

Confound & Destroy

The magazine of RAF 100 Group Association

 **SPECIAL EDITION SUMMER 2014** 



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

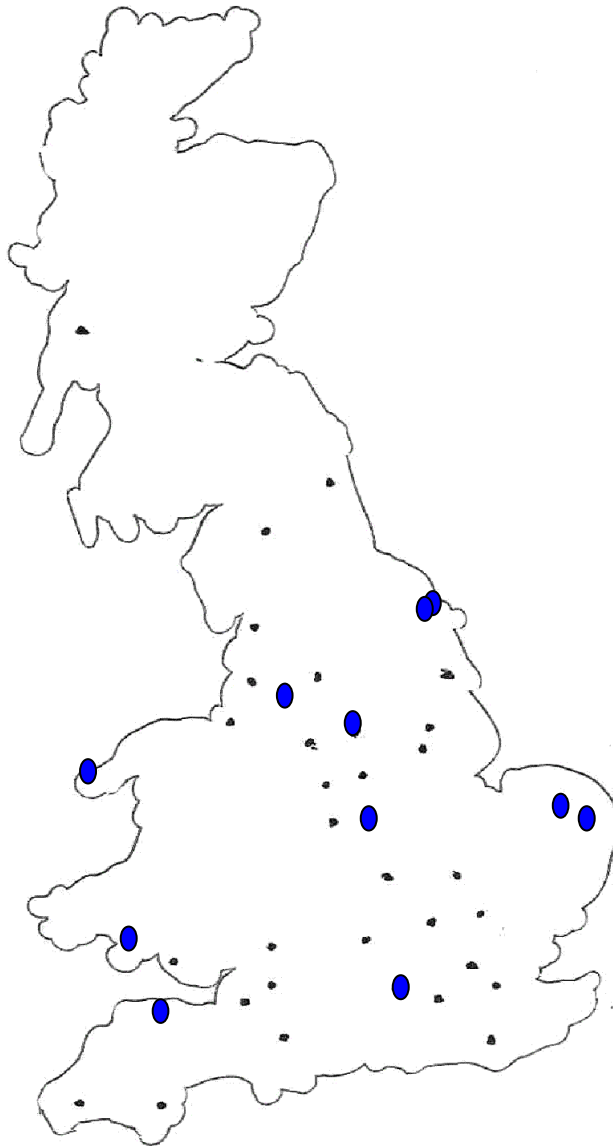
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RAF 100 Group Association

Membership Areas



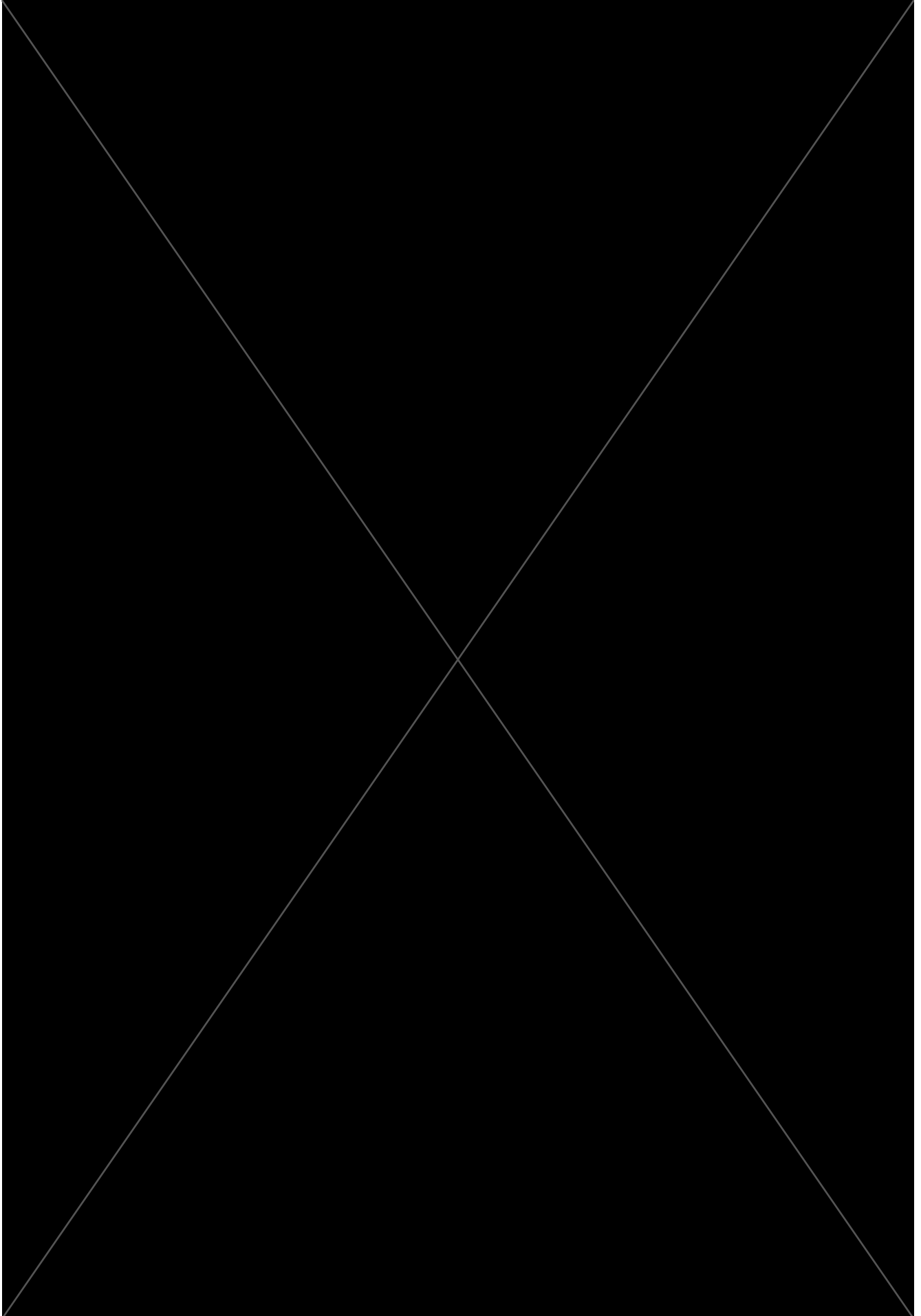
Each dot represents an area where there is a cluster of members
Big dots show where members of the RAF 100 Group Association Committee live

Members also live in the following countries:

Northern Ireland
Canada
Austria
China
Germany
Australia
U.SA
South Africa
Thailand
Brazil
New Zealand

RAF 100 Group Association

Committee



EDITOR'S PAGE



Dear Friends

How wonderful to spend another notable Reunion together - this one more special than most! Over the 9–11 May weekend, as one big happy Family spilling over with warmth and love, we converged on Norfolk from around the world. Even for a Wordsmith, it's a challenge to mirror that remarkable atmosphere, so relaxed, everyone so '*connected*', with villagers offering a rousing welcome. Special cakes created to mark our Oulton Memorial 20th Anniversary were stunning. Thank you, Andrew Macnair, for hosting Foulsham Tea at your lovely home. Thank you, Peter Holness and your band of helpers for everything at Horsham St Faith to make our stay memorable, not forgetting Rev Keith Rengert and Aylsham Town Band for the moving service. Thanks Chris, for the programme at Oulton: please pass on our deepest gratitude to villagers who made us feel so included, so special. Thanks also to John Lilley, our Speaker from *The People's Mosquito*, and Dave Coeshall keeping us abreast of news of the Canadian Mosquito poised to make her maiden flight which, like our planned surprise Flypast didn't happen. Thanks Nimmy (Pilot). Next year?

Warmest congratulations to our new Lifetime President: **Phil James MBE**, who, through the years, has done so much for us, working quietly in the background as is his way. Congratulations also to our new Chairman, **Roger Dobson**. I leave him to introduce himself through his first Chairman's letter following. Roger's granddaughter, 2 year old Felicity, was definitely the youngest member attending our Reunion this year! It was so good to see Roger surrounded by his family for this auspicious occasion.

For those of you who feel you missed out and couldn't attend our Reunion for whatever reason, I have tried to share the myriad of emotions that touched every one of us over our weekend in these pages.

I was still flying high, carrying so many fond memories as we arrived at our home in the north, where Tony had to immediately turn the car round to head for Manchester for work early Monday morning. As the house settled to become silent and still, memories fluttering like a thousand butterflies in all shapes and colour; I turned once more towards my Opus Magnus as so many call it - a book about 100 Group for which I signed a contract with a publisher towards the end of last year.

For those who haven't heard, the book represents my 21st publication – making me feel as if I've finally come of age, about to be offered the key to the door! *Do people still do that anymore?* Entitled: '**RAF 100 Group - Kindred Spirits, personal experiences of RAF & USAAF on secret Norfolk airfields during WWII**' it brings together voices of those who served during the war. The publishers are making the first 100 books '*collectables*', including signatures of veterans from RAF 100 Group. It will be released for Remembrance Day this year. With just six months to write it, you can imagine the challenge, often dedicating up to 12 hours a day to this project, passionate in preserving the many hundreds of stories continuing to slip through my letterbox daily. A heartfelt thank you to the many many members supporting me in this ... some sharing and writing experiences for the first time ever, much to the surprise of their families. My thanks to Wing Commander Kenneth John Weeks-Dix OBE, AFC, QCVSA for writing the Foreword. Ken, I hope you continue to recover from your recent second stroke. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. A heartfelt thanks to my good friend Stephen Hutton (author of '*Squadron of Deception*'), who works alongside me, and who's time, energy and support in sharing the USAAF experience is truly valued. It was lovely you and Pam made it from the States to share our Reunion, with dear friends Chas Jellis & Heda Kootz, and Brendan & Ann Maguire – a group of people instrumental in creating a number of Memorials in the UK in memory of USAAF aircraft and crews.

One final vote of thanks must go to Geoff West who made a VHS film in 1994 of the Dedication of Oulton Memorial. Unable to attend this year, he offers members a copy of the 1994 Dedication ceremony on CD at £8+pp. Tony and I have watched it through, all the more evocative given the events of Reunion 2014. Full details are at the back of this magazine.

Love & Hugz
Janinexx

Items for magazine should be sent to:

Janine Bradley

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LETTER from the CHAIRMAN



Dear Friends,

Being nominated by your committee for the position of Chairman was an unexpected surprise. My subsequent election by members at the AGM has presented me with a challenge I am delighted to take up. I now have to do my best to justify the confidence you have all placed in me. I believe that the RAF 100 Group Association is in very good order and for this I thank John Stubbington for his many years leading us, and Richard Forder for his willingness and quiet competence in covering the interim period. They have both set a high standard for me.

This year's Reunion was a great success, the weather was kind to us (save for high winds preventing the planned Flypast at Oulton) friendships were renewed amidst moving ceremonies and sumptuous refreshments. In many ways 2014 may be regarded as a vintage year: it is the twentieth anniversary of the 100 Group Memorial at Oulton, the seventieth anniversary of D-Day, and the seventieth anniversary of 100 Group delivering its strategic role to overcome the German night fighter threat.

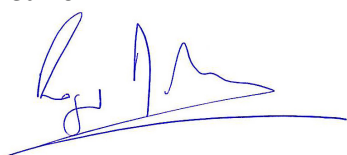
Our veterans continue to inspire us with their dignity and modesty whilst our numbers grow with the involvement of new generations. Our hard working committee are to be congratulated for their industry, powers of organisation and team spirit. We are also fortunate in the remarkable hospitality extended to us by the Foulsham and Oulton communities, our friends at Norwich Aviation Museum and the Church and Mission Hall at Horsham St Faith.

Our Secretary has encouraged me to share with you some insight into my background and my link with RAF 100 Group. I was brought up in Eccles, Lancashire (as in the cakes) as were four previous generations of Dobsons. Like my father and older sister Susan, I studied Pharmacy at University but unlike them, my enthusiasm for student politics (in the heady 1960s) outweighed academic study. Eventually I recognised that Pharmacy was an accident of birth rather than a genuine interest and I joined the world of work as a production foreman making Hoover vacuum cleaners in Scotland. I became an Industrial Relations Officer for Dutch giant Philips and then followed 34 years of Human Resources management in a variety of industries: brewing, hotels, distilling, DIY retailing, financial services, real estate, aerospace (Rolls Royce), coal mining and railways. My last job was Global HR Director for a Swiss flooring company based in Holland. Now in retirement I live on the North Coast of Anglesey with my wife Julia, a Gordon setter and Hungarian Vizsla. A daughter and three sons are scattered around the UK with our five grandchildren. My claim to fame is that I once had afternoon tea with Gracie Fields on the isle of Capri.

My father gained his pharmacy qualification in 1938 and was accepted into the RAF in 1941. After three years training he arrived on 15 May 1944 at RAF Foulsham as Flying Officer Navigator/Special ops, 192 Squadron. Further training involved flights on Halifaxs, Wellingtons and an American P38 Lightning. His Log Book records that on 14 June 1944 he teamed up with F/Lt FE (Nobby) Clark on a Mosquito and flew with him on 50 occasions of which 20 flights were over enemy territory. On 23 September returning from a fighter affiliation exercise with a Halifax over the North Sea there was a catastrophic failure of the feathering mechanism of the port engine. Flying on one engine and unable to feather the port prop they could not maintain height. Jumping out over the sea was not attractive and by the time they were over land they were too low to jump. Six miles from home, on the edge of the village of Briston, they spotted a field and at exactly 12 noon Nobby Clark, with great skill, executed a belly landing in front of a pub. Both were injured, my father severely. Following a period in hospital, Nobby Clark returned to operations and was last heard of in 1947 when he was a test pilot at Boscombe Down. Dad lost his left leg and his right leg was just saved. After almost two years in hospital he retired from the RAF as F/Lt and returned to Pharmacy where he built a very successful business. We knew he loved his time with the RAF and that he was immensely proud of Mosquitos, but like so many of his generation he said almost nothing about what he did during the war.

RAF 100 Group Association has been immensely helpful to my family in understanding what F/O Richard Dobson experienced in his time with 100 Group. I have exchanged Log Book records with Doc Elliot, a regular attender at our Reunions, and we know he flew with my father on a Wellington on three occasions. Janine Harrington's book 'Nina & Vic' includes a letter from Vic Vinnell to his fiancée Nina Chessall where he describes visiting my father in hospital shortly after the crash. Vic was a fellow Navigator in the same flight. He arrived at Foulsham the day after my father and it appears they became friends. He was probably the first person to see my father given that my mother was pregnant and in Manchester. Following our ceremony at Foulsham this year, by chance I fell into conversation with one of our members, Beryl Griffiths, who explained she lives in Briston. Within three days Beryl had put me in touch with two men who visited the crash site on the day, one of whom witnessed the crash. For twenty years we believed they crashed in front of the Three Horseshoes Inn, east of Briston whereas we now know they crashed in front of the Plough Inn, south of Briston at Cranmere Beck. I have spoken to the owner of the field who claims to have a piece of Perspex from the cockpit canopy.

I look forward to corresponding with you in the future and hopefully meeting many of you at the 2015 reunion.



* * * *

WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

A few words.

I am surprised and honoured to be chosen as your President.

I will carry out my duties to the best of my ability and the faith that I have in our Association. I consider it to be one of the best in the country. Our Association still needs to keep alive all the work that they did in World War Two. So little is still known about it by the general public.

Phil James MBE

WEBSITE NEWS

www.raf100groupassociation.org.uk



Dear Members,

Early on in the life of this website, the hosting organisation suffered an attack and spurious members were added. Some had a web address which were easy to identify and delete. However, many are unclear as to whether they really are members or spurious. There is no way to delete them without deleting all members and asking real members to re-register ... which is the way we're having to go for the future.

There is now what is known as a 'Catchpa' - a little box containing funny letters and/or numbers that a computer robot cannot read, but you should be able to. Please log onto the website and follow the instructions below to re-register as a member. The illustrations are designed to guide you through the process, and you will need to choose a User Name to go by.

The first screen you will see is about behaviour on the site, not putting spurious, rude, lewd, or libellous on the website. You simply need to click the 'Agree' button:

The screenshot shows the 'RAF 100 Group Association' website. The main heading is 'RAF 100 Group Association'. Below it, there's a 'Board Index' link. The page is titled 'RAF 100 Group Association - Registration'. It contains a long paragraph of terms and conditions, followed by two buttons: 'I agree to these terms' and 'I do not agree to these terms'. At the bottom, there's a footer with 'Powered by phpBB® Forum Software © phpBB Group | Designed by Alex' and a link to 'The team • Delete all board cookies • All times are UTC [DST]'.

Then comes the actual registration form to complete, giving details:

The screenshot shows the 'RAF 100 Group Association' website. The main heading is 'RAF 100 Group Association'. Below it, there's a 'Board Index' link. The page is titled 'RAF 100 Group Association - Registration'. It contains a form with the following fields: 'Username' (with a hint 'Length must be between 3 and 20 characters'), 'E-mail address', 'Confirm e-mail address', 'Password' (with a hint 'Must be between 6 and 100 characters'), 'Confirm password', 'Language' (set to 'British English'), and 'Timezone' (set to '[UTC] Western European Time, Greenwich Mean Time'). Below the form, there's a 'CONFIRMATION OF REGISTRATION' section with a confirmation code 'BJU2BPQ' and a 'Refresh confirmation code' button. At the bottom, there's a footer with 'Powered by phpBB® Forum Software © phpBB Group | Designed by Alex' and a link to 'The team • Delete all board cookies • All times are UTC [DST]'.

If you should encounter a problem of any kind during registration, I will be happy to hear from you and can guide you through the process. Alternatively, you can contact me (Tony) or Janine giving us your email and chosen User Name and we can do the registration for you, emailing you confirmation of your User Name and password once we have registered you on the website.

Once registration is complete, you will have full access to the website.

The website can hold a wealth of information. But like a book waiting to be written, it needs RAF 100 Group material and memories direct from you the members to make this website of interest and value to everyone who visits. What would you like to see on the website? Do you have information and shared experiences you would like to share with a wider audience than the Association magazine? Any member who would like to contribute, please send your writings/photographs to either Tony or Janine, and we can ensure it appears on the website.

There is a section dedicated to individual Squadron histories to record details of how Squadrons were formed and their importance ... all vital pieces of history, part of the overall story of RAF No. 100 (BS) Group which should be passed on to future generations and never be forgotten:

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the RAF 100 Group Association forum. The page title is 'RAF 100 Group Association'. The forum is titled 'No 23 Squadron Details'. It features a table with columns for 'FORUM', 'TOPICS', 'POSTS', and 'LAST POST'. The table lists four sub-forums: 'Particular Aircraft History and Stories', 'Missions Flown History and Stories', 'Personnel Histories and Contacts', and 'Personal Stories, History and Archive'. All sub-forums show 0 topics, 0 posts, and 'No posts'. Below the table, there is a search bar and a 'NEW TOPIC' button. The page also includes a 'WHO IS ONLINE' section showing 'TonyB' and 0 guests. At the bottom, there is a footer with the text 'Powered by phpBB® Forum Software © phpBB Group | Designed by Alex' and 'Administration Control Panel'.

FORUM	TOPICS	POSTS	LAST POST
Particular Aircraft History and Stories	0	0	No posts
Missions Flown History and Stories	0	0	No posts
Personnel Histories and Contacts	0	0	No posts
Personal Stories, History and Archive	0	0	No posts

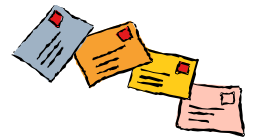
Please feel free to use this website. It has been designed to provide a wealth of information to people who still know nothing at all about RAF 100 Group and its history or the significance of why and how it was formed and the operations which followed. There are sections waiting to be filled, including RAF 100 Group aircraft.

Visit the website. Familiarise yourself with it and its various sections. If you feel you have something to contribute to the site, all you need do is contact Janine direct, or simply send it to us through the post marked 'Website'. I will update the website over weekends.

This is a website for and about you. I will be developing a full User Guide and make this available on request from the end of June. Meanwhile, if anyone has any problems registering, or using the website, I am here to help. Please contact me at apgbradley@gmail.com, or phone me on 01723 512544 / 07738 974662

Tony Bradley

LETTERS PAGES



Dear Mrs Bradley,

As I return my signature for inclusion in your book, I thought it a good opportunity to draw your attention to the incorrect date for commencement of 462's operations as shown in both the Autumn and Winter copies of the magazine. I wrote to you about this in May 2008 and you corrected it, but Gremlins seem to have crept in to upset things.

You date our first 100 Group operation as March 1945, whereas it was actually 1 January 1945, which can be verified by consulting 462 O.R.B. Form 540, page 41; a document with which I am sure you are very familiar. (As someone who has done a fair amount of WW2 Airforce research, I wish that the RAF would follow the RAAF's policy of putting Squadron O.R.B's online and available to all.)

The Squadron's first ABC sortie was carried out in March, which may explain the mistake.

I am sorry to bother you with this, I'm sure that you are very busy, but I would like History to treat my old Squadron fairly. I would not like future generations to think that we spent the first two months of 1945 sitting around singing Waltzing Matilda and drinking Fosters Beer!

Best wishes,

Arthur Newstead

NOTE: My humble apologies to all who served under 462 (RAAF). Your letter was most welcome, Arthur, as always, and the table at the back of the magazine has been corrected accordingly.

As I write this book today, bringing together as a collective the experiences of those who served under RAF 100 Group, I receive a lovely letter from one of Jack Fisher's six sisters, Gloria. In the 70th year since the death of mother's wartime fiancé Vic Vinnell with his Canadian friend and pilot Jack Fisher, it is wonderful to retain this connection with the past:

Dear Janine,

So happy you keep up a connection to the family of our dear Jack. Audrey finds her handwriting difficult so she passed the task to me ... We treasure your book ('Nina & Vic: A World War II Love Story'). I am just sorry for your dear mother, Nina's loss ... Now you must know I still miss my dear brother. I was fifteen when we heard the bad news. He was full of fun, loved to tease Mom and us six girls. We lived twenty miles from High School and farming wasn't great, but he was determined to go to school so he was able to work for room and board, helping out in the Nursing Home where he was born and other odd jobs.

It left a hole in our hearts when the war was over ...'

Please convey our thanks to Phil and Vera for their friendship also. I'm sorry we never got to meet them when they visited Canada ...

With very fond wishes to you and Tony
And thanks for all your caring,

With love

Gloria and Bill



*Bill & Gloria Douglass
Celebrate 60 years!*



Congratulations Mom & Dad on your
60th Wedding Anniversary--September 15, 1951
Love your kids

Dear Janine

Thank you for your letter introducing me to RAF 100 Group Association and for the copy of the magazine courtesy of Betty Johnson. I read the magazine and enjoyed it very much. It brought back some fond memories and some sad ones as I read the list of the many Squadron members who had passed away. We who remain are becoming a scarce item.

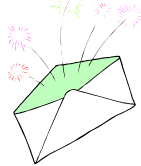
My interest in RAF 100 Group stems from the fact that I had been with the Wireless Op in F/O Thompson's crew, since we crewed up in Nassau in the Bahamas and eventually became members of 223 Squadron, Oulton. I flew every trip with the crew, until I became ill after our flight on 18 Feb 1945. The crew was shot down on 20 Feb and Flight Sergeant Bryant who replaced me lost his life along with five others in the crew. The other members who perished that night were Sgt Whittaker, F/S Wood (RCAF), F/S Wynn, F/S Kendell, F/O Thompson (RCAF), pilot.

I don't think a day goes by that I don't remember them and regret the enormous loss of lives the war cost.

Thank you again for your letter, the warm introduction to 100 Group Magazine.

Best regards,

Rex J Arnett (Canada)



Dear Janine,

This is a message from Desmond Pye's daughter, Virginia Cranfield. I am emailing with some very sad news that my father, Desmond Pye, (who served with Ground Crew in 223 Squadron as W. Mechanic, B Flight) passed away last weekend, 3-4 May. My father was well and living life to-the-full to the end and, although his death was sudden and unexpected, it was peaceful.

He often talked about the RAF 100 Group and I would be grateful if you could pass on our sad news to members. If there is any information, in connection with my Dad that you would like to have, please let me know.

With best wishes,

Virginia Cranfield

cranvp@talktalk.net



NOTE: Our thoughts are with you at this time. A card has been sent. And I understand Desmond's family are currently putting together a Memorial Tribute to him, to appear in the Autumn magazine.



Hi Janine,

Just dropping you a note to let you know my father died on Thursday 15 May. He had a bad last few weeks with his dementia, but finally succumbed, which was actually a blessing in the end.

Feel free to add his name to the 'roll call' in the next magazine - *Warrant Officer Edwin Moore*. My father's rank in 171 Squadron was Flight Sergeant, but when he left the RAF in 1947, he was a Warrant Officer of which he was very proud. I have tracked down the date Charles (Chuck) Warner died – 6 July 1965 - pilot of my father's crew in 171. I would appreciate it if you could also include him in Final Postings.

Ian Moore (N. Yorkshire)



Hallo Janine,

Many thanks for the Spring Magazine – super as usual. Norman Storey asks for the name of the 214 Squadron Adjutant (page 22) – George Wright, a wonderful person who couldn't do enough for the crews. There's a very good story about him in the archives. He's in the picture on page 17, number 9 ...

I'm sadly no longer able to travel, but I shall be with you all at the Reunion as always, in spirit.

It's mid-April as I write this. The Spring has sprung and nature has blossomed in all its glory. It's not so long ago that I did not expect to see these days, but here I am, still at large and blooming. I suffer no discomfort, of late I'm fully mobile about the house and take short walks twice a day for exercise. We enjoy our garden on sunny days, taking our meals out on the terrace and I have a very healthy appetite. I am blessed with a loving family and good friends about me to while away contented hours, but sadly travel is no longer a practical proposition. In a few days' time, it will be three score years and ten since my first operational flight and I shall miss those happy and memorable Reunions very much indeed. However, the contact with my friends remains with memories I will always treasure. The final curtain may come down at any moment of course, but the game is still very much afoot and I may see a few overs yet before rain stops play. So keep watching this score board, for who knows ...

Gerhard & Sissy

NOTE: Please know you were both missed at our special 2014 Reunion. So many asked after you, and it wasn't the same without you. However, I hope you come to feel a part of the proceedings as you share them later in this magazine. Warmest love to you both xx



Hi Janine,

... Just a bit of news for you. We went to Hillsborough Castle to have the Clasp to Bomber Command Veterans presented by the Chief of Air Staff, Sir Andrew Pulford KCB, CBE, ADC. We had present our daughters Maureen, flying over from Doncaster; and Patricia from over here (Ireland); our Granddaughter Rachel and of course Gwen and I.

Now looking forward to seeing old friends again at the Reunion.

Take care,

Gwen and John (Gilpin)

NOTE: Congratulations, John, and lovely to see you both at the Reunion, and I know you had a safe journey home as I've heard from you since. However, we seem to have mixed reactions relating to the Bomber Command clasp, and wonder what other veterans feel about it? Perhaps members would like to write in to say?



Dear Janine,

Just a note to say I have received the 'Ribbon/Bar' for Bomber Command. It is pretty awful to say the least and I am, on behalf of my late husband Bill Foskett (214 Squadron), totally unimpressed. I wonder if you have any other comments from those receiving it?

Pauline Foskett

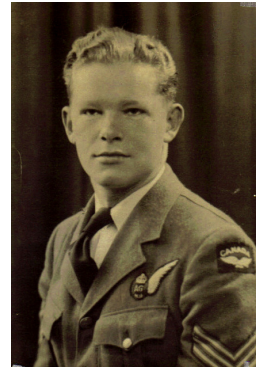


Good morning, Janine,

Thank you so much for taking on the Project of bringing together the experiences of those, like my brother, who served under RAF 100 Group during the war. You know for sure who one of your first customers will be once it is completed.

Thanks to the new statue being unveiled in London, the Canadian Government is honouring those who served in Bomber Command with an additional medal. It is a Bar and will go on the ribbon for the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal. I have now received this on behalf of my brother.

P/O Gordon Joshua Dennison, better known as Billy; served 2 years in Canada as an Air Engine Mechanic at one of the Bomb and Gunnery Schools here near the town of Dafoe, Saskatchewan. He re-mustered and tried for Pilot, but was recommended for Air Gunner. He left Canada after completing Gunnery School in January 1944, arriving in Liverpool at the end of the month, and was moved to four different bases to be crewed and trained for active duty at North Creake.



His last mission was as follows:

15 September – EX-P (A Stirling Mark 3 serial no: LJ536), Base: Southwold – Point A Latitude 51 degrees, 45 minutes north, Longitude 04 degrees, 48 minutes east – Base. Flying 'MANDREL'. Time on position A 22:40, time on position B 23:00. Leave position B 02:15 MANDREL on from 22:15 till 02:35.

Explanation for the above directions:

The course for EX-P would be to fly from Base (North Creake) to point A and be there at 10:40 at night (22:40) then to fly to point B and be there at 11:00 at night (23:00). This back and forth from point A to point B was to be repeated till the last time at point B at 2:35 in the morning. They would then fly to Base (North Creake). This set up a sort of race course pattern, being flown in partnership with plane EX-E (Pilot F/O Lampkin). MANDREL would be turned on from 10:15 (22:15) at night till 2:35 (02:35) in the morning. This mission would have put EX-P close to the Holland coast and over the North Sea.

15 September, 199 Squadron was providing cover for a bombing run on the Kiel Canal of about 490 bombers. Also there was the 'Market Garden' campaign taking place in Holland at the same time, so a lot of activity going on simultaneously.

My thoughts: possible causes for the loss are icing, anti-aircraft fire, night fighters, mechanical failure.

Remarks – plane missing.

Note a number of the planes had trouble with icing as well as reserves which had to be used because four planes came up o/s (out of service).

We never received any pictures of Bill and his crew, nor Bases while serving in England. It would be a great delight to have something like that in my possession. His one Leave he shared with us was his visit to a farm in Birmingham, relatives of a family near where we lived in Canada. The people in it were not known to us, so meant little at the time.

Due to censoring, Bill's letters do not contain any pertinent information about life on Base or about his missions. But he had a feeling of isolation at North Creake as it was a long way to a village and transportation to other places in England. He was being well supplemented with goodies by his family back home, writing regularly and often. The last few weeks of his life he received a break-up letter from his girlfriend which maybe had a bad omen to it ...



Jerry Dennison

Dear Janine,

I wonder if members can help me? I need to identify a suitable source for researching aviation and its connection with Stirling, Scotland. I've tried Search Engines that related to the BBC2 'Flying Scots' programme, but cannot get any suitable imagery or information. Can anyone help please?

Thanks in advance and I understand if you're not in a position to help me.

John Atkin FRBS

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Dear Janine,

I am writing to ask if you or any Association members knows of an early film made concerning your Group in the 1950s? I gather it may have had the title: 'Now we can tell the Story'. The mother of a friend (now aged 94) was a WAAF during the war and served with the Group.

Many thanks

Phil Carroll

Information Officer

Upper Wharfedale Heritage Group

phil&pat@avr.org.uk



Hello, Janine

Here is a bit of an update for you. Last Tuesday I was visited by Allan Udy, a Photographer of some note who makes programmes of all the wonderful Air Displays we have here in New Zealand - Auckland, Masterton and Wanaka being the most well-known. At his request and at fairly short notice we made about a fifteen minute interview about my experience of flying Mosquitoes. This is going onto a DVD about this aircraft generally and about the one built in New Zealand in particular. I can't fill you in with any other particulars at this stage Needless to say, I will send you a copy when they become available.

John Beeching (ex 169 Squadron) New Zealand



NEWS FLASH ... NEWS FLASH

DVD for sale

'DH.98 Mosquito - A Wooden Wonder Restored'

First flight of Mosquito built in Auckland, with over 2 hours of awesome video footage. Features Air Show displays, air-to-air and on-board footage, and dual-audio tracks.

A deal is currently being worked out with a UK duplication facility to get copies produced in the UK

Suggested Retail Price at present: Mosquito DVD 17.99
: DVD BluRay: 25.99

CONTACT JANINE BRADLEY for further details



RAF 100 GROUP ASSOCIATION SPECIAL 20TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION 2014

Commemorating the Dedication of Oulton Memorial
Laid by the Association 20 Years Ago



*Oulton Memorial dedication
May 1994*

My heartfelt thanks to the following
for sharing photographs and information

Kelvin Sloper + Jamie at CNAM
Richard Forder
Clive Boursnell (past pupil of Ron Johnson)
Geoff West
Ivan Thompson
Elizabeth Johnson
Eastern Daily Press

If anyone feels they can put names to the four gentlemen above,
or any that might follow, please let me know

RETURN TO OULTON

This year over our 2014 Reunion weekend, we came from all corners of the world to gather in memory of brave men and women who served in Squadrons under RAF 100 (BS) Group based at secret airfields around Norfolk ... remembering particularly those who did not return.

2014 marks the 20th Anniversary of the dedication of Oulton Memorial, and it is here we begin coverage of our programme shared over these few precious days we spent together.

It was almost 20 years to the day that members a part of the Association in its infancy, stood on this same windy corner, huddled on a bank of grass at the crossroads in Oulton. The Eastern Daily Press had registered Eileen Boorman's dream shared with her brother, and became a part of making that dream a reality as it drew people to the scene:-

WAR WIDOW'S MEMORIAL BID

The widow of a wartime airman is planning a memorial to the hundreds of men who died while serving at a secret Norfolk airbase.

RAF Oulton, near Aylsham, has the rare distinction of having its officers' quarters in nearby historic Blickling Hall. But during the Second World War, the airfield was the base for hundreds of daring bombing and radar-jamming missions.

300 Oulton airmen died, many during daylight bombing raids on Germany and Holland.

Amongst the most famous was Operation Oyster, when Boston medium bombers from 88 Squadron led a raid on the Philips radio factory at Eindhoven.

The grass airfield was opened in 1940, and had runways laid during a shutdown in 1943. It continued in service until 1947 – using converted Liberator and Fortress bombers as radar-jammers.

It was during a jamming raid on Hamburg that Flying Officer Stafford Sinclair was lost, along with an entire Fortress crew, when their plane mysteriously exploded over the Elbe estuary.

The radio operator's widow Eileen Boorman, of St Leonards in Sussex, has now decided to put a memorial to Stafford and other lost airmen at the base. Her brother, Martin Staunton, said: 'Oulton was one of Norfolk's quiet secret bases. We visited it recently and it looked desolate. And there wasn't a lot left in the old quarters at Blickling Hall's attics apart from a couple of posters – so Eileen decided to do a memorial.'

On May 15, a Book of Remembrance to the 300 dead will be dedicated at Blickling Hall in an 11am ceremony that has already guaranteed a full church. Loud speakers will relay the service to people outside. At 2pm, a memorial plaque to all who served at RAF Oulton will be unveiled at the Four Crossways, north of the village.

A history booklet of RAF Oulton is being compiled specially for the occasion by Len Bartram, who is interested in hearing from former personnel and aircrew ...'

(Last year, under my maiden name Janine Harrington, in memory of Len Bartram; the RAF Oulton booklet mentioned in the paper was professionally re-produced, including new details and photographs. It is now one of a collection of 12 booklets, each focusing on an airfield in Norfolk. This year, to mark this 20th Oulton Memorial Anniversary amongst many others, Len's material has also been included in a book due to be published for Remembrance Day 2014. Entitled: **RAF 100 Group – Kindred Spirits, personal experiences of RAF & USAAF on secret Norfolk airfields during WWII** it brings together the voices of those who served on these airfields, sharing a wealth of stories members have been sending in to me.)

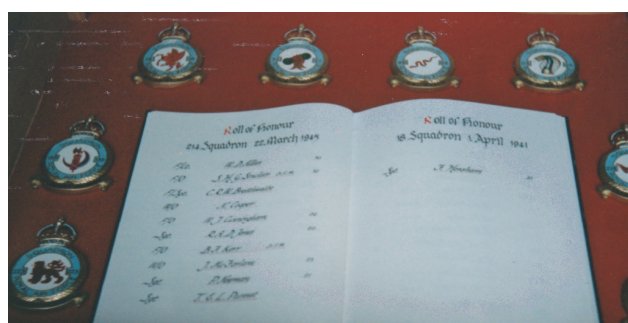
The service held on the morning of 15th May 1994 was a sell-out, according to the paper the following day. A tannoy relayed the service to those outside as promised.



Blickling Church



Interior of Blickling Church



Book of Remembrance, May 1994

The following morning's Eastern Daily Press was full of the previous day's events, offering glowing reports, spreading news about both the Book of Remembrance placed at Blickling Church and the new Memorial at Oulton with its dedication:-

EPP 16 May 94

Poppy shower tribute as veterans honour air heroes

Poppies showered from the sky as war veterans remembered 300 airmen who gave their lives for their country.

A light aircraft flew low over a disused base that once launched daytime bombing raids and secret radar-jamming planes.

The Piper Cub dropped paper poppies on to guests at RAF Oulton near Aylsham as they unveiled a memorial to their wartime flier friends who never came back — many from the daylight bombing raids.

Among the dead was Flying Officer "Staff" Sinclair, whose widow Eileen Boorman worked tirelessly with her brother Martin Staunton for more than three years to provide a fitting tribute to Staff and his fallen colleagues.

The radio operator's Fortress plane mysteriously exploded over the Elbe estuary while on a radar-jamming raid to Hamburg.

Yesterday was a day charged with emotion for hundreds of ex-airmen and their families as they revisited the base.

A morning service at Blickling church saw a book of remembrance, containing the names of all the dead from the base, dedicated in front of a packed congregation of veterans and guests.

In the afternoon the marble memorial was unveiled at the airfield, now home for crops and turkeys.

Mrs Boorman, from Sussex, whose husband went missing just three months after they married, said: "It has been more than worth the effort. We have had such help from the people of Norfolk."

RAF Oulton was opened in 1940 and continued in service until 1947. It had the rare distinction of its officers being the last group of people to live in historic Blickling Hall.

Liberator and Fortress bombers from Oulton, fitted with "dustbin and clothesline" bits of electronic gadgetry were used as radar-jammers.

And one of the most famous sorties was Operation Oyster, when Boston medium bombers from 88 Squadron led a raid on the Philips radio factory at Eindhoven.

● A booklet on RAF Oulton is available from Len Bartram on 0263 861319.

More than 300 people gathered in 1994 at the crossroads where Oulton Memorial sat shrouded beneath a flag, hiding it from view. No fewer than 15 Standards were presented, including The British Legion, RAF, and USAAF. It was Ms Alison Shaw, Chairperson of Oulton Parish Council, who opened the proceedings:



Dedication Ceremony 1994

'Welcome to Oulton and for so many of you, welcome back to Oulton on this very special day.

You see us here now – a peaceful little Parish of some 200 people. The building of this Memorial has provoked many thoughts and feelings in the Parish. For those of us who were born here and able to share the memories of what it was like as a child during the war with all those airmen about. For those of us like myself who settled here many years later, it has been an opportunity to learn so much more about the recent history of our chosen surroundings, and then from the children there are the questions.

I was born shortly after the war when my father returned from several years' service in the Indian Army. Throughout my entire life there has been peace in Western Europe. This is a great gift. As Eastern Europe experiences new suffering, we are made even more aware of just how precious that gift has been. My generation can never really know the trials that your generation had to suffer, but we can try to imagine them and on an occasion like this, we can say: 'Thank you'.

This may appear to be a somewhat isolated spot, but in fact, at certain times of day it becomes a hub of village life; morning and afternoon the school bus stops here and picks up or disgorges some dozen children; parents collect here and gossip, awaiting the said bus. At other times, adults and children wander down here to entertain themselves in the playground behind us where occasionally a village barbeque or cricket match is held. From this day on, these activities will take place around and beside this memorial stone. These handsome young beech trees planted fourteen years ago by the then children of this village will continue to grow and provide a setting for the memorial. Parents will read out the words to their children and questions will be answered and so we will not forget ...'

IN MEMORIAM

*Who loved life
Just as much as I
Nor wished to fight
Or fighting wished to die?
How shall I tell of you my friends?
What songs shall satisfy*

*My heart? What verses
Penetrate the crowd
Of platitudes when crude
Pen-scribblings shroud
With drooping laurels your simple dignity?
The stars were lost in cloud*

*The night I left you
Four miles high
Above the German mountains
Falling from the sky
Like flaming Autumn leaves
There was no time to say goodbye*

*Familiar voices heard
Above the engines roar
Our flying kit flung carelessly
Across the crewroom floor
Are murals for my inner walls
Point, counterpoint of war*

*And so for me
You did not die
Because the corn grew tall
Where you passed by
And you loved living
Every bit as much as I.*

Ron W Johnson

223 Squadron, RAF Oulton

June 1945: in memory of J-Johnny and his crew

In May 1994, Ron Johnson read his poem aloud beside the Memorial at Oulton in memory of his crew, lost in June 1945; with great dignity. And yet, he must have been remembering each and every one of them, rewinding the film of life, playing through the events of that time.

Equally emotive, were the words of Air Vice Marshall Jack Furner, a lovely lovely man. I still have the letters he wrote to Mum (Nina Chessall) about her wartime fiancé Vic Vinnell and Canadian friend and pilot Jack Fisher. I count them amongst my dearest treasures, and in reading them again today, am reminded of this gentle man who survived the war. In May 1994, just before unveiling the Memorial, he spoke to the packed crowd of people straining to hear him around the green where, in their footprints, we stood again this year:-



'We seem to be in the midst of 50th Anniversaries. Those of you who are less than 60 years old must be keen students of the first half of this century's history to understand what all the fuss is about. The fact is that the world today and the world then are two completely different places.

Today, for instance, Germany and Italy are effective members of the European Union and of NATO; the Secretary General of NATO is a highly respected German with NATO aircrew of all participating countries working together. New aircraft are joint designed and test-flown by international aircrews as comrades in a common purpose.

50 years ago, it wasn't like that, it couldn't be. Tyranny was abroad and spreading throughout Europe and to the Pacific basin. Nineteen European countries had lost their freedom under the jack boot by the year 1941, three years before the date we are commemorating. That tyranny had to be resisted and beaten back. In 1940, it had been RAF Fighter Command which had resisted it. From then on and for many years it was RAF Bomber Command and the U.S Air Force based here which beat it back and made the D-Day Landings soon to be commemorated so much easier than they otherwise would have been. 50 years ago, the RAF strength was one and a half million men and women. Today it is approaching 60,000 and falling. 50 years ago there were 116 Bomber Command airfields in just the eastern counties of England. Many of them were temporarily converted from farmland like this one. There were so many that as soon as you had taken off from one airfield you found yourself in the circuit of a neighbouring one. Day after day, night after night, they headed east from here. At the peak of the offensive, up to 1,400 4-engine aircraft of Bomber Command would be out at night returning just before dawn. Then soon after dawn, the skies would fill again with aircraft of the United States Air Force keeping the pressure up by day. Altogether, Bomber Command flew 400,000 sorties.

Oulton was one of these temporary airfields; today it is rightly returned to farmland. Then, it resounded to the roar of aircraft some well-known, some not so. Blenheims, Venturas, Hudsons, Bostons, Fortresses and Liberators. The effort was massive – the costs were high. A total of 9,000 bombers failed to return from operations. Of 125,000 aircrew who flew in Bomber Command – British, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, Polish and others, 74,000 - 60% became casualties. Killed, injured or prisoner, all of them Officers or Senior NCOs. There was no glamour, there were no symphony orchestras playing inspiring music in the background. Inevitably, Oulton suffered their share of losses, although not an active airfield for the whole of the period. 308 aircrew lost their lives while stationed here.

Tomorrow is May 16th, exactly 50 years ago on that very day, May 16th 1944, No. 214 Squadron flew into Oulton from a neighbouring Norfolk airfield, Sculthorpe. I was one of those young men in their twenties and there are others here today attending this ceremony. We came in B-17s Flying Fortresses. Today, May 15th 1994, we are here to pay tribute to the 308 who lost their lives flying from Oulton. The men of No. 18, 21, 88 and 114 and 139 and 214 and 223 and 236 Squadrons, and Squadrons of USAAF 803 Bomber Group.

This morning, the Memorial Book was dedicated which contained their names.

Now we have reached the moment for me to unveil the memorial stone. A stone which will remind future generations what was once happening here at Oulton ...'



Oulton Memorial at night, courtesy of Clive Boursnell

This stunning photograph above taken in a car's headlamps brings past and present together. Taken by Clive Boursnell, he pays respects to Ron Johnson who wrote the moving tribute to his crew J-Johnny, which he read so eloquently at the Oulton Memorial dedication in 1994:

'Ron Johnson was the first teacher I felt and remember taking any notice of me. I was someone in his class. In those far off days, I knew here was a teacher who was different, special, a one-off, although I did not verbalise it as such at the time ... it will be what I remember feeling about Mr Johnson as he became very much a part of my young life. We had lessons and activities in class completely different to the 'Norm' for that time. It was Mr Johnson who taught me to use a dictionary and telephone directory. I remember him telling me that the value of knowing how to find a word or any written knowledge would be forever a huge asset to my life. He was right!

Mr Johnson we nicknamed 'Knobby Johnson' because he was so bony to us kids, not knowing he hadn't been long out of a POW camp; it was a name which stuck but was never meant in criticism. He picked up on my serious dyslexia, unknown at the time where, even my parents thought I had a screw loose! And I can honestly say that it was Ron Johnson who began to show us the wider world, taking our class on the only school holiday I had to an old Army camp in Dimchurch. I'll never forget. I can still see Knobby J fully dressed and ready for the day, striding through our Nissen hut, joyously voiced, waking us with such enthusiasm for life and this new day. He also took us to Nelson's Victory. It was the first time I experienced not being able to buy something I had no money for – a little wood and brass cannon, priced 3/6d. I've never forgotten it.

In Mr Johnson's class we had so many first time experiences. He gave and shared so much, for which I for one still hold dear to this day. My first school plays were with Mr Johnson. On one occasion, I played an old man. I don't think it was meant to be funny, but I remember so much laughter. I also recall Mr Johnson coming out into the playground at Grove Park Primary School one foggy morning in March 1952, the sun just coming through; to tell me and a classmate I was with: 'The King is dead!' We went around the playground in a whisper ... I am just so grateful to have stayed in touch with Ron for the rest of his life, and continue to be so with Betty, his wife. Long may he be remembered!'

Clive Boursnell

Former pupil, Grove Park School, Chiswick: 1950-1954

RETURN TO OULTON

*Fold up the flags
Freeze-frame the stained glass colours
On the white walls of this age-old church
Now all the words in the world
No longer matter
Only the names safe written
In that slim hand-crafted book
We leave for other eyes
To look and read and wonder.
Outside chill freshening breezes
Stir in the long wet grass
Beside the sloping churchyard path
Now follow to the great iron gates
And red bricked towers of Blickling
Pause to remember, kindly,
Warm oak panelled walls
And letters written in the music room.*

*And so to Oulton in the afternoon
Along the once familiar lanes
To where the shrouded stone
Sits at the crossroads
On the little Green
Beneath the windswept hedge
Four square and permanent
As if to say:
Come from all corners of the earth
This is the spot they chose
And here we stay.
Then to the endless flapping of the flags
Unveil and dedicate the stone
With simple prayers and honest words
Chosen to tell the tale
Of how and why we came today
To Oulton fields
Each to remember and for each
The bitter-sweet recall of that remembrance.
Now fold away the flags
And catch the bugle's
Last complaining note
In some clear crystal bowl of memory
Slip quietly away
And leave the future of this special place
Safe in the hands of children
Playing in the field beyond
And when the school bus voices
Daily meet and echo round
The crossroads here
Let them watch over what we did today
As we watched over them
In all those yesterdays commemorated.
Then when the evening mists of Norfolk
Drape their swirling scarves
Around our stone
The roar of engines on the runway
Will be silent
And the final 'Stand Down' order done.*

Ron W Johnson, May 1994



The Dedication Service in May 1994 was followed by a gathering at Aylsham Town Hall with speeches and votes of thanks, particularly to [Eileen Boorman \(left\)](#) and brother: [Martin Staunton \(right\)](#) who worked tirelessly for 3 years helped and supported by Len and Evelyn Bartram, Aylsham Councillor Mr Eaton, and so many others, focused on making their dream a reality.



Three years on, 1997, the City of Norwich Aviation Museum shared another auspicious occasion in working together as a collective to exhibit memorabilia of RAF 100 (BS) Group for the future.

My dearest hope is that Eileen and Martin would both be proud of the way RAF 100 Group Association has developed through the years, sharing with us in spirit as we gather each year around the Memorial Stone at Oulton that came to mean so much to them, paying tribute to brave airmen who gave their lives for the freedom we enjoy today.



Air Vice Marshall Jack Furner, centre, with members of those who flew from RAF Oulton

Tony and I watched a hugely emotive film of the May 1994 ceremonies created by Geoff West at the time. There were a few familiar faces, Richard Forder amongst them. Mum and I were members back then, but unable to attend, relying on those in touch by phone and letter to keep us included and involved ... the reason why I remain so passionate today about those many members who cannot travel and join with us our Reunions in Norfolk, understanding the importance for them of feeling that same spirit of friendship and love.

Geoff West produced from his original VHS video, over 120 copies worldwide following the ceremonies over the weekend of 15th May 1994, each lasting nearly 2 hours.

Today, Geoff is offering members the chance to purchase a piece of history - a CD of the Dedication of Oulton Memorial from 1994. Tony and I personally endorse this absolutely incredible and very moving film which is well worth watching. Words alone cannot do it justice.

To order direct for £8+pp please contact – [Geoff West, Bancroft, The Street, Little Snoring, Fakenham, Norfolk NR 21 0HU. Tel: 01328878501](#)

* * * *

RAF 100 GROUP REUNION 2014

How can I possibly find words to do justice to a weekend filled with so many wonderful events, days which flowed so easily from one event to another, everywhere filled with such a depth of feeling almost tangible, almost possible to reach out to touch that true spirit, that kindred spirit which connects and binds us together?

I believe there are many many voices which join with me in saying what a wonderful Anniversary weekend this turned out to be!

It was also special because we were joined by new faces both from home and abroad. Stephen Hutton with wife Pam travelled from the States to represent the USAAF, joining UK representatives and good friends Heda Kootz and Chas Jellis. An equally warm welcome was also given to Ann and Brendan Maguire who came from Holyhead, Wales, where they watch over the Memorial to Stephen Hutton's father Iredell Hutton's aircraft and crew: *'The Jigs Up'*.

Stephen Hutton is author of *'Squadron of Deception'*, and currently working on the book with me bringing together the voices of RAF and USAAF which comes out in time for Remembrance Day 2014 marking a number of Anniversaries which fall this year.



Heda's flight jacket (far left) honours the Mighty Eighth and Chas's (second left) illustrates the 'Beast of Bourbon'. The Beast was Lt. Harold Boehm's ship, but when Lt. Louis McCarthy flew it in February 1945, the Beast crashed on take-off from Cheddington with 3 of his airmen killed. Chas & Co. produced the Memorial to them in Long Marston.



Chas also produced a Memorial to Lt. Landberg's crew in Ivinghoe. Lt. Norman Landberg lost 2 of his crew after take-off from Cheddington when B24 #42-51219 crashed on Chas's cousin Paul's farm in November 1944.

Stephen's flight jacket honours his father's crew and their Liberator – *The JIGS UP*, however, it was 8 men of Lt. Boehm's crew that were lost to the Irish Sea in December 1944 when they jumped from *The JIGS UP*.

(Thanks Stephen for the info)

FRIDAY PM: FOULSHAM



Under the stark tower of Foulsham church, we were fortunate this year to have blue skies as we laid two wreaths at the Memorial in the Square – one from the Association commemorating all who flew from RAF Foulsham, together with a personal wreath in memory of Vic Vinnell and Jack Fisher in this, the 70th Anniversary of their death in Mosquito DK292 on a secret operation, laid on behalf of both families and those who continue to miss them still.

Our brief but moving ceremony was followed by tea and cake hosted by Andrew Macnair and his wife. Thank you both, for making us so welcome. And please, pass on our thanks to all those helpers who provided tables literally heaving with such an abundance of wicked goodies ... for those watching waistlines! It provided a wonderful welcome back to Norfolk.



The weekend was already moving apace, with many people having travelled from so far and already tired.

Later, we met at The Plough, Marsham, for drinks and a Committee Meeting, before settling to a long leisurely dinner under the capable hands of Val & Roger Stock. Thank you



both for all you offered to make our members feel as if they were coming to a home from home!

* * * *

SATURDAY

The Mission Hall, Horsham St Faith AGM

A few surprises were in store for unsuspecting Association members as they took their seats at 11am for the start of our Annual General Meeting. The Mission Hall was crowded. And again, Peter Holness, together with his wife and their merry band of helpers, had done us proud, serving refreshments to bring us into the spirit of the day.

Welcome

Acting Chairman, Richard Forder gave a warm welcome to all members, especially those sharing our Reunion for the first time.

Apologies

- Gerhard + Sissy
'My regards to all and my regrets that I'm unable to travel and again experience the warm friendship and comradeship I have always found at these reunions. But I shall be with you all in spirit for what time will be granted to me.'
- Joe Sayers, 192 Squadron
- David Porteous
- George Stewart (Canada, who served with 23 Squadron, Little Snoring)
- Dave Berry
- Anthea Iveson – RAF 100 Group plaque resides in room at Blickling Hall above restaurant

- Betty Johnson, wife of Ron Johnson, 223 Squadron
- Ernie Hughes, 171 Squadron

Role of Chairman

Acting Chairman Richard Forder explained to the gathered throng that reluctantly, John Stubbington, Association Chairman for the past 5 years; came to conclusion he could no longer give commitment to the Committee as he'd taken up a number of other tasks. Gerhard sent these words to be read in his absence in recognition of the work John has done over previous years:-

- Gerhard Heilig: (17.4.2014) *I heard yesterday from John Stubbington that he has resigned the Chairmanship. At the appropriate moment, please move on my behalf a vote of thanks for his Chairmanship and membership which has been such a benefit and pleasure for the Association. It is the one small contribution I would like to make in my unavoidable absence.*

Richard expressed his thanks to John Stubbington, saying what an excellent job he had done with the Association in starting a new Committee and giving strong leadership and direction, helping to publicise it extensively. The Committee felt his work should be recognised, and members were asked if they were happy for Richard to present a plaque to John on behalf of members at a cost of £47.50?

This proposal was agreed and a vote of thanks from the membership is hereby recorded.

Richard Forder went on to say that, as an Association, it became crucial to find a new Chairman, while over past months he had been happy to adopt the role of Acting Chairman in the short term.

A list of potential candidates was drawn from the membership as a whole and reduced to three thought able to take on the role of Association Chairman for the future. First on the list: **Roger Dobson**, was approached and agreed for his name to go forward for approval in the belief it is important for the chosen person to have positive links with RAF 100 Group both past and present.

Roger Dobson

'I am a Lancastrian living in Angelsey with a career predominately in Resource Management in the drinks industry, ie Johnny Walker, as well as in coal mining and a number of other industries, including the company who produced the Merlin Engine. I am recently retired, with four children, a daughter and three sons, who are joining us this weekend. However, it was my father, Flying Officer Richard William Dobson, known as 'Dobbie', that has been a major influence on my life. He qualified in 1938 as a Pharmacist, and in 1944 came here, to serve in 192 at Foulsham, his Skipper Gordon 'Nobby' Clarke. In idle moments six or seven years ago I went on the internet, and saw an advertisement for a book 'Nina & Vic – A WWII Love Story' by Janine Harrington; bringing together love letters shared through the war. Imagine then my reaction when, on Page 48, I came across these words in the writings of Vic to his wartime fiancé Nina Chessall:

'... This afternoon I went into Norwich with the 'Wingco' to see two chaps from our flight who are in hospital there. One of them is Dick and the other his pilot. They crashed whilst I was on leave and Dick has lost part of one of his legs. I was quite shaken when I heard the news on my arrival back here. Dick and his pilot are on 'Mossies' and the unfortunate incident was the result of technical failure. Since I saw them I have heard that Dick is rather worse. He lost quite a bit of blood and I think his disability is depressing him. His spirit, on the other hand, is quite perky and wondering whether he will be able to play rugger this season (in spite of two broken legs). I think he's a trifle optimistic ...'

The man named Dick he spoke of was my father.

Parachuting into the cold North Sea was not appealing to Dick, my father, or Nobby Clarke his Pilot, and by the time they were over land they were too low to jump. As they tried to make it back to Foulsham they were being tracked by radar and in radio contact with their Control. With six miles to go they were faced with the prospect of landing in trees if they didn't make it. They identified an attractive field on the edge

of the village of Briston and decided to make a belly landing. The field is immediately in front of the Plough Inn, Craymere Beck, at the south-western edge of Briston. It was midday and an audience of pub regulars stood at the door waiting for opening time. I surmise that, as they careered along on the aircraft belly, they went through a hedge causing significant injury to my father's legs and to a lesser extent those of Nobby Clark. It is reported that two spinster sisters were first on the scene, one with a carving knife followed by equally brave locals from the Plough who rescued the two of them from the wooden wreckage covered in aviation spirit.

By great good fortune driving through Briston at the time of the crash was an Army ambulance complete with a doctor. The immediate medical aid may well have saved my father's life. Although severely injured, he was conscious and concerned his rescuers did not light cigarettes! His pharmacy training came into action and he instructed the doctor to write down the drugs he administered on a card and tie it to his neck. He went on to become a good Pharmacist for the future.

The invitation to become Association Chairman came as one of the most unexpected surprises of my life! If you endorse this appointment I will give RAF 100 Group Association my commitment and care, continuing to enable it to grow and thrive for the future.'

The choice of Roger Dobson as Chairman of the Association was approved unanimously, and Roger stepped up to take the position.

President Position

It was explained by Richard Forder that originally, for those not aware and new to the Association, in the beginning we also had a President, later to become Patron – Air Vice Marshall Jack Furner of 214 Squadron who, following the war, led a distinguished career. We lost him in 1977. His position was never replaced. As a Committee, it was deemed timely to re-instate this position, with one candidate standing out to fill this role – **Phil James MBE**, known to many and the face of the raffle, ably supported by Vera his wife, and daughter Barbara, with the raffle and auction very popular features of our Reunions!! Behind the scenes, Phil remains a prominent person, assisting wherever needed, particularly when the original Committee was lost a fair few years ago now. Phil is a Do-er. Certainly, through the years, he has helped to keep the Association together, responsible for the appointment of John Stubbington, who served us very well since 2008. His experience has proved valuable in so many ways.

Phil James served in 192 Squadron at Foulsham in George Ward's crew, and has lived with the RAF as a long-time member both of the RAF and the ATC. His whole family is connected with the RAF in one way or another. Offering Phil the position of President for the future gives the Association the chance to recognise someone who has served us for so many years.

A show of hands was called for ... and the position of **Phil James MBE as Association President** approved unanimously.

Phil's response was that he was both delighted and honoured ... and would carry out his duties to the best of his ability.

Deaths

It was reported to the Association that Peter Witts, long-term member of RAF 100 Group Association before he died; brother-in-law Len Abbs passed away recently. Len also served in the RAF, not in 100 Group, fighting in Greece and Palestine before becoming a POW, ending up working on the 'Railway of Death' in which he featured prominently. He passed away 4 weeks ago, and will always be remembered as a great character and family man.

POST AGM – Carolyn Isaac, Peter Witts daughter, received a phone call the Saturday morning of the Reunion from her cousin to say her father's brother Lawrence was very ill. He passed away on 17 May 2014 age 76. *'I have lost in this last two years, eight uncles and aunts. I am at the age this will happen but it is never easy ...'* I am sure the thoughts and best wishes of all Association members are with the family at this sad time.

Treasurer Report

Andrea Sluman as our new Treasurer, appointed last year, said she felt honoured to be able to contribute to the Association. In summary, she said the Association has money and remains solvent, which is good news, accounts showing £5,705.03 in credit.

Rumours circulating at the last 2013 AGM that postal magazines were being reduced to black and white are not true, and it has been established we have a budget for the magazine which, this year, Tony and Janine have produced fractionally over budget. This budget will therefore rise accordingly to enable the magazine to retain its current status to £1800, given that this provides a vital link between members around the world. A huge debt of thanks goes to those members who have continued to give donations to enable this to happen, which means membership subscriptions continue at £15 per annum.

CNAM Museum Report

Derek Waters, Chairman

Derek welcomed members back to Norfolk, and offered Congratulations on behalf of CNAM to the new Chairman and President. He was remembering a cold winter night in 1989 when the previous CNAM Chairman resigned and he was suddenly thrust into the Chairman role ... which he has now retained for 25 years. Often stressful, perhaps never more so than now, given plans for a new road originally destined to split the Museum.

'It is with some relief I can now say that the Museum will stay where it is for the future, but will be severed from the airfield by the road. We can now move forward once the dust is settled into a whole new era, putting aircraft under cover for the first time, applying to the National Lottery for a grant to make this happen. Otherwise, it has proved a successful year.'

One further outcome is that we have negotiated with KLM for the purchase of the Fokker Friendship - the only surviving example in the UK. As a registered charity, we have almost £100,000 in the bank. We understand we will never get a full grant, but are in the process of obtaining Partnership funding.

It's hard to imagine that 30 years ago we had one aircraft. But other Associations are now becoming involved, and the Museum is currently working with 74 Associations who have placed items with us, encouraged by what they see.

We now employ three people, two almost full-time, one part-time, and for a small organisation we are doing well, seeing every month this year, a record number of visitors. Mentioning the Museum and spreading the word about us is important as new people come for the future and offer answers to questions, because we're not just about aircraft ... we can do so much more!'

All members were welcome to join with CNAM for a buffet lunch.

Membership (Janine)

- The Association continues to take on new members, both veterans and families, many living in New Zealand and Australia who keep in regular daily contact,
- More members are taking the magazine through email, through Google Drive,
- We currently have 178 members in total compared with 149 last year (+ 4 taken over weekend)
- Magazines are also sent to Museums both in this country and abroad,
- It should be noted that generous donations have been made by members over this past year of £510 for the magazine to continue in colour.

Oulton Tea

- **Location for the tea** was explained by Chris Lambert, which balloons and flags would signpost
- **A Special Surprise of a Flypast** by an original 1947 Navion (*the only one in Europe*), with pilot Nimmy, was organised by Janine (*weather permitting!*) to follow the ceremony at Oulton Memorial, marking the 20th Anniversary of its dedication. Janine offered heartfelt thanks to Chas

and Heda for help in making this happen after a year in the planning, working with the BBMF (Battle of Britain Memorial Flight) together with various other organisations. Nimmy was to fly from Oxfordshire, keeping in touch by phone with Chas/Tony, flying over at approximately 5pm.

NOTE: Sadly, due to continuing high winds and driving rain in Oxfordshire, the Flypast was called off, with a very disappointed pilot at the other end of a phone, standing ready by his pristine and polished Navion:-



Options for Reunion 2015

The Committee has been aware for some time that, although the Wensum Valley Hotel & Golf Club has done us proud over Reunion weekends, many members are unhappy with the cost of the menu and staying there. Members have also expressed concern that it is remote from other places we visit. A new venue has therefore been acquired for next year – Elm Farm Hotel.

Chris Lambert offered a favourable report – with 14 bedrooms for which the cost is £46 per room, almost half the cost of staying at The Wensum; the owner is willing to close its doors to the public during our main Saturday evening dinner, and provide exclusive service. All bedrooms are on the ground floor. Food-wise, they can cater for all special requirements, with a top price for each three-course meal at no more than £20 per head. It also has plenty of parking.

The new venue was approved for next year.

Re-election of Committee

It was agreed that all members of the Committee retain their positions for another year.

AOB

- **Visit to Officers' Quarters, Blickling Hall**

Saturday and Sunday afternoon, tours of Blickling Hall Officers' Quarters was arranged, with parties of ten people at one time. For those going for lunch on Sunday, their tour would happen then. Otherwise, members were meeting at 1.30 and 2.15pm respectively for their attic tour.

- **QUEEN & PRIME MINISTER LETTERS**

Janine had written to both the Queen and the Prime Minister about RAF 100 Group, including a copy of her book: *'Nina & Vic, A World War II Love Story'* to each, together with a copy of our recent magazine and 100 Group leaflet. Both responded and Janine read aloud their letters to members –



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA
www.gov.uk/number10

From The Military Assistant

7 May 2014

Dear Mrs Bradley

Thank you for your letter of 4 April to the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister is always deeply touched to hear the stories of those, like your mother Nina, who showed such selfless dedication in this country's greatest hour of need. These accounts serve as an important reminder of the enormous sacrifices men and women made during the war and we must never forget how much we owe them. The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you and the RAF 100 Association Group for the sterling work you do on behalf of World War Two veterans located not just in the UK, but all over the world, to ensure we never forget those who served so bravely to defend our country.

I note the RAF 100 Group Association's reunion will take place during the weekend of 9-11 May in Norfolk, and that you have organised a number of memorable events, including a flypast of a rare 1947 Navion, to mark the occasion. I am sure these events will be welcomed and much appreciated by veterans and their families attending the reunion.

Please accept the Prime Minister's best wishes for what promises to be an unforgettable reunion.

Yours sincerely

COLONEL GWYN JENKINS OBE ROYAL MARINES

Mrs Janine Bradley



WINDSOR CASTLE

9th April, 2014

Dear Mrs. Bradley,

The Queen wishes me to thank you for your letter in which you tell Her Majesty about the RAF 100 Group Association and of the activities and magazines with which you are involved.

The Queen was also interested to hear about your mother, Nina, and her fiancé, Vic Vinnell. Her Majesty was very touched that you enclosed a copy of the book you have put together of the letters they sent to each other so many years ago.

The Queen sends her best wishes to everyone in the RAF 100 Group Association for your special reunion in May and I am to thank you, once again, for writing as you did.

Yours sincerely,

Susan Hussey

Lady-in-Waiting

Mrs J Bradley

- **New RAF 100 Group Publication**

Stephen Hutton drew to the attention of members a new publication currently in the making which Janine is working on in collaboration with him. It draws together the voices of those who served under RAF 100 Group and the USAAF, in Squadrons on Norfolk airfields during WWII. The first 100 books published will be collectables, given they include real-time signatures of veterans across the world. The publication is due for release in time for Remembrance Day this year. It commemorates a number of Anniversaries, but on a personal note, the 70th Anniversary of Vic Vinnell and Jack Fisher's Mosquito DK292 disappearance flying a secret operation 26/27 November 1944, the 70th Anniversary

of the death of the crew in The JIGS UP (36th Bomb Squadron USAAF) Stephen Hutton's father's aircraft, in which he would have been flying had he not had to change aircraft at the last moment; and the 70th Anniversary of the crash at Briston of the aircraft of Roger Dobson's father, Flying Officer Richard William Dobson.

Thanks

Thanks were given to [Peter Holness](#) for all arrangements made for the AGM in the Mission Hall, and to ladies providing tea and biscuits both today and on Sunday after the service.

- A special 'thank you' was also given to villagers at Oulton for the wonderful tea they always provide, together with the Memorial Ceremony in which they take part
- Thanks is also expressed to Richard Forder for his role over past months, standing in as Chairman and taking on the responsibilities.

Next Year's Reunion

Our 2015 Reunion will take place over the weekend of 15, 16, 17 May 2015

* * * *

SATURDAY PM

City of Norwich Aviation Museum

As always, the Museum volunteers did us proud, and we extend a heartfelt 'THANK YOU' for the wonderful buffet. As always, there was just too little time to sit and enjoy. The Tea Room was crowded. The happy sound of chatter filled the air. It was wonderful to see people getting together, catching up, sharing experiences ... and this year there was a particular emphasis on activities of the USAAF:



36th Bomb Squadron/Electronic Warfare



Fascinating to capture two frozen moments in time, with left: Brendan Maguire and Iredell Hutton, with the Memorial dedicated to Iredell's crew of The JIGS UP at Holyhead, and today, Brendan pictured with Iredell's son Stephen.



Incredibly, the wreath of poppies (seen left) is resting on one of the aircraft propellers which Stephen and his father discovered 49 years after the crash.

The Memorial caption reads:

'In memory of the eight crewmen of the 36th Bomb Sqdn USAAF B24 which crashed at North Stack on 22 Dec 1944'

* * * *

BLICKLING HALL



Thanks to a kind offer from Sue Price, Events Co-ordinator at Blickling Hall, members were this year offered the opportunity to visit on Saturday afternoon and for Sunday lunch, as well as being given a tour of the Officers' Quarters.

Many members took up this opportunity and enjoyed their visit immensely.

Our thanks to Sue Price for making this happen.

This was definitely something new for this year, and perhaps can be replicated in 2015.



RETURN TO OULTON

Oulton Tea

They say a picture paints a thousand words ... I'm hoping this is true for members who could not share with us the absolute delight at being a part of these celebrations, and the 'Welcome Cake' created in tribute to our 20th Anniversary weekend:



The tea prepared by people living in the village was, as always, scrumptious. So many delights it was difficult to know what to choose for those of us who had time to eat amidst the chatter. The hub of voices slowly reached a crescendo, but when a knife was passed to our newly appointed President: Phil James MBE there was sudden hush, followed by spontaneous applause as he was joined by Oulton veterans Peter Lovatt, Andrew Barron, Sidney Pike, John Gilpin, Bob Belton:



Oulton Memorial



This year, so many people had taken so much trouble, and like a bridge between past and present, on arriving at Oulton Memorial, we immediately felt that presence of all those brave young men arriving at RAF Oulton for the first time. Each name of those who did not return were lovingly written on the tsunami of crosses stretched like a carpet of remembrance in front of the Memorial ... names we would never forget.

We WILL remember them!



Chris Lambert, our Oulton representative, introduced those taking part, before Alison Shaw, ex-Chair of Oulton Parish Council (1994) spoke movingly '20 Years On'.

A reading followed, read by **Paul Killingback**, representing the present Parish Council Chairman. It left us spell-bound, his words caught on the wind to echo on through the trees around us:

*'They called on you to do your duty
You rallied to the call of war
Our saviour was your bravery
I know the perils you faced
We give thanks to you.*

*They knew you would suffer in order to prevail
You did not waver when danger came
Our thanks is for your sacrifice
We will not forget you.*

*They gave you huge responsibilities
You found strength to carry on
Our history is your story
I give thanks for your life
We have freedom because of you.*

*They asked impossible goals
You paid the price for victory
Our duty is to your memory
I recognise your sacrifice
We will remember you'*



Peter Lovatt read '**For the Fallen**' –

*'They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We **will** remember them.'*

Laurence Binyon

As the final notes of the 'Last Post' were hauntingly played by **bugler Charlie Jefford** we were held in those moments as two minutes silence followed, tears falling like rain for all those lost in the Second World War ... and then: 'Reveille' a reminder that life moves on.



Andrew Barron spoke into the stillness of that afternoon, the wind whipping up clouds:

*'When You Go Home, Tell Them of Us and Say,
For Their Tomorrow, We Gave Our Today'*

The words are attributed to John Maxwell Edmonds (1875 -1958), an English Classicist, who brought them together among a collection of 12 epitaphs for WWI in 1916. This famous epitaph can now be found on numerous Veteran Memorials and Monuments throughout the world.

Wreaths were laid on behalf of the Association by **Peter Witts' family** – Andrea, Carolyn and Len; followed by Oulton flowers laid by **Paul Killingback**.

Words again echoed into the silence as **Richard** read the poem written by his dear friend Ron Johnson. Ron stood in almost the same spot in 1994 to read *In Memoriam* for the first time (included earlier in the magazine).

Phil James MBE, our new Lifetime President, shared with us the following:

*'When gazing at the skies, summer blue or midnight hue,
I picture airmen young and true, with laughing eyes.
With laughing eyes to hide the pain of where they've been,
And how they've seen their good friends slain.
Expecting death on every raid,
I hear the rumble of aircraft engines,
And feel so humble at the sacrifices made.'*

Written by Samantha Davis at just 11 years old in 1989, they were read at the funeral of 10 Sqn Air Gunner/'Tail End Charlie', James Hamnett DFM, who died on 2nd January 2006. Our new **Chairman Roger Dobson** then shared words previously read by Eric Phillips DFC, Chairman of the Memorial Association in 1994:

*'In Friendship and in service one to another we are pledged
To keep alive the memory of those of all nations who died in the
Royal Air Force, the Air Forces of the Dominions
and the United States Air Force.
In their name we give ourselves to this noble cause.
Proudly and thankfully we will remember them.'*



Richard Forder & Roger Dobson

SATURDAY PM

Wensum Hotel & Golf Club

After two afternoon teas, Friday at Foulsham and Saturday afternoon at Oulton, following a buffet lunch at the Museum; you wouldn't have thought we had room for a three course evening meal. *You would be wrong!* The best part of the whole evening was being surrounded by Family, in the truest sense of the word ... with so much warmth and empathy and love. The room filled, Rod presented the Standard. Chairman Roger said 'Grace', and then it was all hands on glasses, cutlery, plates, filling fast and emptying to be replaced with a second and third course while the room around us buzzed with laughter and chatter. It was so lovely to be a part, soaking up the atmosphere, listening to voices rising and falling ... a symphony in the making!

This year, John Lilley had flown all the way from China to be with us, so passionate is he about *The People's Mosquito Project*, presenting through PowerPoint and film a stunning and inspirational talk surrounding this wonderful aircraft ...



'During the Second World War the British people raised money to build aircraft for the RAF. 70 years on, we are asking your help to return a de Havilland DH.98 Mosquito to British skies. Known as The People's Mosquito, it will fly to educate future generations and remember the sacrifices of those who went before ... 'we believe we can produce a twin-engine bomber which would have a performance so outstanding that little defensive equipment would be needed' (Geoffrey de Havilland, Sept 1939). In Sept 1941, the de Havilland DH.98 Mosquito flew

its first mission. But the Mosquito has not graced the British skies since 1996. We intend to put that right and return the Mosquito to where it belongs – in the air –

John showed a film from the war, illustrating how Luftwaffe pilots believed the sting of the Mosquito so deadly they were allowed to count one destroyed as two victories to their credit ...

The People's Mosquito Team

Air Chief Marshal (Retd.) Sir John Allison KCB, CBE, FRAeS, RAF - Patron

John Lilley - Chairman & Managing Director

Ross Sharp - Director of Engineering & Airframe Compliance

Bill Ramsey – Technical Project Research & Development

Steve Manning - Company Secretary & IT Director

Nick Horrox – Director of Communications

Alan Pickford – Finance Director & Treasurer

Progression

2012 The People's Mosquito Ltd as a non-profit limited company

HMRC Gift Aid pending & plans to become a registered charity

A five year budget & annual fundraising plan

2013 Acquired the identity of RL249

Developed a sound Engineering strategy & plan with CAA approval

In process to issue RFP for E4/M5 organisation

AeroWood (NZ) Ltd. identified airframe supplier

John was proud to announce that the first wood is being cut for the fabrication of a complete set of wing ribs for *The People's Mosquito* RL 249.

Following the Guest Speaker, an Auction took place courtesy of Dave Coeshall, with a Phillip West Mosquito print (Limited edition: 1 of 35) from an original painting, signed by 12 ex-Mosquito aircrew. It was Sue Eccles, Roger Dobson's sister, who claimed 'her prize', with proceeds divided between *The People's Mosquito* and the Association magazine.

There were also two tables - one stacked with books for sale, kindly donated by Phil James MBE, our President, the other almost collapsing under a pile of gifts lovingly bought and wrapped by Linda and her mother, to whom we offer heartfelt thanks for all their hard work. Well done Linda and Rod for conducting the raffle in quick-time ... bringing in a total of £217.05. Well done, Linda and Eunice, for some absolutely amazing prizes which certainly set the pulses going, and made everyone want to become part of the show!

SUNDAY 11th MAY

Horsham St Faith



We gathered at the church as the first rousing notes of Aylsham Town Band began filling the building with sound. Suddenly time stood still, the years rolling back - we find we are standing amongst so many blue uniforms standing straight and tall and proud, with the faces of those remembered. Easy to imagine the scene, especially when, looking round, there are veterans smartly displaying medals with pride. *Who knows how many crowded into this church to stand where we stand today, heads filled with the end or beginning of an operation, lives lost, friends departed, forever young?*

The service, as always, was touching, humbling, special. Rev Keith Rengert did us proud, and we offer a huge debt of gratitude to everyone who made our day complete, including Peter Holness and his band of helpers who provided us with a 'send off' tea and delicious cake.

What began as a long weekend always comes to an end too quickly. In the Mission Hall across the road, we gathered for final farewells. It's sad to think we won't meet for another year. A year! It seems so long ... and so much can happen in those twelve months!! We become caught in threads of conversation trailing on out the door, standing by cars, unwilling to let go.

For those unable to join with us over these long Reunion weekends, I hope the snapshots below offer a sample at least, peeking through the windows, looking in at our comings and goings and shared experiences. And thank you ... thank you every single one of you who made this year such a wonderful weekend. I'm sorry, Nimmy, you didn't get to fly your Navion, wings glinting in the sunshine, flying over Oulton. I'd been looking forward to those moments, as I know had you. But we're attending the Wings and Wheels Show on 17 August at Sywell and we'll see you there, together with friends Heda and Chas in the USAAF Museum, complete with truck and trailer. In the next edition of the magazine, I may get the opportunity to share some of the highlights ... again, if the weather holds. The BBMF is programmed, as are The Red Arrows.

Meanwhile, I leave you with the windows of our world, sharing a very special and moving Reunion 2014 weekend ... long may its memories and friendships last!



Surprise Anniversary cake made for the occasion and Presented to us at the Mission Hall, Horsham St Faith



Heda Kootz sporting Women Air Force Service Pilots



Good to see Eric Dickens with us again!



John and Gwen Gilpin travelled from Ireland

Forsyth family, right



Left, Phil James + family, w Anne Thomsett centre in picture



Andrew Barron with family



*Right:
Chas Jellis,
Stephen Hutton,
Brendan Maguire*

*Standing at Oulton
Memorial, good
Friends and true*



*Association Chairman Roger Dobson,
with youngest Reunion attendee Felicity,
grand-daughter, aged two years old*



*Chas Jellis listens in awe to Stan Forsyth as he
relates his wartime experiences*



*Veterans of RAF 100 (BS) Group
Phil James, John Gilpin w brother of Jimmy Hollingworth: Hugh;
Peter Lovatt, Andrew Barron, Sidney Pike, Bob Belton*



RAF 100 (BS) Group Association, 20th Anniversary 2014

POST REUNION

Hello Janine,

I would like to say thank you for all your hard work in making the Reunion so memorable yet again. Being a relative newcomer to the Association, I feel privileged to meet such special people and be part of a wonderfully warm 'family'. Good to welcome Roger as our new Chairman and to have Phil attend as our President. There was so much to enjoy over the weekend and how nice to meet Stephen and Pam Hutton, having made the long trip to attend the Reunion. I look forward to meeting them again next year. Each year, we are 'bowled over' by the tremendous kindness and hospitality shown by the good people of Norfolk, from the afternoon tea at Ivy Cottage at Foulsham, the buffet lunch at the Museum, the afternoon tea at Oulton and the tea and cakes in the Mission Hall at Horsham St Faith. All these delicious treats so welcome and appreciated. The Saturday evening dinner enjoyed by all, with an enthusiastic talk on The Peoples Mosquito, followed by the auction and raffle. Hopefully Rod and I didn't let Phil down, after his sterling way of conducting the raffle in previous years.

All too soon, the Reunion was coming to a close. The emotive Church Service, with stirring music from the Aylsham Town Band, a fitting end to another fantastic weekend, when we meet to remember and honour past and present loved ones who served in RAF 100 Group, with our ever grateful thanks. Looking forward to many more times together,

Love,

Linda Fraser

Hi Janine and Tony

Firstly thank you so much for organising such a lovely but hectic weekend. Mum, Dad and myself enjoyed ourselves; although I must admit that it is getting very difficult for them as it is so busy. I am sure a lot of work goes into making sure everything is just right. Your efforts are very much appreciated.

Can you please let me have the name and address of the couple who hosted us at Foulsham as I would like to drop them a note of thanks, their hospitality was so generous.

Hope you had a safe journey back, we arrived home safe but exhausted! Take care, keep in touch.

Thanks again.

Barbara, Vera & Phil

James Family

Hi Janine,

What a wonderful and very enjoyable Reunion and weekend. You and your colleagues, Committee members, friends and helpers should be very proud and pleased with the results. I will remember the afternoon tea at Oulton for some time to come, it comes close to a Devon Cream Tea!! Please give my thanks and congratulations to ALL and thank you again for inviting me.

Kind regards

David Coeshall

Hi Janine,

Yes, time for you to take a rest it was a brilliant weekend we did not leave Blickling till 4 and got home at 2230 so tired today, work tomorrow. Ann is much better. I will send some material to you hopefully next week and Stephen and I had a chat with Jeff at Blickling, so a very eventful weekend and really enjoyed it.

Many thanks

Brendan Maguire

Hi Janine,

Well you pulled it off Big Time and what a great weekend we all had. As we have been in your boots before, we knew what you were up against, I know the Flypast would have been great, but that was out of our control. Everyone knew that. But the next one will be fine, I'm sure. Heda is off work at the mo so as soon as she can print off our membership forms we will get them to you.

Well done again for a fab weekend.

Chas.x

Hi Janine

Just a note to say thanks so much for organising the splendid weekend's events which we thoroughly enjoyed. The Museum, the Tea Party, the Memorial Ceremony, the Dinner, meeting the veterans - all such happy memories. You did a great job - well done! We have made new friends with our common interest which we wish to support.

It was some consolation that it was too windy for even the Lanc to take off that day. Chas said Nimmy was upset that he couldn't do the Flypast. We have booked Chas' 1942 USAAF truck into the 'Wings & Wheels Show' at Sywell Aerodrome on 17th August as the RCAF & BBMF Lancs will be doing a display there. Can't wait! We'll see you there, now you both have tickets!

Best regards

Heda

Janine,

This is a quick note to say a big 'thank you' for the excellent weekend! A great occasion and a great atmosphere. Thank you for all your work both in organising the Reunion and in all the day-to-day secretarial activities you undertake which we got a glimpse of at the AGM. It is much appreciated.

With kindest regards,

Chris Jones



A BROTHER'S LOVE

*'Twas the end of World War Two when, dear Brother, I first knew you.
Survivors of that hellish war, our watchword was 'Esprit de Corps'.
On that dreadful Railway of Death you toiled – the Grim Reaper's grasp you surely foiled
So many men have not returned to the life for which they prayed and yearned.
We've both faced Hell in different ways, fighting for more peaceful days.
Brothers-in-arms, Brothers in strife, this bond created Brothers for Life!
Once more at home and full of life, you met the girl to be your wife.
Together, walking hand-in-hand, you both knew happiness, and yes,
With loving daughters you've been blessed.
Now 'midst all the sorrow and the tears, let me, dear Brother, calm your fears.
Your Betty has not gone, I say. She's only but a thought away.
So lift your head to Heaven above and know that her undying love
Will be with you throughout your days.
With love, I remain your Brother and your friend, always.
Think on, and understand, Betty walks with you,
She'll take your hand, she'll lead you to the Promised Land.
So raise your head and wipe your eye,
The love you found can never die.*

Dedicated to Peter Witt's brother Lawrence and brother-in-law Len
who recently passed away
together with all those he served with under RAF 100 Group
- 'Brothers' -



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 passed away late 2005
- 192 Squadron** Ted Gomersall passed away 30 November 2004
- 192 Squadron** Hank Cooper DSO, DFC passed away 2005.
- 192 Squadron** Michael Simpson W/Op & F/O passed away on the Isle of Man
- 192 Squadron** Richie' Richards Rear Airgunner, flew Wellingtons. His son, F L Richards, passed on in August 2009, both members of the Association.
- 192 Squadron** Air Commodore Vic Willis, C.O, RAF Foulsham, passed away 30 July 2006.
- 192 Squadron** Group Captain Jack Short passed away December 2006. Association Chairman till 1996
- 192 Squadron** W.O (later P/O) A G McEachern RCAF died 15th August 2007, Saskatchewan aged 85
- 192 Squadron** LAC Harris, Ground Crew passed away 15 August 2007. Grandson James Kerslake is an Association member.
- 192 Squadron** Wing Commander David Donaldson, DSO*DFC passed away 15 January 2004
- 192 Squadron** Wilhelmson, F/O Sander Willie Raymond (J10026). DFC Home: Elbow, Saskatchewan
- 192 Squadron** F/Lt Richard (Dick or Dobbie) William Dobson, died 1996, remembered by son, Roger & daughter Susan, both members. Roger Dobson – Association Chairman from May 2014.
- 192 Squadron** W/O John Rhys Powell, Rear Gunner flying Wellingtons, died 1992
- 192 Squadron** Sgt George Richards, Tail Gunner, posted missing 4/5 July 1944. Remembered by niece Cheryl Cairns nee Colgan & sister Agnes Colgan.
- 192 Squadron** F/Lt Henry Victor Vinnell (Vic) posted missing 26/27 Nov 1944. Remembered by wartime fiancée Nina Chessall & her daughter Janine Bradley, Association Secretary.
- 192 Squadron** P/O Jack Glen Millan Fisher with Royal Canadian Air Force, posted missing 26/27 Nov 1944. Remembered by sister Audrey.
- 192 Squadron** Flight Lieutenant Albert Victor (Vic) Parker passed away November 14 2010. Remembered by daughter Ann Felsky.
- 192 Squadron** Spec/Op (Wop) John Henry BALL, Association member for many years, passed away 23 April 2009. Remembered by daughter, Susan Lawford.
- 192 Squadron** George Lowe, originally 1473 Flight before becoming 192 Squadron, Special Signals, Foulsham. Died 24 March 2011.
- 192 Squadron** F/O Alan Thomsett passed away 27 May 2011. Initially flew ops with 1473 Flight during Battle of the Beams, 1941, then as part of No. 80 Wing. Missed by daughter Anne, and Association members who knew him.
- 192 Squadron** Eric Clarkson, Wireless Operator/Navigator, passed away beginning of 2012. Remembered by daughter Jenny Bentley & friend Dennis Wildman.

- 192 Squadron** Squadron Leader Cecil William Cornish, passed away 19 August 2011. Flight Sergeant at Foulsham. Initially with 98 Squadron, he was a survivor of the sinking of TS Lancastria.
- 192 Squadron** Flight Sergeant John Eggert (2202199) aka 'Shorty'. Passed away 28 April 2006
- 192 Squadron** Sgt Hugh Holm, Radio Mechanic, is remembered with love by Phil and Vera James, especially for his kindness to them while holidaying with him in Canada.
- 192 Squadron** Macdonald, Kenneth Wynne CD, Colonel, Stan Forsyth's Skipper, passed away on 12 February 2014. Missed by his family and all who served with him.
- 199 Squadron** F/O Ed Emmerson, Navigator to Flt/Lt Paddy Passmore DFC, Canadian
- 199 Squadron** Arthur Fitch, former RAF Bomber, passed away July 2006
- 199/171 Sqn** Group Captain George Cubby, MBE, FRMets passed away 2005. Remembered by Roy Smith, only surviving member of his crew.
- 171 Squadron** Joe Brogan, Halifax pilot passed away 2004, remembered by widow Sheila
- 171 Squadron** Arthur Adcock passed away February 2008 & Syd Love, Canadian crew member, passed away April 2008. 'Friends to the end!'
- 171 Squadron** Len Fanstone passed away 13 January 2010. Greatly missed by Harry Freegard & wife, in touch since his return to Canada in 1946.
- 171/102 Sqn** Ken Ratcliffe Nav/Bomb Aimer passed away March 8 2010 age 86. He flew Halifax & Lancasters, in touch with his crew all their lives.
- 171 Squadron** Flight Engineer Andrew Melvin Robertson passed away 1998. Remembered by son Colin Robertson, Association member.
- 171 Squadron** Wop/Ag Wilf Thompson passed away 1991. Remembered by son Peter, Association member.
- 171 Squadron** Warrant Officer Edwin Moore passed away 15 May 2014. Remembered by son Ian & family.
- 171 Squadron** F/Lt Charles 'Chuck' Warner, Edwin Moore's pilot, died 6 July 1965.
- 157 Squadron** Bryan Gale Flt/Lt passed away 2 January 2009. Missed by daughter Valerie & son Chris
- 169 Squadron** Fred Herbert, Navigator/Radar, passed away 15 October 2010, remembered by friend colleague & pilot John Beeching
- 169 Squadron** Flt/Lt Bert Vine, former Navigator of Sqdn/Ldr. James A. Wright, 'A' Flight Commander, both of whom are no longer with us, remembered by 169 pilot John Beeching
- 214 Squadron** Geoff Liles, Pilot, passed away 4 March 2006
- 214 Squadron** Mr J Creech passed away April 2006
- 214 Squadron** Don Austin, remembered by Les Bostock
- 214 Squadron** Air Vice Marshall Jack Furner passed away 1 Jan 2007
- 214 Squadron** Sqdn Leader/Flight Commander Bob Davies passed away June 2007
- 214 Squadron** Bill Howard passed away October 2007
- 214 Squadron** Flt Lt Blair passed away Sept 2007
- 214 Squadron** John Hereford, Spec Op.
- 214 Squadron** Robert Moorby W/Op passed away January 2008. Remembered by sons, Michael and Robin. Also Shirley Whitlock.
- 214 Squadron** Ft/Sg Hadder, Air Gunner in Fortress III HB815, bearing code letters 'BU-J' killed 3/4 March 1945, remembered by nephew Leslie Barker.

- 214 Squadron** Alan Mercer passed away 6 June 2009
- 214 Squadron** Warrant Officer Gordon Wing, 'Howie', passed away Nov 2009 age 87. Rear Gunner, Eric Morrison's crew, Stirlings/Fortresses; Founder member of Airgunners' Association.
- 214 Squadron** Robert Louie William Darracott, Navigator, died May 8 2010, 94 years
- 214 Squadron** Flying Officer Reginald Coates completed whole of 2nd Tour of Ops as Bomber Pilot in March 1945. Died 10 Nov 1963. Remembered by son.
- 214 Squadron** Bomb Aimer Les Bostock in Don Austin's crew died just before Christmas 2010. Remembered by M/U gunner C A Piper, 'Pip'.
- 214 Squadron** Flight Sergeant George V Cox passed away 21 July 2011. Flight Engineer in crew of Squadron Leader Miller DFC.
- 214 Squadron** Squadron Leader William 'Bill' Doy DFC passed away 28 November 2011.
- 214 Squadron** P/O Peter Witts 223/214/462 RAAF, Airgunner, commissioned after the war. 1925 – 2011. Missed by family and friends, remains in our hearts, a Legend.
- 214 Squadron** George Fisher, Navigator with No.214 REM & No.206 Squadrons 1942-1946, passed away with a heart attack on 25 Sept 2012
- 214 Squadron** Flying Officer William 'Bill' Foscett passed away 21 December 2011. Sadly missed by wife Pauline, 2 sons, 4 grandchildren, good friend Tony Cooper.
- 214 Squadron** 'Doug' Douglas, Tail Gunner on Fortresses and ex POW, died in Nelson, New Zealand, 2013.
- 223 Squadron** Flt Lt A E L Morris (Tony) died June 2005. Andrew Barron's skipper: Oct 44 – 1945.
- 223 Squadron** Tom Butler 'Bishop'.
- 223 Squadron** C. L. Matthews (Les) Rear Gunner, Peter Witts Nose Gunner in Flt/L Stan Woodward DFC crew before Peter went on to 214 Squadron.
- 223 Squadron** Arthur Anthony, Flight Engineer, passed away 13 May 2006.
- 223 Squadron** F/Lt Jack Brigham DFC passed away 2008. Original Captain as 223 reformed. Flew Liberator TS524/6G-0; 36 ops. Remembered by Len Davies, Waist Gunner, only surviving member of crew.
- 223 Squadron** F/L/Sir John Briscoe passed on a few years ago.
- 223 Squadron** 2nd Pilot Mervyn Utas, Canadian in late Tony Morris's crew, passed away 8 Nov 2010.
- 223 Squadron** James Edward Bratten: 26.11.1922 - 16.11.2001. Andrew Barron's crew.
- 223 Squadron** Mick Stirrop passed away March 2012.
- 223 Squadron** Flying Officer Reggie Wade, Navigator, passed away Christmas Eve 2012. Reggie served in the crew of Squadron Leader Carrington, 'B' Flight Commander.
- 223 Squadron** Air Gunner John McLaren passed away 31.3.2013, leaving wife Margaret and son Graham.
- 223 Squadron** F/Lt Navigator Ron Johnson passed away August 2013. Missed and remembered by wife Betty & Richard Forder.
- 223 Squadron** W/Mechanic Desmond Pye, Ground Crew, B Flight passed away 3/4 May 2014, remembered by daughter Virginia Cranfield and his family
- 23 Squadron** Flight/Lt Johnny Rivas, passed away 2 January 2013.
- 23 Squadron** Wing Commander Phil Russell passed away end November 2012.
- 23 Squadron** 'Bud' Badley, passed away beginning of 2013
- 88 Squadron** F/Lt Len Dellow passed away Christmas/New Year 2006-7; veteran of 88 Squadron, 2 Group & Rear Gunner/Wireless Operator on Bostons.

- 49 Squadron** **Len Bradfield** passed away Nov 2005. POW with pilot Johnny Moss when shot down in Lancaster ED625. Nursed to health by Nora, who he married.
- 462 RAAF Sqn** **F/O H.R. Anderson DFC 'Andy'** passed away 6 April 2008 in New South Wales.
- 462 Squadron** **Donald Hulbert** passed away October 2009.
- 462 Squadron** **Pilot Bruce Drinkwater** passed away 2 May 2010. Peter Witt's Skipper.
- ?** **Flt Lt Eric Atkins DFC* KW*** died 22.11.2011. Blenheim pilot with 139 Sqn flying from Horsham St Faith & Oulton in 1940/1. Flew Mosquitoes with 2 Group.
- ?** **Corporal Charles 'Fred' Savage** passed away 18 Dec 2011 - a Wireless Operator, serving in No 2 Heavy Mobile W/T Section in France, 1940.

Dates for your Diary

PUBLICATION – 'SQUADRON OF DECEPTION' by Stephen Hutton

Members enquired at our Reunion about how to obtain copies of Stephen Hutton's book:

Gazelle Book Services, Ltd.
Hightown
White Cross Mills
Lancaster
Lancashire
LA1 4XS
Tel. +44 (0) 1524 68765

AUTUMN 2014 MAGAZINE

Late September is when the Autumn 2014 magazine will be out, and there is still plenty of material to include, especially on ANZAC DAY as it's coming up to the UK Remembrance Day in November; articles and news on MOSQUITOES past and present; and shared experiences of those recently departed by members of their families.

Please keep articles and information coming in. I'm always happy to receive them. The deadline would need to be mid-August to be certain of being included.

COLLECTION OF 12 BOOKLETS

The series of books begun by Len Bartram back in 1994 have since been reproduced, and are now going into colour for the future, including new material, unique photographs, shared experiences, with the collection being extended to include the USAAF and stories of the people. For further information please contact Janine Harrington, the author (now Bradley). All profits go to the Association.

LETTERS FROM THE QUEEN & PRIME MINISTER

Any veteran who would like a copy of letters read out at the Reunion received by Janine can receive one by making contact with her. Details on Committee Page.



Former WWII Control Tower opening
as a unique vegetarian B&B in North Norfolk
Opening coinciding with 70th anniversary of first mission
from RAF North Creake – D-Day 1944

8th June 10am – 4pm

Open House and Gardens with vintage fair, tower tours, 40s
make-overs, refreshments & bar

Free entry

D-Day + 70 Open Day: Come to the Control Tower

70 years ago, as *Operation Overlord* took to the sea and
skies on D-Day, RAF North Creake's first operation took off.

The role of this 199 Squadron mission was to convince those watching German radar that the invasion was to happen at Calais rather than Normandy by registering erroneous signals on their screens to divert attention from the main invasion fleet. This involved flying a few feet above The English Channel dropping tin foil (codenamed 'Window') to mimic invasion craft. Thankfully, for the landing troops and for posterity, they were believed.

We are very proud to live in such an important piece of history and want to share our home and wildflower gardens with you. Many friends are involving themselves in this celebration and we're very pleased to announce that we will have, the *Little Vintage Lover Fair* joining us in the Nissen hut with stalls selling lots of vintage loveliness (from the 20s - 70s), setting the scene in the Tower we have *The Swinging Detective* DJ to swoon you, 40s makeovers by *Hairaid Shelter* for all you lovely ladies. There will also be refreshments, a bar serving Beeston Brewery Stirling beer, tours of the Tower and lots more!

At 11am we will have a very special guest, Lord Peter Melchett, one of the first residents of the Control Tower, joining us to cut the ribbon and officially open the Tower. The Control Tower is open for B&B bookings from mid June 2014. Two double rooms with art deco en suites available. Home cooked vegetarian breakfasts served in the former meteorological office. Only 10 minutes away from Wells-next-the-Sea beach.

Contact mail@controltowerstays.com for photos or information

For more about:

Claire & Nigel <http://controltowerstays.com/about-us.html>

RAF North Creake History <http://controltowerstays.com/history.html>

Little Vintage Lover Fair <http://www.littlevintageloverfair.co.uk/>

Hairaid Shelter <https://www.facebook.com/HairaidShelter?fref=ts>

Beeston Brewery <http://www.beestonbrewery.com/>

Peter Melchett <http://www.theguardian.com/profile/petermelchett>

The Control Tower B&B, Bunkers Hill, Egmore, Walsingham, Norfolk [NR22 6AZ](#) - [Directions](#)

01328 821 574 | mail@controltowerstays.com | www.controltowerstays.com/open-days.html |

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

100 Group Order of Battle

SQD	AIRCRAFT	1st 100 GROUP OPERATION	BASE	SORTIES, LOSSES ROLL
192 USAAF 7 th PRG	Mosquito II, B.IV, B.XVI, Halifax IV Wellington B.III Lightnings P-38	Dec 1943 Aug 44 – March 45	Foulsham	2171/5 Losses Electronic Intel/Elint
141	Beaufighters VI, Mosquito II, VI, XXX	Dec 1943	West Raynham	1214/11 Losses 80 EA, 58 Trains, 7 Ships Dest
219/239	Mosquito II, VI, XXX	20 Jan 1944	West Raynham	1394/9 Losses 51 En AC Dest
515	Mosquito II, VI	3 March 1944	Little Snoring	1366/21 losses 29 En AC Dest
169	Mosquito II, VI, XIX	20 Jan 1944	Little Snoring, Great Massingham	1247/13 Losses 25 En AC + 1 V1 Dest
214	Fortress II, III	20/21 April 1944	Sculthorpe, Oulton	1225/13 Losses Electronic Jamming
199	Stirling III, Halifax III	1 May 1944	North Creak	1707/6 Losses Electronic Jamming
157	Mosquito XIX, XXX	May 1944	Swannington West Malling	1336/6 Losses 37 En AC +39 V1 Dest
85	Mosquito XII, XVII	5/6 June 1944	Swannington West Malling	1190/7 Losses 71 En AC+30 V1 Dest
23	Mosquito VI	5/6 July 1944	Little Snoring	1067/8 Losses 18 En AC Dest
223	Liberator VI, Fortress II, III	Sept 1944	Oulton	625/3 Losses Electronic Jamming
171	Stirling II, Halifax III	15 Sept 1944	North Creak	1583/4 Losses Electronic Jamming
462 RAAF	Halifax III	1 January 1945	Foulsham	621/7 Losses Jamming/Windows
36 & 803 BS	Boeing B-17F P38	Jan 1944	Sculthorpe, Oulton	1211/0 Losses Electronic Jamming
857 & 858 BS	Consolidated B-24G	Jan 1944	Oulton	280/2 Losses Electronic Jamming

Created by Janine Harrington

My heartfelt thanks goes to David Mortimer and his team for the printing of this magazine
Prontaprint, Scarborough, North Yorkshire

