was speechless, more worried about sleeping on duty than the damage to the barrier. I gave him my details and left him to report the incident, fearing the worst.

After a few worrying days and sleepless nights, during which I heard nothing, and the '*grapevine*' was silent; I realised as there were no witnesses, the guard must have produced a story which did not involve either of us. Possible '*an unidentified vehicle*' which failed to stop, hitting the barrier. However, I always took a different route for future visits to the D.F. Hut so never saw the guard again, but doing a reconnoitre one day by cycle, I saw that the barrier was just a temporary arrangement and it remained so for the rest of my stay at North Creake.

This incident involving the D.F. Hut leads me to my first and only involvement with the WAAF Wireless Operators. My simple request for more Wireless Operators to maintain a 24-hour watch at the D.F. Hut produced ten new WAAF Operators instead of the RAF Operators I had expected. I am sure the '*Powers-that-Be*' had no idea what they were required for, and neither did the WAAF Officer i/c until the duties were explained to her and she was shown the D.F. Hut where they would be required to work. It consisted of one circular room with the equipment in the middle (due to its construction of many hollow plywood sections filled with shingle, it was called a '*Bullet and Blast Proof Hut*'). There was no privacy and the toilet a chemical closet in a small hut a few steps from the entrance door. Like me, the WAAF Officer was not very happy and insisted that there must always be more WAAF Operators than RAF on Watch at the same time. Transport must always be provided for WAAFs to and from the Hut for every change of duty at shortest intervals, constant with good watch-keeping procedure, and I must make regular inspections at frequent unannounced times over 24 hours!

At first, I found these visits very embarrassing to both me and the Operators, but soon it was obvious no matter at what time I left Camp on my cycle to pay a visit by whatever route, advance warning had been given; so naturally I found everything in order. However, from rumours around the Camp, I knew that was far from the truth! I felt that even under '*Conditions of War*', RAF and WAAF should not be working together under such unethical and unsupervised conditions. I made my feelings known, but have no knowledge of any change, for soon after I left North Creake.

Looking back, I realise how opportune that Posting was, for I had never settled to life on an Operational Airfield, despite several good N.C.O. friends in the Main Stores, Armoury and Workshop. I shall never forget illicit early morning trips carrying an empty sandbag in which to put the pheasant and rabbits my marksman friend bagged ready for his weekend Leave. He prided himself that only one shot was needed, straight through the head! I picked the mushrooms which were our excuse for the early trip. With my experience of Radio Countermeasures, it was hard to accept the main Operational Workshops were out of bounds, but this did not prevent me from acting as assistant when my friends had to work overtime on a special job. As a practical man myself, my ideas always seemed welcome.

My Armourer friend with his .22 rifle was always interested in anything for the pot and this one time, he had heard that duck shooting on the marshes around Brancaster, not far by cycle from the Camp, was popular among the locals. So, one evening, we met a chap in a pub who was to take us out and introduce us to the sport. I was very apprehensive from the start because we were taken along narrow paths with seawater and spray either side; and when we came to one point when I thought we were surrounded by sea, the guide kept pressing on until we heard shots, bird

cries and flapping wings. We kept close to our guide, getting quite wet from the spray, but breathed a sigh of relief when we made the shelter of the bar again. Once was enough. We never attempted it again.

My Store-Keeper and I used to frequent a pub about a mile from the Camp called '*The Swan*'? It was a cycle ride and popular with Servicemen and women shown by the number of cycles piled on top of each other along the walls of the pub. This particular evening, I put mine on the top and it was quite noticeable because it had a brass G8QM call-sign badge, made in my workshops, on the lamp bracket. I was a pre-war radio amateur and thought that one day I would meet up with another if I advertised the fact. When my friend and I came out of the pub, my cycle was nowhere to be seen. We tried to return to Camp on my friend's cycle, but I slipped and badly cut my in-step on the pedal, which then needed attention from Sick Bay on the Camp.

I needed my cycle, so worked out a plan that, whoever had taken it would bring it back. We returned the following night and lay in wait. Sure enough, along came a village lad who carefully put the cycle back from where he had taken it, to be confronted by two angry RAF N.C.O.s. He desperately tried to justify his action by saying on the spur of the moment he needed to follow two WAAF girls on cycles who were off to a pub in the next village. We intended to accept the proffered drink, but a fight broke out, as often happened, and we parted company.

My story does not end there. By an amazing coincidence, we were destined to meet again twenty years later. After the war, I started working for the Home Office Directorate of Communications. I was based at a Wireless Station at Cheveley near Newmarket in Suffolk, where we were providing radio communication between cars and Police and Fire Headquarters throughout East Anglia. Norfolk County was one of the Police Forces and they were asked to provide Police cover for the grounds and local area of Holkam Hall for a special event at which Royalty were to be present. Another technician and I were assigned the job of providing good radio coverage, which needed an aerial as high as possible on top of the Hall. In order to gain access, the Manager allocated me as an employee who knew his way around the large Mansion to give help when necessary. I told him I was stationed at North Creake, RAF, during the war, and used to cycle around the area when off duty. He told me, before he was Called-Up, he worked for a farmer in South Creake and often saw RAF lads as one of the roads went through the Camp. Then, out of the blue, he said:

'Were you the chap whose bike I took from outside the pub?'

I must admit I was not completely surprised for there was something about him which was strangely familiar, but although I tried to get him as an escort when the time came to remove the aerial and equipment, I never saw him again.

My friend Alf, the Sergeant in charge of the Equipment Section and myself used to take an occasional afternoon break and set off on our issue cycles to explore some of the places of interest within reasonable distance of North Creake. On a sunless day in the late Summer of 1944, we found ourselves in Binham, three miles away, where, on a previous trip we had noticed the interesting ruins of a Priory. We entered the ruins, picking our way over pieces of fallen masonry which had become overgrown with moss and weed. At the end of what seemed like a passage was an opening about three feet above ground level through which we could see a clear area. Climbing through, we were obstructed by debris and the base of a thick wall. Not wishing to give up for something seemed to be driving us on, we got over this obstacle and, when straightening up, we saw a woman in front of us about twenty-five feet away, bending over a piece of ground close to the wall. In her left hand, she held what appeared to be a basket and in her right hand, a sprig of some kind of plant. She was dressed in a black coat buttoned down the front, and on her head was a small black bonnet. We both felt guilty at intruding on this lady's privacy and called out our

apologies, with which she stood up, looked straight at us, and smiled. We walked towards her to explain our presence in the ruins and, as we did so, she turned and walked towards a piece of arch where we lost sight of her. When we went up to the arch she had disappeared. Until this point, our meeting seemed quite normal, although we thought it strange to find a woman dressed as she was in the ruins. Then the realisation struck us both. We felt completely drained of all energy and, after examining the area close to where she'd been standing which consisted of stony soil and weeds, we returned to Camp very subdued, sure she was flesh and blood even fifty years later. I can still see her in the ruins of the Priory before she left us. We had both seen the same thing. We did not share our experience with fellow N.C.O.s, nor did we visit Binham again. We thought we had experienced something often read about, sometimes ridiculed, and for which there seemed no logical explanation.

Earlier, I referred to the job I gave myself at the Control Tower which required a cable being cleated down the side of the building from an aerial on the roof. This was for a new radio frequency to enable the Wireless Operator on an aircraft to obtain '*up to the minute*' information for the pilot. Very accurate frequency and timing was essential together with a pre-determined code. I provided a Wireless Operator and set up an operating position in Flying Control. The system was '*one way only*', the Wireless Operator on the aircraft did not transmit any acknowledgement so Control did not know if the message had been received, but it was obviously worth the trial.

The main reason for including this is, in Laurie Brettingham's book: '*Even When the Sparrows are Walking*', on page 132 is a picture of the Briefing Room at North Creake where we had to go to get our information on frequency and times to transmit. Wireless Operators on a mission would take note as well. The coded message would be given nearer to the time by an Officer in the Control Tower. I remember the same Briefing Room, standing just inside the door in company with crews taking part in a mission, to be given our information, only nothing else was heard and we left immediately. Our services were only required on one other occasion, but it did give me the feeling we were actually taking part in a major operation with airborne countermeasures.

I have referred to my inability to arrive for an inspection visit to the Direction-Finding Hut, but without the occupants having been pre-warned, I assume from the only place to witness my departure which would be the Guard Room or Guard Post. This day, I arrived and was checking the Daily Log Book when an aircraft came up on the radio asking for a bearing, giving his location. Not getting a response, he called again. I could see the Operators were inexperienced, so I took over. But it soon became obvious that the aircraft was taking no notice of the first bearing and instead was flying around in a circle making it impossible to provide or need one. It was at this point I realised it was a put-up job. I was the target! On my way back, I saw an Anson aircraft, usually kept at one of the dispersal points, land after being airborne on certain tests?

I shall end my North Creake story by explaining the 'final straw' which I felt I had no means of dealing with, nor had anyone to turn to, in which 'fate' came to my rescue in the form of an overseas Posting.

The Direction-Finding Hut was in a farmer's field, well away from the road and vehicle traffic. A farmer's tractor working in close proximity could have been a problem. The Hut had one door and no windows, ventilation was basic, the toilet was a chemical closet-type located in a small wooden shed in the opposite direction to the access path and by the side of a large blackthorn bush. I can still see the used contraceptives (condoms) tied to the branches, hanging down. I was disgusted and embarrassed to think that this had been going on in an RAF compound under my responsibility. I could well imagine the ridicule and Barrack Room humour it would create if generally known. Fortunately, I left shortly afterwards – not even telling my good friends. As a raw

N.C.O. new to Squadron life, I felt my time at North Creake had been well spent and I had achieved all that had been asked of me. I did, however, feel sorry for my replacement and the legacy I was leaving him!

Forty-five years later, in 1991, I received the Air Efficiency Award Medal in recognition of Wartime Service with the Civilian Wireless Reserve, Royal Air Force Voluntary Reserve and Royal Air Force.

NOTE: Vic Flowers passed away early in 2018. A further piece of his writing will be included in the Summer magazine in remembrance of him, telling the story of the Civilian Wireless Reserve, nicknamed 'Early Birds' of which he was a valued part. These final words belong to his true and faithful friend David Lang who visited him until the end, and who shared so many special memories:

Hi Janine,

Thanks for your email and yes, I think Vic would have liked to be included (in the magazine) and to that end, I am attaching a couple of his stories and photographs.

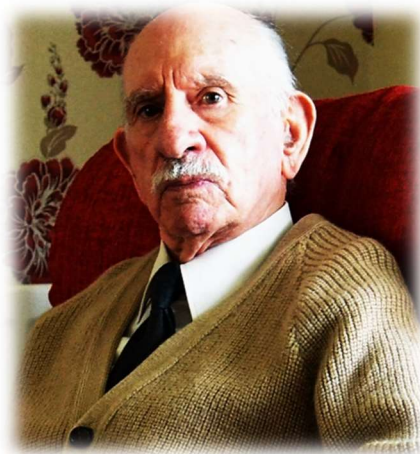
I have a small collection of all his stories about his life before and during the war. He was certainly in the forefront of the RAF's need to get radios into planes and the use of them before Dunkirk. I think his saddest story was about his efforts to get back to the French coast at the beginning of the war and, in particular, his story about the sinking of the 'Lancastria'. He almost got on that ship, then saw it being attacked, sinking with all that loss of life ... and it could have been him.

Anyway, he is gone now, and the world has lost one of the real gentlemen of our Time.

Yours,

David

David Lang



In Memory
Vic J. Flowers

IN MEMORY

JOHN GWYNEDD WYNNE DFC **8 May 1921 – 19 November 2018**



John Wynne in his aircraft 'Take it Easy'

John Gwynedd Wynne was born on 8 May 1921 in Chester. His father was a mining engineer and his early childhood spent in Malaysia and Japan. His family returned home via India to live in Cornwall. He was educated at Cheam School, Surrey, where he was a contemporary of Prince Phillip and the two boys shared joint first place in the high jump. John completed his education at Bembridge School on the Isle of Wight.

He enlisted in the RAF in November 1940, training as a pilot in Canada. On his return to Britain in February 1942, he converted to Wellington bombers and in September, delivered aircraft to Egypt via Gibraltar, West Africa, and Khartoum. Shortly after, he joined 40 Squadron, and over the ensuing nine months completed 40 bombing operations, some flown from Malta, most from advanced landing strips in Libya. He attacked targets in support of the Eighth Army as it advanced to Tunis and was part of a flare-dropping force, illuminating targets for other bombers. At the end of his Tour, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

After a series of appointments as a bombing instructor, he returned to operations in January 1945, joining 214 Squadron at RAF Oulton, under RAF 100 Group.

John Wynne was only 23 years old and already a veteran bomber pilot when he took off on 14 March 1945 in his B-17 Fortress to provide electronic jamming support for a bomber force attacking the oil refinery at Lutzendorf, near Leipzig. It was on his return flight that his aircraft was hit by fire from a night fighter, believed to have been piloted by Luftwaffe ace Martin Becker. With engine failure and a fire on board, the aircraft descended to 4,000ft while John struggled to keep control.

He ordered his men to bail out, believing they were now safely flying over Allied-occupied territory, while remaining at the controls alone, trapped by his equipment. The aircraft was at such a low altitude he knew even if he freed himself and jumped, it was unlikely his parachute had time to open. So, his decision made, he continued flying the damaged plane home to England. Radio contact with other airfields he passed proved impossible, and eventually he made an emergency landing at a USAAF airfield at Bassingbourn in Cambridgeshire.

The sudden appearance of a damaged all-black bomber bristling with radio and Radar aerials and only a pilot on board caused immediate suspicion until Wynne explained what had happened, by which time he had been flying for almost 10 hours.

Nine men had bailed out of his plane. Two were injured and taken to hospital where they were treated. The other seven were captured, interrogated and taken to a civil prison. Two days later, they were taken by truck and driven through what was left of the streets of Pforzheim, a German city which a few weeks previous had suffered one of the most severe bombardments of the war. These British airmen were taken to the nearby village of Huchenfeld where they were held in a school. The following day, an angry crowd gathered outside, including members of Hitler Youth. They were dragged out of the building into the street, and it was quickly apparent they would be hanged. Three escaped in the confusion and managed to hide, but in minutes, the four remaining men were shot. Those who escaped were recaptured the following morning and sent to a PoW Camp. The third was picked up later, dragged away, and shot by a Nazi mob.

After the war, some of those responsible for the killings were put on trial and sentenced.

Meanwhile, unaware of what had happened to his crew, John spent the next four years flying aircraft in support of the Radio Warfare Establishment.

In February 1952, he joined 109 Squadron to fly Mosquitoes. But within a few months converted to the new Canberra jet bomber, before returning to 109 Squadron. On promotion to Squadron Leader, he formed and commanded a new Canberra Squadron, No. 76.

In December 1955, Wynne started to fly the RAF's first V-bomber, the Vickers Valiant, part of the UK's nuclear deterrent, before re-joining 214 Squadron, his wartime unit. Within a few months, he flew a Valiant to Malta and took part in the Suez Campaign, bombing Egyptian airfields.

In 1958, the Squadron began a series of trials and long-range flights to prove the air-to-air refuelling capability of the V-bombers.

In January 1960, John was posted to strategic Air Command at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana. He spent 2 years with the USAF, flying the eight-engine Boeing B-52 Stratofortress from Barksdale. On his return to Britain, he spent five years in the MoD on operational requirements for the V-Force, followed by three years in a NATO appointment in Norway specialising in nuclear warfare. This knowledge later proved invaluable for helping to resolve some of the problems facing British sheep farmers as a result of the radioactive fallout from Chernobyl.

He retired from the RAF in 1973.

It was to be 40 years following the incident with John Wynne's crew after they bailed out over Germany that Dr Curt-Jurgen Heinemann-Gruder, a Lutheran Pastor and former Army Officer, who retired to Huchenfeld; learned about the atrocity of what had occurred in the village in wartime. A determined man, he fought against those who opposed his plans for an act of peace and reconciliation and placed a Memorial where the airmen had been killed, dedicating it to them. In 1992, a simple plaque was erected on the wall of the village church bearing the names of all the aircrew victims with the words: *'Father, Forgive'*.

The first John Wynne knew about the fate of his crew was when he read reports of a church service due to be held for the unveiling of this Memorial to them. He had no idea of the ordeal they had faced on bailing out of the plane, believing they had parachuted to safety. Deeply touched at what was now taking place where his crew had died, he commissioned a Welsh craftsman to make a wooden rocking horse, which he presented to a new kindergarten at Huchenfeld. As a farmer in

North Wales, he travelled with his wife to Germany, to personally give to the people this rocking horse named '*Hoffning*', the German word meaning '*Hope*'.

A friendship developed between the villagers of Llanbedr in North Wales where John lived, and Huchenfeld in Germany where his friends had died. The friendship began a tradition of an annual exchange-visit of schoolchildren, hosted by local families in both areas. The two airmen who had escaped the fate of the rest of their crew also became part of this friendship and tradition.

In February 2008, members of both communities attended a twinning ceremony to link their villages formally, marking the climax of a gradual process of reconciliation. Meanwhile, John's actions were recognised by the peace activist Canon Paul Oestreicher of Coventry Cathedral, who gave him an individual Cross of Nails, symbolising peace and reconciliation originating from the bombing of Coventry Cathedral in wartime.

In June 2011, St Peter's Church at Llanbedr, home to John Wynne in Wales, received its own Cross of Nails, accompanied by a message from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams. In this, John was instrumental in recognising the importance of building bridges of friendships between communities ... especially those in conflict.

John Wynne in recent years had been a farmer breeding Welsh-Cambridge crossbred sheep near Llanbedr in North Wales. He remained actively involved in running the farm until late in life. He was also an ardent conservationist and a founding member of the Red Squirrel Trust of Wales, which continues to preserve the endangered species on Anglesey. He had married his wife, Pip, in 1948, and she and their daughter Elisabeth survive him. Sadly, their son Benjamin died in a farming accident on 8 November 2018 ... just eleven days before his father died.

Summarised from *Daily Telegraph*, December 2018



In Memory
John Gwynedd Wynne DFC

John is remembered in our 'FINAL POSTINGS' Section of the magazine

FINAL FAREWELL

We lost too many Veterans last year, 2018, for whom Memorial Tributes have been written in previous magazines. Now, I offer a collective **THANK YOU** from all RAF 100 Group Association members to **Iain Forsyth**. Over past years, he has faithfully laid wreaths at the Bomber Command Memorial in Green Park, London, while in November, it was particularly poignant as he placed two wreaths ... one on behalf of RAF 100 Group, the second for his Grandfather, Stan Forsyth DFC, Veteran of 192 Squadron, awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for identifying the German battleship known as the 'Tirpitz' hiding in the Norwegian Fjords. Stan died in September 2018, and I think it timely that these photos taken by Iain Forsyth, become a fitting reminder of the valuable service provided by RAF 100 Group in wartime, too many paying the ultimate sacrifice of life.



Bomber Command Memorial, Green Park, London



The poignant message on Stan's wreath reads:

'Remembered by RAF 100 Group Association'

*'In memory of my treasured Grandfather **Stanley Forsyth DFC, 192 Sqn.** Sadly, passed away in last weeks of his 98th year. Much loved father of three, Granddad to three, & Great Granddad to seven. Life is to be cherished, and the wisdom of his years cannot be replaced. We will miss and celebrate him as a Family always ... and all who took part in Operations with No.100 Bomber Support Group where so many lives were lost giving invaluable assistance to Bomber Command ...'*



**Words written to a beloved wife
from an airman during WWII**

Think of me at night when
Sleep is near,
And I who loved you am so
Far away;
Think of me then, and I will
Come to you,
Nor leave you till the night
Turns into day.

Stretch forth thine hand and
Through the depths of dark,
Another hand shall touch
Your fingertips,
And as of old, my voice
Shall breathe your name,
And press a kiss upon
Your dreaming lips.

Anon



Final Postings

Death will be but a pause...

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

Founders of RAF 100 Group Association – remembered in love

- 192 Squadron** George Ward DFC Sqd Ldr; Phil James' Canadian pilot
- 192 Squadron** Kenneth 'Paddy' Passmore: DFC Flt/Lt; Canadian, died 2005
- 192 Squadron** John Cooke left memorabilia to the Museum archive collection
- 192 Squadron** Ron Phillips died late 2005
- 192 Squadron** Ted Gomersall died 30 November 2004
- 192 Squadron** Hank Cooper DSO, DFC died 2005.
- 192 Squadron** Michael Simpson W/Op & F/O died on the Isle of Man
- 192 Squadron** Richie' Richards Rear Airgunner, flew Wellingtons. Son, F L Richards, died August 2009.
- 192 Squadron** Air Commodore Vic Willis, C.O, RAF Foulsham, died 30 July 2006.
- 192 Squadron** Group Captain Jack Short died December 2006. Association Chairman till 1996
- 192 Squadron** W.O (later P/O) A G McEachern RCAF died 15 August 2007, Saskatchewan, aged 85
- 192 Squadron** LAC Harris, Ground Crew died 15 August 2007. Grandson James Kerslake: Association member.
- 192 Squadron** Wing Commander David Donaldson, DSO*DFC died 15 January 2004
- 192 Squadron** Wilhelmson, F/O Sander Willie Raymond DFC (J10026) Home: Elbow, Saskatchewan
- 192 Squadron** F/Lt Richard (*Dick or Dobbie*) William Dobson, died 1996, remembered with love by son, Roger & daughter Susan. Roger Dobson – Association Chairman from May 2014.
- 192 Squadron** W/O John Rhys Powell, Rear Gunner flying Wellingtons, died 1992
- 192 Squadron** Sgt George Richards, Tail Gunner, posted missing 4/5 July 1944. Remembered by niece Cheryl Cairns nee Colgan & sister Agnes Colgan.
- 192 Squadron** Flt Lt Henry Victor (Vic) Vinnell posted missing 26/27 Nov 1944. Remembered by wartime fiancée Nina Harrington (nee Chessall) until her death & daughter Janine Harrington, Association Secretary.
- 192 Squadron** P/O Jack Glen Millan Fisher, Royal Canadian Air Force, flew with Vic above, posted missing 26/27 Nov 1944. Remembered by sisters Audrey, Gloria and family.
- 192 Squadron** Flt Lt Albert Victor (Vic) Parker died 14 November 2010. Remembered by daughter Ann Felsky.
- 192 Squadron** Spec Op (Wop) John Henry BALL, Association member for many years, died 23 April 2009. Remembered by daughter, Susan Lawford.
- 192 Squadron** George Lowe, originally 1473 Flight before becoming 192 Squadron, Special Signals, Foulsham. Died 24 March 2011.
- 192 Squadron** F/O Alan Thomsett died 27 May 2011. Flew with 1473 Flight during Battle of the Beams, 1941, then as part of No. 80 Wing. Missed by daughter Anne and Association members.
- 192 Squadron** Eric Clarkson, Wireless Operator/Navigator, died beginning of 2012. Remembered by daughter Jenny Bentley & friend Dennis Wildman.
- 192 Squadron** Sqn Ldr Cecil William Cornish died 19 August 2011. Flt Sgt at Foulsham. Initially with 98 Squadron, he was a survivor of the sinking of TS Lancastria.
- 192 Squadron** Flt Sgt John Eggert (2202199) aka 'Shorty'. Died 28 April 2006
- 192 Squadron** Sgt Hugh Holm, Radio Mechanic, remembered with love by Phil & Vera James, especially for kindness to them while holidaying in Canada.
- 192 Squadron** Macdonald, Kenneth Wynne CD, Colonel, Stan Forsyth's Skipper; died 12 February 2014. Missed by family and all who served with him.

- 192 Squadron** Flt Sgt Earl Skjonsberg, mid-upper Gunner on DT-O, in crew of Phil James MBE and remembered by him. Died October 2014.
- 192 Squadron** F/O Bryan Helme, Navigator on Wellington Flight & Halifax IV A/C, Aug 44-Feb45, completing 24 Ops, 8 Ops on Halifax w F/Lt Bob Gray. Died 22 May 2015. Remembered by daughter Sally.
- 192 Squadron** Sergeant Fitter IIA, William James 'Bill' Rees, 1473 (Special Duties) Flight and 'B' Flight. Co-Author of '*Espionage in the Ether*' & '*The Final Fling*'. Remembered by son: John, Lynne & family.
- 192 Squadron** Sqn Ldr John Herbert Crotch DFC 1912 – 1994. Lovingly remembered by son Andrew Crotch, daughter Linda Read, Granddaughter Julia Read.
- 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
- 199 Squadron** F/O Ed Emmerson, Navigator to Flt/Lt Paddy Passmore DFC, Canadian
- 199 Squadron** Arthur Fitch, former RAF Bomber, died July 2006
- 199 Squadron** John Frederick Wincott, Gunner on '*Jolly Roger*' EX R, died in 2006. Remembered by son Tony.
- 199/171 Sqn** Peter Scloverano, W/O in 171, 199, 462 Sqns at North Creake. Remembered with love by Janine and all who knew him.
- 199/171 Sqn** Group Captain George Cubby, MBE, FRMets died 2005. Remembered by wife Betty and Roy Smith, only surviving member of his crew.
- 199/171 Sqn** Vic Flowers served at North Creake. Died early 2018. Remembered by firm friend David Lang
- 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.
- 171 Squadron** Joe Brogan, Halifax pilot died 2004, remembered by widow Sheila.
- 171 Squadron** Arthur Adcock died February 2008 & Syd Love, Canadian crew member, died April 2008. '*Friends to the end!*'
- 171 Squadron** Len Fanstone died 13 January 2010. Missed by Harry Freegard & wife, in touch since 1946.
- 171/102 Sqn** Ken Ratcliffe Nav/Bomb Aimer died 8 March 2010 age 86. Flew Halifax & Lancasters, remained in touch with crew all their lives.
- 171 Squadron** Flight Engineer Andrew Melvin Robertson died 1998. Remembered by son Colin Robertson.
- 171 Squadron** Wop/Ag Wilf Thompson died 1991. Remembered by son Peter, Association member.
- 171 Squadron** Warrant Officer Edwin Moore died 15 May 2014. Remembered by son Ian & family.
- 171 Squadron** Flt Lt Charles '*Chuck*' Warner, Edwin Moore's pilot, died 6 July 1965.
- 157 Squadron** Flt Lt Bryan Gale died 2 January 2009. Missed by daughter Valerie & son Chris
- 169 Squadron** Fred Herbert, Navigator/Radar, died 15.10.2010, remembered by friend, & pilot John Beeching
- 1692 Flight** Albert Fairweather, Ground Crew at Great Massingham & Little Snoring. Died in 2002. Remembered with love by granddaughter Jane Fairweather & family.
- 169 Squadron** Flt Lt Bert Vine, former Navigator of Sqn Ldr James A. Wright, 'A Flight' Commander, both no longer with us, remembered by 169 pilot John Beeching
- 169 Squadron** Flt Lt Frank Win died 13 July 1998. Remembered by daughter Chris, and friend John Beeching.
- 214 Squadron** Geoff Liles, Pilot, died 4 March 2006
- 214 Squadron** Mr J Creech died April 2006
- 214 Squadron** Don Austin, remembered by Les Bostock
- 214 Squadron** Air Vice Marshall Jack Furner died 1 Jan 2007
- 214 Squadron** Sqn Leader/Flight Commander Bob Davies died June 2007
- 214 Squadron** Bill Howard died October 2007

- 214 Squadron** Flt Lt Blair died Sept 2007
- 214 Squadron** John Hereford, Spec Op.
- 214 Squadron** Robert Moorby W/Op died Jan 2008. Remembered by sons, Michael, Robin & Shirley Whitlock.
- 214 Squadron** Flt Sgt Hadder, Air Gunner in Fortress III HB815, bearing code letters 'BU-J' killed 3/4 March 1945, remembered by nephew Leslie Barker.
- 214 Squadron** Alan Mercer died 6 June 2009
- 214 Squadron** Warrant Officer Gordon Wing, 'Howie', died Nov 2009 age 87. Rear Gunner, Eric Morrison's crew, Stirlings/Fortresses; Founder member of Air Gunners' Association.
- 214 Squadron** Robert Louie William Darracott, Navigator, died 8 May 2010, 94 years
- 214 Squadron** Flying Officer Reginald Coates completed 2nd Tour of Ops as Bomber Pilot in March 1945. Died 10 Nov 1963. Remembered by son.
- 214 Squadron** Bomb Aimer Les Bostock in Don Austin's crew died just before Christmas 2010. Remembered by M/U Gunner C. A. Piper, 'Pip'.
- 214 Squadron** Flt Sgt George V Cox died 21 July 2011. Flight Engineer in crew of S/Ldr Miller DFC.
- 214 Squadron** Squadron Leader William 'Bill' Doy DFC died 28 November 2011.
- 214 Squadron** P/O Peter Witts 223/214/462 RAAF, Air Gunner, commissioned after the war. 1925–2011. Missed by family and friends, remains in our hearts, a Legend.
- 214 Squadron** George Fisher, Navigator with No.214 REM & No.206 Squadrons 1942-1946, died 25 Sept 2012
- 214 Squadron** Flying Officer William 'Bill' Foskett died 21 December 2011. Missed by wife Pauline, 2 sons, 4 grandchildren, good friend Tony Cooper.
- 214 Squadron** Russell Owen Douglas, Tail Gunner on Fortresses, ex-PoW, died in Nelson, New Zealand, 2013.
- 214 Squadron** Sgt Gerhard Heilig, Pilot Officer in post-war RAFVR; died 24 October 2014 in Austria. Loved and missed by wife Sissy, and all who knew him. A true Gentleman!
- 214 Squadron** Allan Chappell DFC, Navigator, flew more than 30 missions. Died 22 April 2016 aged 94 at the Austenwood Nursing Home, Gerrards Cross. Remembered by sons Peter and Stephen
- 214 Squadron** Steve Nessner died latter end of 2016, remembered with love by wife and family
- 214 Squadron** Sgt F. Alan Wilkes died on 15 November 2016 aged 92 years. Missed by son Robert Wilkes
- 214 Squadron** W/O Archibald 'Jim' Mitchell Navigator DFC died 5th April 2013 aged 92, Eric Morrison's crew Stirlings/Fortresses. Missed by daughters Judith and Angela
- 214 Squadron** Alistair McDermid, Waist Gunner in Flying Fortresses, died 23.2.2017 aged 92. 1 of only 2 survivors when intruder shot down plane over Oulton on 3/4 March 1945. Remembered by daughter Linda and family. Regular attendee of Reunions.
- 214 Squadron** Flt Lt Michael Crosbie (Bing) remembered with love by son Rupert & Sue Crosbie.
- 214 Squadron** Flt Lt Sidney Pike died 3 July 2017. Remembered with love by 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 1 week previous.
- 223 Squadron** Flt Lt A E L Morris (Tony) died June 2005. Andrew Barron's skipper: Oct 44 – 1945.
- 223 Squadron** Tom Butler 'Bishop'.
- 223 Squadron** C. L. Matthews (Les) Rear Gunner, Peter Witts Nose Gunner in Flt Lt Stan Woodward DFC crew before Peter went on to 214 Squadron.
- 223 Squadron** Arthur Anthony, Flight Engineer, died 13 May 2006.
- 223 Squadron** Flt Lt Jack Brigham DFC died 2008. Original Captain as 223 reformed. Flew Liberator TS524/6G-0; 36 ops. Remembered by Len Davies, Waist Gunner, only surviving member of crew.

223 Squadron Flt Lt Sir John Briscoe died a few years ago.

223 Squadron 2nd Pilot Mervyn Utah, Canadian in late Tony Morris's crew, died 8 Nov 2010.

223 Squadron James Edward Bratten: 26.11.1922 –6.11.2001. Andrew Barron's crew.

223 Squadron Mick Stirrop died March 2012.

223 Squadron Flying Officer Reggie Wade, Navigator, died Christmas Eve 2012. Reggie served in crew of Squadron Leader Carrington, Commander of 'B Flight'.

223 Squadron Air Gunner John McLaren died 31.3.2013, leaving wife Margaret and son Graham.

223 Squadron Flt Lt Navigator Ron Johnson died August 2013. Missed by wife Betty & Richard Forder.

223 Squadron W/Mechanic Desmond Pye, Ground Crew, B Flight died 3/4 May 2014, remembered by daughter Virginia Cranfield & family.

223 Squadron Flt Lt John R. Maunsell DFC, Navigator with Flt Lt Allnutt crew, died beginning of 2015.

223 Squadron Flt Lt Robert Oliver Belton, Pilot died 11 January 2015. Remembered by family with love.

223 Squadron Kenneth Lionel Stone, Tail Gunner on Liberators. Died early 2017. Remembered by son Roger

223 Squadron William Herbert Glyn Thomas, Navigator. Died 1 May 1992. Remembered by son Martyn.

223 Squadron Sgt Derek Wilshaw, Waist Gunner in F/Lt Briscoe's crew. Died January 2017.

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 attended Reunions.

223 Squadron Flt Lt Ronald Carpenter DFM, died 6 December 2011, aged 91. Remembered with love by devoted wife Barbara, son David, daughter Anne, and grandchildren.

223 Squadron Pilot Officer P. G. Nash. Died 5th May 2018. George is remembered with love by daughter Barbara, and friend Richard Forder.

23 Squadron Flt Lt Johnny Rivas, died 2 January 2013.

23 Squadron Wing Commander Phil Russell died November 2012.

23 Squadron 'Bud' Badley died beginning of 2013

239 Squadron Flt Lt Cliff Rhind, Canadian Mosquito Pilot died 15 June 2017 aged 94 yrs. Missed as a much-loved volunteer at Alberta Aviation Museum, Edmonton, Canada

141 Squadron Flt Lt Doug Gregory DFC, Pilot died 2015 aged 92 yrs. Missed by wife Liz, son & daughter.

141 Squadron Flt Lt G D Bates, known as 'Charlie', served with F/O W S Field, his Navigator/Radio Operator.

157 Squadron W/Cdr K. H. P. Beauchamp DSO*, DFC, Commanding Officer 157 Squadron, Swannington, died 1996 aged 80 yrs. Missed by son Paul, Association member.

515 Squadron Flt Sgt Reg Fidler, Navigator w Townsley crew on Mosquito died 4 August 2015. Remembered with love by daughter Jenny & husband Martin, with stepsons David & Laurie.

88 Squadron Flt Lt Len Dellow died Christmas/New Year 2006-7; veteran of 88 Squadron, 2 Group & Rear Gunner/Wireless Operator on Bostons.

85 Squadron Wing Commander Branse Burbridge died 1 November 2016, missed by son and daughter.

49 Squadron Len Bradfield died Nov 2005. PoW w pilot Johnny Moss, shot down in Lancaster ED625. Nursed to health by Nora, who he married.

462 RAAF Sqn F/O H. R. Anderson DFC 'Andy' died 6 April 2008 in New South Wales.

462 Squadron Donald Hulbert died October 2009.

462 Squadron Pilot Bruce Drinkwater died 2 May 2010. Peter Witt's Skipper.

462 Squadron Warrant Officer Ken Spriggs died peacefully at home 20 January 2016. Loved and remembered by Wendy, his daughter, his family, and by all who knew him in RAF 100 Group

- Bylaugh Hall** Flt/O Shirley Bellwood, Intelligence Officer remembered with love by son Chris & friend John Stubbington, Wing Commander.
- ? Flt Lt Eric Atkins DFC* KW* died 22.11.2011. Blenheim pilot with 139 Sqn flying from Horsham St Faith & Oulton in 1940/1. Flew Mosquitoes with 2 Group.
- ? Corporal Charles 'Fred' Savage died 18 Dec 2011 - Wireless Operator, serving in No. 2 Heavy Mobile W/T Section in France, 1940.
- USAAF 36th BS** Sergeant Aubrey 'Bill' Whitworth, Nose-Gunner for Lt Soderstrom crew died 11 August 2015. Missed and loved by daughter Kim and family & all who knew him.
- USAAF 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
- USAAF 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.
- USAAF 36th BS** Art Brusila, Pilot, died 2 June 2018. Remembered by all who knew him.

Dates for your Diary



2019: 17 – 19 May (confirmed) dinner Holiday Inn Hotel, Norwich North

2020: 15 – 17 May (provisional) Spring National Holiday 25 May

2021: 21 – 23 May (provisional) Spring National Holiday 31 May

Be sure to put these important dates in your diary.

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Summer 2019 magazine – out in July 2019. Deadline for material: end of May.

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RAF 100 GROUP SPECIAL EDITION 2019 CALENDAR

For a rare gift of past times, this beautiful Calendar printed in The Netherlands makes a perfect New Year gift. Each month contains rare wartime photos, with a page dedicated to our WAAFs. It also has moments captured from past Reunions. Now only a few remaining, this Calendar is yours for **£10 + pp**, by contacting Janine direct.

* * * *

SPECIAL EDITION 2017 REUNION DVDs



A limited number of Special Edition 2017 Reunion DVDs remain, compiled by Stuart Borlase, with lots of extras included, making prime time viewing! It portrays our wonderful May 2017 Reunion when we were joined by veterans & present-day serving members of U.S. 8th Air Force 36th Electronic Warfare Squadron. As Stuart lives in Australia, to save costs in postage & packing, this DVD is available at £20 by contacting:

JANINE HARRINGTON

NEW BOOK: 'RAF 100 Group – Reasons to Remember', published Aug 2018, £15.

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

Created by Janine Harrington

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