

CONFOUND & DESTROY

RAF 100 GROUP MEMORIAL MUSEUM
ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



Winter 2009

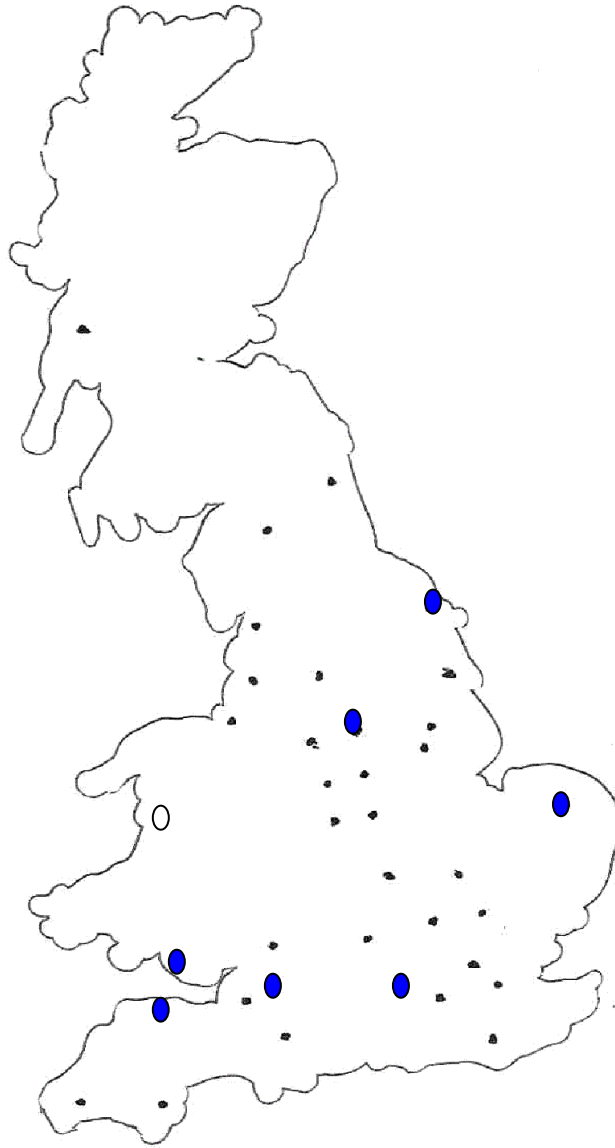


100 Group Association Chairman Wg Cdr John Stubbington: [REDACTED]
100 Group Association Secretary Janine Harrington: [REDACTED]

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

RAF 100 Group Association

Membership Areas

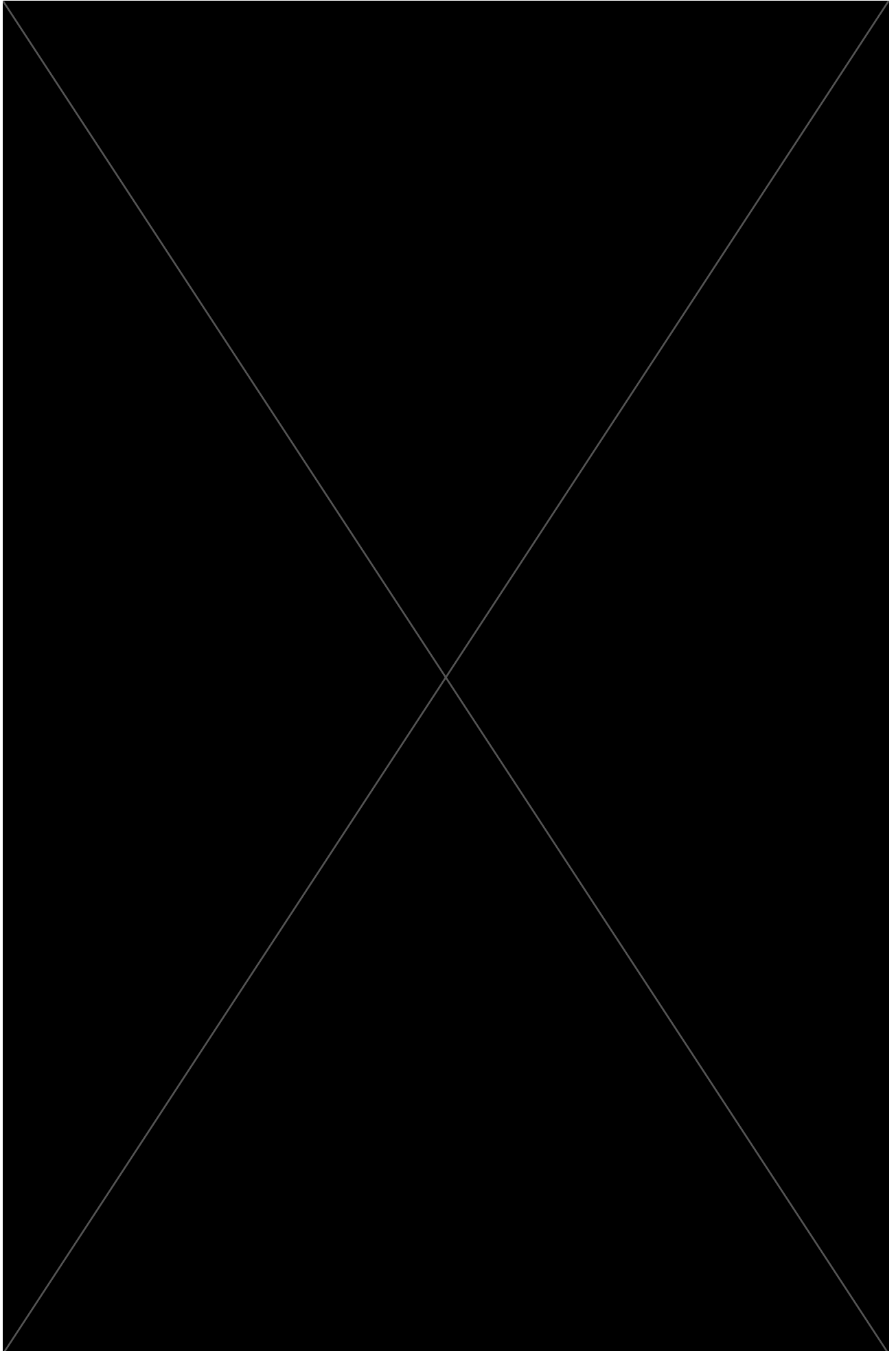


Each dot represents an area where there is a cluster of members
Big dots show where members of the RAF 100 Group Association Committee live

Members who live abroad are in the following countries:

Northern Ireland
Canada
Austria
China
Germany
Australia
USA

RAF 100 Group Association



EDITORS PAGE



Dear Friends,



There is nothing sadder in this world than to awake on Christmas morning and not to be a child. Oh the joy of having one of those mysterious and intriguing gifts which, even when opened, offer endless hours of delight finding out exactly what it is and what it can do. My thoughts this year turn to past Christmas' and I can't help but remember that sense of family, gathering around the piano where I would play carols we would all sing, the aroma of freshly baked mince pies, the pudding steaming, the cake made since

October fermenting in the tin. And then the night of Christmas Eve, going to bed early just to make the day come all the sooner, and waking to hear rustling at the end of the bed, not daring to peep, not daring to touch or feel or open until suddenly, daylight spreading through the windows and finally, finally we can open the small brown sock we always hung at the foot of the bed. The chocolate soldier, the crayons, a puzzle book, more intriguing small items ... and the Satsuma always wrapped in tin foil at the very bottom alongside the bright shiny chocolate coins. In front of the fire would be waiting the one main present and usually an annual:



different this year, just having that someone special in my life, my Forever Man, to share the bad times as well as the good would be all I ever want now. There is no substitute for the warmth, respect, loyalty, commitment and love of a good man, or lady comes to that. My thoughts and prayers are with each and every one of you this Christmas ... may it hold a bright golden future for the year which lies ahead.

Merry Christmas one and all, and a very Happy New Year!

Janine

X

SEASON'S GREETINGS



'Princess' for me, and 'Look & Learn' for my sisters somewhat younger. Already, I would be cutting out the cardboard dolls ready to dress appropriately in their clip-on outfits. Mum already would be carefully re-folding the wrapping paper for another year. But it was the boxes the gifts came in, especially a large one, it was all I would need for the rest of the day to go sailing in my pirate ship around the high seas, visiting whichever land took my fancy.

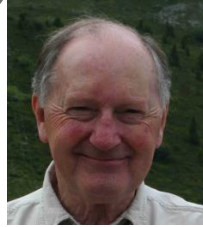
My Christmas wishes are slightly

Items for Newsletter should be sent to:

Janine Harrington

'New Dawn', 7 Ashley Court, Filey, North Yorkshire YO14 9LS
Telephone: 01723 512939 Email: writers.retreat@lycos.com

THE 100 GROUP ASSOCIATION



Members,

Greetings to you all; it is my pleasure to keep in contact with you.

In the last Newsletter I outlined the provisional plan for the next Reunion in May 2010. The most important item that you need to be aware of is the choice of location for the Dinner on Saturday evening, 8th May 2010. The Dinner will be served at the Wensum Valley Hotel & Golf Club in Taverham. It is three miles from Norwich Airport, along the A1067 Fakenham Road.

The Committee has come to this decision after our consideration of several options. The dominant advantages are the high standard of the establishment, the capacity and style of the main Dining Room, and the availability of overnight accommodation. Our after-dinner Speaker will be Air Vice Marshal Grahame Jones. There are 90 double or twin-bedded rooms within the Hotel. Members may access full details on the Hotel website: www.WENSUMVALLEY.co.uk

We decided not to use The Plough at Marsham because of the split level floor, the overall capacity of the Bar and the difficulty for the After-Dinner Speaker. But we do expect to meet at The Plough on the Friday evening for a Committee Meeting and an informal dinner.

On the Friday afternoon we expect to make a visit to the Radar Museum at Neatishead.

Full details of the Reunion will be provided with the next Newsletter.

I must make a plea to the many members who have provided their personal memorabilia to Janine for incorporation into Newsletters. We are deeply privileged to be able to share this material but it is simply not possible to incorporate the many photographs, extracts from Flying Log-Books and other records into Newsletters. The incorporation of so much photographic and photo-copied material will make the Newsletter unaffordable. The editing and production of the Newsletter is a major task and we are only able to operate because of the immense amount of personal time that Janine devotes to the Association. May I ask members who have personal material that they would like to share with other members, to bring that material with them to Reunions. We have no place to store or display further memorabilia while the City of Norwich Aviation Museum is waiting on the outcome of the Norwich Northern Distributor Road development programme.

With my most sincere best wishes to all members,

Most sincerely

John E G Stubbington, Wg Cdr (ret'd)
Chairman

City of Norwich Aviation Museum



Dear Members,

June, July and August were very busy months at the Museum. Our visitor numbers in June and July showed an increase of 40% on those of 2008 and we were pleased to have the best August visitor numbers for some years. As you can imagine, this increased volume of visitors has kept us fully occupied.

In addition to running the Museum, we have attended air shows at Duxford, Rougham and Seething with our fund raising and publicity stall.

There is no new news to report regarding the proposed Norwich Northern Distributor road. We have managed to save a good percentage of the profit from the Museum's income made during the summer to add to our funds which will be needed to finance any move. Our restricted fund to help pay for new museum buildings has also grown and over the next few months we will be introducing more fund raising activities to further boost the balance of this fund. Whether we stay on our existing site or move, our aim is to gather as much money as we can to help ensure the Museum has a good future.

Restoration work on the Museum's aircraft has carried on throughout the summer months with the Vulcan, Hunter and Friendship all receiving attention. Maintaining the appearance of the site has also kept us busy. Increased visitor numbers means that more time has to be spent presenting the site and then clearing up after they have left.

We are still receiving high volumes of visitors, in fact as this report is being written the Museum's car park has only three empty parking spaces! The sun is still shining and a Spitfire has just flown overhead, sounds like a Treasurer's dream.

During the coming Autumn and Winter we will be concentrating on the archive store records and preparing our 2010 publicity campaign.

Regards

Kelvin Sloper

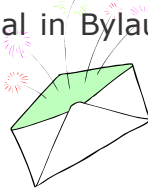
LETTERS PAGE



Dear Janine,

... As a matter of interest I would like to mention I was a shorthand typist and worked for Group Captain Goodman (Chief Signals Officer) in Bylaugh Hall and alongside him was a Wing Commander Cordingley who dealt with the Radar side. Now my father knew this gentleman – worked at the same firm and helped him with some of his experiments – my father being the technician. I had met him as a youngster. Small world!! I read with interest about the last meeting in the Summer especially about them all having a meal in Bylaugh Hall. I would love to have been there. Hope I can make it one day ...

Joan Cannon



Hallo Janine,

Thanks for another super Newsletter. Here belatedly some photos from the Reunion. We've only just scanned them, but better late than never.

Best regards

Gerhard

Photos also from Alan Thomsett



Howard Deacon & Gerhard: tea at Oulton



'A Motley Crew!'

Lunch at Bylaugh Hall



Letter from Editor: I would

like to share with you a remarkable letter received by me stretching back through the years to 1945 –

Dear Janine,

I very much hope this email reaches you.

My mother, who is now 86, has kept the clipping from the newspaper (Daily Express) detailing your mother's story which would have been printed around 1946! She has kept it all these years as she found it profoundly moving. Having found it again recently, she showed me the story and said she often wondered if Nina was alive as she would love to let her know that she was fortunate enough to live the dream that Nina had, having 3 sons and two daughters.

Having researched the story today, I found that you had written a book about your mother's story. Also, what was more coincidental about it was that your mother's fiancé was called Vic, which was my Dad's name!

I know your mother passed away in 1996, but my Mum would love to hear how her life panned out. I hope you don't mind me contacting you in this way. I very much look forward to hearing from you.

Kindest regards

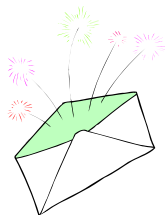
Laureen x

Of course, I responded to Laureen's letter, and through her came to receive in turn a beautiful card from her mother after sending a copy of my book '*Nina & Vic: A World War II Love Story*'.

Hello Janine,

I have just arrived home after a rather trying morning (my own doing) and to my delight Nina & Vic's book was waiting for me. Thank you for sending it so promptly. I'm thrilled at the prospect of reading their love story. I just know I'm going to find many facts and co incidents relating to our love story. Vic's experience will be with me, so we can relive our wartime romance. Happy Days! We've come a long way since then, but our love never changed. Like most people we've had our sad times and tragedies but love and happiness prevails. I do miss Vic so much, he was part of me. Still, I'm very very fortunate to have a wonderful loving family to care for me. I only wish other Mums were so fortunate ... thank you again, Janine, Love and God bless

Ina



Hello Janine,

Late yesterday evening when I returned home from a visit to the North Carolina mountains I was thrilled to see the latest 'Confound & Destroy' Newsletter had arrived. So far I've only read the first few pages, but I can already tell it's going to be an exciting issue. Believe me I shall savor it all! And please allow me once again to express my thanks to you for including me in the pages of RAF 100 Group news that reaches so many who value the sacrifice and service of our veterans and guardians of freedom. I am especially most grateful to you for mentioning the upcoming November 15th 36th Squadron ceremony in England. Hopefully, some of the Group membership can be there.

At this time I'm balled up tight with a myriad of items I'm working, so I'll wrap up this message for now, however, I shall thoroughly consume this latest issue and report back to you.

Until next time then, take good care and please give my fondest regards to all the RAF100 Group membership. Thank you for welcoming me as part of your family.

Sincerely yours,
Stephen Hutton



Hello Janine,

Thank you for the Autumn 'Confound & Destroy' which arrived today.

I haven't read it all yet, but my first reaction is to the photos identified as being in France. This is absolutely correct. My Dad was in command of the air force station, if one can call it that, at Betheniville in France in 1940. I had (I have now donated it to the RAF Museum at Hendon as it is very rare) the 103 Squadron Operations Log Book, but have kept a copy. It is very faded and difficult to read, so I have transcribed it. The first page and the transcript are attached. As these are not relevant to RAF Oulton, would you please forward this email to Ron Durand and Richard Forder as they obviously have an interest in this period. If you have time, do read the attachments, but I do warn you, that if you can visualise what they describe, it was horrendous. My Dad's flying log book up to this time was lost as they had to destroy all documents as they left France. But I do have the one from mid-1940 for the rest of his career.

After this time in France, my Dad and the family went to Canada for 1940 to 1944 until we went to RAF Oulton, and Dad was responsible for training Canadian pilots. I have photographs of that time in Canada.

And that leads me to the photos I might show at next year's Reunion. They will be nearly all the same ones that you have printed, but I will re-scan them and improve the quality. I will also add some family ones and elaborate on my father's career. He was trained at RAF Cranwell, at the same time as Lalla's father (Vyvian Q Blackden), and my Dad was Best Man at Lalla's parents wedding. So the pictures will be of a more general interest, but will be RAF related, including a period in Egypt before the war. This is where my mother was born and my parents were married.

Very best wishes
Eric Dickens

PS. It is very likely I will be at Cheddington to meet Stephen Hutton.

Dear Janine,

You are very welcome to publish the Operations Record Book of my Dad's time in France, but it is not really relevant to RAF Oulton or 100 Group.

Members mention my Dad's flying log. I attach a page from it relevant to RAF Oulton (there are six pages in total), and it is the one covering D-Day, 6 June 1944. But it is very tantalising as it says that Dad did 1hr10mins of local flying in a Fortress, but why would he do that when there was so much else going on? He was Station Commander and we know that there were flights that night with counter-measures. But what time of day was it? Was he just helping to check out something? Was it in the afternoon and crews were resting and he was doing some testing of a repaired aircraft?

As you have enough for the next issue, I will wait before sending you more, but I have some letters to my mother from F/Lt. David Collins. Although marked personal, I think after all this time they can be published, and there is nothing that private in them. One page lists the names on the Plaque (now in the Blickling RAF Museum) which he donated, and I attach that as it gives the crew captains' names.

Best Wishes

Eric Dickens 8 Oak View, Bretton, Peterborough PE3 6YE Tel: 01733 265432 edickens@supanet.com

Note from Editor: As Eric says, there is a copy of the complete flying log of his father's over 6 pages in total which are, regretfully, too many to include here. Anyone wishing to see the complete log, as I am aware of members' interest, please contact Eric direct. However, the following page lists names under Eric's father. However, the letters he mentions sent to his mother from F/Lt David Collins will be in New Year.

Meanwhile, on the subject of 'Nose-Art' brought up in the last Autumn edition of the Newsletter, check out what some of our boys overseas did to their helicopter. This very special Mi-24 helicopter is presently flying in Afghanistan where it is no doubt causing quite a stir.



Captains of Crews flying under G/Capt T C Dickens

Captains of crews flying under the command of G/Capt T.C.DICKENS from the formation of 100 GROUP (B.S) until May 8th 1945. 214 SQUADRON.

W/C R.L.Bowes, D.F.C.		F/L F.W.Savage	
W/C D.D.Rogers.		F/L W.L.Scantleton	
Sq/L R.Van de Bok, D.F.C.		F/L F.T.Scholes	
S/L J.J.Bray		F/L T.J.Baylis	
S/L S.L.Jeffery		F/L M.Crosbie	
S/L E.V.Miller, D.F.C.	M	F/L B.D.Davies	
F/L W.D.Allies		F/L W.D.Austin, D.F.C.	
F/L J.D.Telfer		F/L S.T.Farrington	
F/L S.A.Woods, D.F.C.		F/L P.R., S.Filleul.	M
F/L J.Wynne		F/L J.L.Gilbert.	
F/L K.Wyver		F/L D.J.Haynes	
F/O P.J.Anderson		F/L N.L.Hill	
F/O H.Bennett	K	F/L D.A.Ingham.	
F/O K.J.Bettles		F/L J.A.Lawson	
F/O B.G.Cameron		F/L G.G.Liles	
F/O R.Coats		F/O H.E.Rawlin	
F/O J.R.Corke		F/O J.T.Robertson.	M
F/O T.M.S.Jackson	M	F/O N.T.Scott.	
F/O R.V.Kindom	M	F/O J.N.Shorttle	M
F/O G.A.Mackie		F/O G.Stewart.	M
F/O R.A.Nelson		F/O R.J.Walters.	
F/O D.M.Peden		F/O E.Woodley	
F/L J.W.Lucas		F/O G.L.Wright.	
F/L C.E.Lye		P/O J.W.Archibald.	
F/L M.C.J.Mark		P/O A.J.N.Hockley.	M
F/L T.A.Morrisson		W/O J.R.Lee.	M
F/L N.Rix	M	W/O N.A.McDougall.	
F/L N.S.Rogers		W/O F.Murray.	
F/L C.C.Puterbough		F/Sgt C.J.Ashworth.	K

K-Killed.

M-Missing.

Presented by Mrs Joyce Dickens in memory of the late
Air Commodore T.C.Dickens, C.B., C.B.E.

The above, together with the names of 30 Captains (2 of whom were "missing") of 223 Squadron is inscribed on a wooden plaque which now is placed on the South Wall of the restaurant in the East Wing of Blickling Hall, the Officers Mess of these squadrons during the 2nd World War. The plaque had been presented by Mrs Dickens in 1975 to F/Lt David Collins but passed on to Blickling Hall with her permission since he felt it was a very important part of its History.

Dear Janine,

Many thanks for the information on 100 Group Association of which I have now become a member. You may be interested in the following item which was published in our local paper. I hope to be able to attend the Reunion next May - health permitting.

Don Francis

SHARED EXPERIENCES

Aircrew Veteran Scores 90 Not Out!

Donald Victor Francis born 5th July 1919



Celebrating his 90th birthday earlier this week was a well-known Exmouth personality, Don Francis, who spent the whole of his working life in the aviation industry. Son of a Metropolitan Police Officer, then an instructor at the Hendon Police College, on leaving school Don started his career with the nearby Handley Page aircraft company. Joining the staff of its technical office he was soon working on calculations for the company's Harrow, Hampden and later, Halifax bombers.



(Picture to the right is taken after 'Wings' Parade reading a letter from wife to be Joan.)

In 1937, with Hendon airfield nearby, Don enlisted in the R Aux AF, joining No 604 County of Middlesex Squadron as an aero-engine fitter. In 1938, as the storm clouds of WWII gathered, his Squadron was mobilized and later Don decided to leave the Auxiliary to join the mainstream RAF. For the first two years of the war he served in his ground trade but when, in 1942, a shortage of aircrew gave him an opportunity to fly, he immediately volunteered and was accepted for training as a Navigator. (Pictures below shows Don in an Anson, Navigator training, Winnipeg area, 1943)



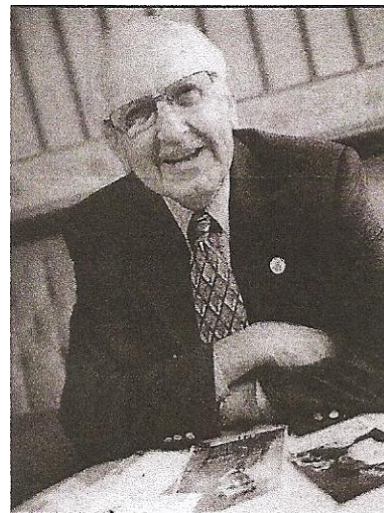
Successfully completing his training in Canada, Don returned to the UK where he joined No 23 Squadron based at Little Snoring, Norfolk. It had recently been reformed and was equipped with the highly versatile Mosquito. At this stage the Squadron's main tasks were 'intruder missions' which involved flying at low-level deep into Germany and attacking enemy airfields and transport targets such as barges and railway locomotives. Don once described their role as *'shooting at anything we fancied and making ourselves a bloody nuisance!'*

Successfully completing his first tour of thirty-five ops, Don became an instructor on 'night fighter techniques' and, now a warrant officer, was offered a commission as the war ended. However, he decided to return to Handley Page and resume his career in aeronautics. This progressed rapidly, moving first to de Havilland and then to English Electric where he rose to become Chief Draughtsman.



It was now the era of guided missiles and another opportunity opened for Don when he rejoined de Havilland as their Chief Draughtsman for the '*Blue Streak*' project. Even today, Don is still registered as a Chartered Engineer and a Member of the Royal Aeronautical Society.

Finally retiring from British Aerospace in 1981, Don decided to settle in Exmouth. Keeping many of his service links, in 1991 he founded the Exmouth (later East Devon) Branch of the Air Crew Association and has watched it grow into one of the country's most successful branches. He remains active as their Vice-President and is also a keen supporter of the town's RAFA Club.



For Don, a widower for many years, approaching his 'four score years and ten' has seen no lessening of his zest for life, particularly foreign travel which in recent months has included visits to the Far East, Mexico, the USA and Canada as well as a number of European destinations. Even the computer age has not daunted him and within the last month he has purchased his first computer and is happy to tell his friends how he has broadband and is mastering 'the web'. Don's many friends, joined by his three sons, wish him good health and the ability to continue his enjoyment of life for many years to come.

The photograph below is of No 23 Squadron, Little Snoring, Norfolk. Don is immediately under the port inner cannon. Don says Joan, his wife to be, wrote every day (as did he). They lived out unofficially when he was on ops and if asked '*I could bore you with a few stories of that time!*'



No 23 Squadron, Little Snoring, August or September 1944

The following article has also been sent in by Don Francis aware that many members, such as himself, may find the article entitled: 'Flight of the Mosquito' interesting.



The Mosquito, one of two in the world in flying condition, is a 30-year-old wooden plane

Flight of the Mosquito

Now, when Duane Egli climbs into the cockpit of the World War II British De Havilland Mosquito fighter-bomber, it's almost like coming home.

After all, he and fellow members of the Confederate Air Force have been flying the little wooden aircraft for over a year. But before that, Egli and another colonel in the CAF, Ed Jurist, flew the plane 5,700 miles from Luton, England, to Rebel Field in Harlingen, Texas. That's the longest flight ever made in a Mosquito.

The Confederate Air Force is an organization of over 600 worldwide members. Its purpose is to preserve, in flying condition, the aircraft of World War II. So when Jurist located the Mosquito, one of two in the world in flying condition, in England, he added it to the collection.

After spending months putting the Mosquito in safe flying order, Egli and Jurist installed an extra fuel tank in the plane and began the first leg of their journey home. They flew from Luton to Bordeaux, France, and then made an unscheduled landing in Vigo, Spain, because of oncoming darkness. Then they headed across the Atlantic, stopping at Lajes Air Force installation in the Azores before going on to St. John's, Newfoundland.

The two pilots admit that there were anxious moments during the trip that took almost a month to complete. About an hour and a half out of St. John's, over the North Atlantic, the exhaust stacks on the engines burned out. And when they landed after that 2,100-mile hop across the open sea, they had just 10 minutes of fuel left.

The two borrowed a couple of exhaust stacks from the Royal Canadian Air Force, which has a Mosquito for mu-

seum display. Then they continued their flight home. From St. John's they flew into Boston; New York; Lexington, Kentucky; Pine Bluff, Arkansas; and then into Rebel Field.

Egli says, "The main drawback of flying the Mosquito, especially for such a long distance, is that you can't wear a parachute. It doesn't do any good. An average-size man can't get out the hatch because the opening is too small. The only way out is the way you get in—through a trapdoor in the bottom of the cockpit."

The Mosquito is now a member of the Bomb Wing of the Ghost Squadron at the Confederate Air Force headquarters and museum in Harlingen.

The museum is open daily, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., except on Sunday, when it is open from 1 to 6 p.m. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated.



Confederate Air Force Colonel Duane Egli sits in the cockpit of the Mosquito bomber

NO TRAPDOOR OF FIGHTER VERSION!

SHARED EXPERIENCES

MY UNCLE LESLIE HADDER

by Leslie Barker

I have always known I was named after my mother's brother, who was killed while serving in the RAF during the Second World War. At the time of his death his mission was secret, and remained so for the next 30 years. It was only when my cousin Richard Harris and a half cousin started doing some family research a few years ago that Leslie's story began to emerge. Much has been written since the documents were made public. However research continues at the more detailed level of individuals.

My interest began when Richard discovered material relating to the crash in which our uncle died. In his email to my brother, copied to me he wrote;

I came across RAF Oulton a few years ago when we visited Blickling Hall. I knew Uncle Leslie had been based at Oulton but assumed it was close to Oulton Broad near Lowestoft rather than North Norfolk. At the time there was an exhibition recounting details of RAF Oulton and a booklet mentioning the crash.

[On a recent visit] *We managed to locate the sight of the crash to a small copse of trees at the old RAF Oulton base. Some of the runway can still be seen and several Nissen huts are still up. The control tower which was still present when we visited two or three years ago has been demolished. Some of the foundations of the sick bay can still be identified as the basic road layout has not changed. The oak tree is no longer there and John thinks that aviation fuel would have made it difficult for anything to grow for many years hence the trees in the copse are not particularly mature.*

RAF Oulton was a dispersal airbase during the war and was used by a number of Squadrons including 214 Squadron. There is a memorial to the base a few hundred yards away from the crash site. In Blickling Church is a Book of Remembrance to those who died from RAF Oulton. It is in a locked case with a telephone number to call if you wished to inspect it. We called and a church warden came and unlocked it. He owned the farm on which the plane crashed. He remembered the night as he was home on leave from the army and was cycling home from Aylsham when the enemy aircraft attacked and had to dive for cover!

Then on holiday in North Norfolk in October 2002 with my parents we visited the Military Vehicle Museum, the Muckleburgh Collection; amongst the displays were photographs of Norwich during the Blitz - when my mother was living there. We also heard of another museum in Norfolk, and on holidaying in Norfolk again in May 2003 discovered there were actually three museums of interest.

The first was the RAF Air Defence Radar Museum at Neatishead, so secret until the end of the Cold War that it is only shown on the latest maps. Here you can enter a reconstruction of the Second World War operations room where the WAAFs plotted all the aircraft movements - and learn how it was done, and how British planes were given their positions and guided back. You can also visit the Cold War operations room, still as it was when decommissioned - and learn about the circumstances which would have led to the "MAD" button being pressed.



The second museum was the City of Norwich Aviation Museum which has a room displaying the work of 100 Group Bomber Command which was based in Norfolk. Here we found much more background information, including material relating specifically to Oulton, and it was here I joined the RAF 100 Group Association.

The third, not yet visited is the Norfolk and Suffolk Aviation Museum incorporating the RAF Bomber Command Museum.

All this prompted me to find out more details. My purpose: to put together a short biography of my uncle, who has now become my war hero, in the wider context of 100 Bomber Command, and made personal particularly by my mother's memories, but also through other documentary sources, and books written by survivors.

The Internet has made this easier, particularly as Hadder is a rare name. I did a search which came up with just four entries for Leslie Hadder! One was the article only recently put on the BBC website compiled partly from the memories of a survivor of the crash in which my uncle died.

In July 2004, after the death of my father in November 2003, I holidayed in Norfolk again with my mother and brother David, who once more acted as chauffer. At the Forum in Norwich I found two newly published books with relevant information on Oulton Airfield and the blitz in Norwich, though the 1930s bus station which I hoped to photograph had just been demolished. However during my first visit to the RAF Museum at Blickling Hall we discovered much more interesting information including a personal account of life on the airfield in 1944-5 which included a sketch map showing the site of a "Fortress crash."

At last in July 2004 I toured round, though not through, Oulton airfield and took a number of photographs, including those of my mother visiting the site. While staying at our holiday cottage in Little Snoring I noted down my mother's recollections. We also visited one of her cousins who was evacuated to Norwich at the beginning of the war and also knew Leslie.

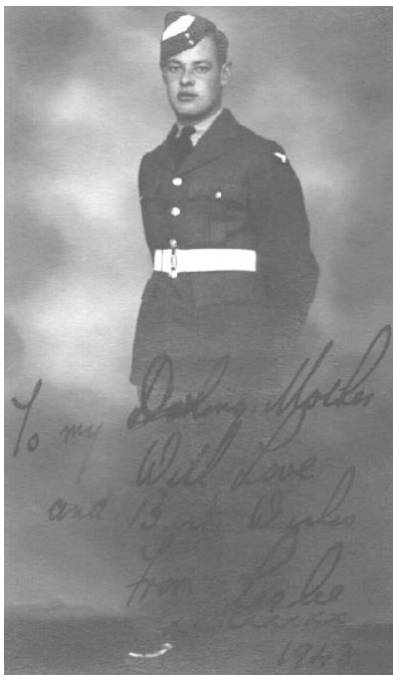
At this point a key document to acquire was still my uncle's Service Record, which I hoped to get copied from one of my cousins. This and copies of other material I obtained when I met with my cousins Anne Harris and Barbara Dodd later that year at my mother's home. Due to commuting I did not have time to incorporate this material until February 2005 after moving to Tring where I now work.

This, my article on my uncle, is the result of the research completed so far, up to the 60th anniversary of his death.

FLIGHT SERGEANT LESLIE HADDER

After working as a Motor Mechanic's Mate from the age of 14 when the family moved to Norwich Leslie volunteered for the RAF on 31 March 1942 when he was seventeen and a half years old. He was placed in the Reserve on the following day, apparently at Euston. Nearly a year later, on 1 February 1943, he reported to the No.1 Aircrew Reception Centre, which was possibly at Lords Cricket Ground. He was described as 5 feet 9 inches tall, with a 31 inch chest, brown hair, grey eyes, fresh complexion, and with four vaccination scars on his left arm.

His training is a little difficult to follow, even by RAF historians, as 'accurate office procedure in the orderly rooms was a little lacking in those days and therefore the actual sequence and reasons for entries can be confusing.' (Jock M. Whitehouse, 214 Squadron Historian)



Entries in his Service Record under the heading "Mustering" show that when he was called up he was considered for pilot training. However his eyesight was not sufficiently good and this entry has been crossed out. He began his training as an AC2, Aircraftsman 2nd Class, and was promoted to LAC, Leading Aircraftsman, on 11 June 1943 when he was considered for training as a navigator, bomb aimer or wireless operator. But when he was promoted to T/Sgt on 21 October he was training as an Air Gunner. At the end of the year, and again a year later on 31 December 1944 Leslie's character was described as very good, and his proficiency as satisfactory.

Leslie's training began on 20 March 1943 at No.10 Initial Training Wing at Scarborough, as confirmed by the group photograph taken by Walkers Studios of St. Thomas Street, Scarborough below. He is the third man down on the right. In July he spent some time with an Elementary Training Wing under canvas at Ludlow, and at sometime during his initial training Leslie sent a photograph home to his mother with the message, 'To my darling mother with love and best wishes from Leslie 1943', (left). In September he went to No.2 Air Gunners School at Dalcross near Inverness, and on 21 October he qualified as an Air Gunner and was promoted to T/ Flight Sergeant. Five days later he was posted to No.11 Operational Training Unit at RAF Bassingbourn in Cambridgeshire.



There were at least three Base HQs in 3 Group (31, 32 and 33) and during the first four months of 1944 Leslie moved through a number of units at 31 Base HQ at RAF Stradishall; No.1657 CU was the Heavy Conversion Unit at Stradishall (3-4 weeks course to become a proficient heavy-bomber crew); 1483 was the (Bomber) Target and Gunnery Flight based at RAF Marham (specialist gunnery training); and No.3 LFS was the Lancaster Finishing School based at Feltwell. He also spent some time during February 1944 at the Aircrew School at Methwold in Suffolk.

From late April Leslie spent three months in and out of Ely Hospital, though his Service Record does not specify why. During this time Ely Hospital was preparing for D Day, so he was sent for convalescence to Hoylake Remedial Centre in Liverpool. While in hospital the rest of his crew were killed when their plane was shot down over France. On discharge he was posted back to No.1657 CU at Stradishall, and on 28 September from there to 214 Squadron at Oulton, just west

of Blickling Hall. This was one of the airfields in Norfolk used by No.100 (Bomber) Support where he trained with 1699 CU on Fortresses. However his Service Record has no more entries until "*Killed in Action.*"

Leslie's Flight Log Book has not survived but that of Frank Hudson has, which shows that he also trained with the 1657 Conversion Unit at the same time, and from July 1944 under the same pilot - Flight Sergeant Harry Bennett. Hudson previously flew with F/S Gold as pilot, and his Log Book entry for 20 April reads "A/C CRASHED." Hudson was one of only two survivors

Leslie survived 13 crash landings altogether!

Other entries in Frank's Log Book list training flights in September 1944. They were flying in Stirlings with the 1657 CU under Bennett's command and include night flying tests, fighter affiliation, cross country flights and bombing. Similar training flights were then undertaken in Fortresses with 1699 CU, including air to sea firing, air to air firing and circuits and landing.

By December 1944 Leslie and Frank had finished training and involved in Special Duties flying out to Osnabruck, Frankfurt, Munster and Coblenz. Some secret flights were not written down. In January 1945 there was only 18 hours and 35 minutes flying time due to bad weather, but Special Duties were carried out at Vohwinkel, Giessen and Mainz.

In February Special Duties took them to Mannheim and Wiesbaden before being shot up on 7th while returning from Dortmund.

Alastair McDirmid, a waist gunner with Leslie, has written an account of the duties of 214 Squadron in a letter to my cousin Richard Harris:-

214 was an interesting Squadron to be in. Our duties were varied and different to that of Bomber Squadrons; we did not carry any bombs, our purpose to support and help protect the bombers when flying over Europe at night, by jamming the early warning systems, and also the ground instructions to night-fighter aircraft, with the latest electronic (RADAR) gadgets with which we were equipped (much of which was Highly Secret and not supplied to Bomber Command aircraft).

To execute this we had 2 separate operations. 1) Firstly we would fly on Spoof (or Diversion) Raids - this entailed flying and windowing (in a particular way) to an area or town well away from the Target for To-night area, perhaps 20 minutes before the Bombers - to attract the night fighters to us and away from the Target; in the hope that they would not catch us and could not get back in time to harass the Bombers.

Normally we would do perhaps 3 Spoof Operations and then go on a Target operation with the Bombers. Some of our B17s were equipped with a large (Top Secret) Jostle machine in the bomb-bay (which was too large for the bomb-bay of Lancasters or Halifax's (the reason we flew in B17 aircraft)) and this was operated by German speaking Special Wireless Operators at the Target. He was expected to jam any ground instruction to the airborne N/F pilots. To do this our aircraft had to stop close to the Target area on one of 3 shifts, to ensure if one aircraft was hit we still had another aircraft (from 214) to cover, and operate. The shifts were H-5 to H+5 (minutes), H to H+10, H+5 to H+15. (H = Time arranged for the first flares to be dropped by Pathfinder aircraft, for the Bombers to bomb on. Normally a bombing run would be ½ minute. Pathfinders stayed 3 minutes, and as you will see 214 remained 10 minutes on the Target. (Some fun?)

Jostle would be turned ON and OFF. When ON, we were told later it was possible for night fighter aircraft to home-in on the beam. We learned later that Bomber Command believed that we might be subject to heavy losses, but fortunately this was not so, until we lost 6 B17 aircraft

March/April 1945. As far as I am aware from Oct '44 we lost one aircraft in Nov '44 and one aircraft Feb'45 (landing on Fido at Foulsham) which was encouraging to the Operational Aircrews of 214 (Bomber losses probably much higher in comparable operational sorties).

As far as I am aware 214 was the only Squadron with Jostle - which was Top Secret for many, many years after the war. Crews were not to discuss with the Spec Operator his job or equipment, at any time. It was assumed that Ground Staff did not know what we were doing (their job was purely maintenance) or what the Window (metal strips dropped to flood the enemy radar screens) we carried was used for. We were called 100 Group B/S (Bomber Support) and our work was not made public before the 1970's or '80's - we were little known (even today) and even wartime Operational Bomber Crews knew very little, if anything, about us, so if Leslie said little about what he was doing (as he was instructed) you may now understand.

7 FEBRUARY 1945

On 7th February 1945, Leslie's crew went on special duty operations jamming radio and radar while Six Group was bombing the Dortmund Ems Canal. There was heavy flak. They had been jamming for twenty minutes, then gained height slowly. The bombers were busy bombing the canal and dodging a horde of German night fighters.

When it was home time, the crew set course but they got left behind as the other aircraft were a lot faster. In the vicinity of Essen they were coned by a multitude of searchlights. Essen was heavily defended with 400 heavy flak guns. One of the second tour waist gunners told the pilot H Bennett to fly into the thickest of the flak. When Frank Hudson, the tail gunner, asked him "Why?" the next day, he told Frank that the flak was automatically controlled so that the next burst would explode elsewhere.

They got past Essen but were jumped by a Junkers 88 night fighter, which stayed behind them and started shooting. This was a poor manoeuvre on his part, as he should have attacked on a curve pursuit. This though, gave Frank the opportunity to shoot point-blank. Frank's tracers converged on the fighter; knocking silver sparks off him. He had been aiming at the nose of the plane and had even seen the pilot, but Frank switched his gunfire to the fighter's tanks, between the nose and the engines, knowing that his explosive incendiaries would penetrate the fighter's armoured tanks. The fighter's pilot had stopped firing, presumably killed, when suddenly there was a great yellow flash from his exploding tanks. While Frank continued to fire at the fighter, the fighter's crew fired back with their cannons and machine guns. A tracer appeared to be coming straight towards Frank, so he yelled, "Port go ...!" The tail of the Fortress came up and the tracer tore through the belly of the plane.

The radar device (H2S), fixed under the plane, was blown to bits. Frank lost his bike seat when it was also blown to smithereens. A cannon shell tugged at the crotch of his trousers, scorching his battle-dress pants. Frank also had a few holes in his clothes where bullets just missed him, and his epaulette was shot off. He had a penny in his pocket and a tin of tobacco. A spent bullet hit the tin and squashed the tobacco into a black pulp. It also put a big dent in the penny, which saved his hip joint from severe damage. Jock Murdoch, one of the waist gunners got a bullet through his forearm between the two bones. Being a Scotsman his swearing was magnificent! Bill Church, the other waist gunner, had his ammunition tank blown up. The flash blinded him temporarily. One wireless operator got a hole through his battle-dress, which wrecked his transmitter. The pilot had a heel of his boot shot off. The bottom got shot off the navigator's compartment, losing the two nose guns. The navigator, Ernest "Paddy" Paddick, sat sideways and a cannon shell penetrated his hip joint, went through his lower belly and out the other hip joint and lay on the seat beside him without exploding. The mid-upper gunner, Leslie, tried to render first aid but Paddy fought back.

The bomb aimer wasn't able to help as he couldn't cross the great gap in the floor. They resumed course but there then appeared to be a fire under the starboard wing. On throttling back, the glow disappeared and they decided the turbo supercharger had been shot off one of the engines.

They continued home, heading for a long emergency strip at RAF Manston in Kent as they thought they would have no wheels. The bomb aimer, Frank Hares, navigated them to Manston, with the little remaining navigating equipment and he later received a D.F.M. for his efforts.

It was a pretty ropery landing. They did a few loops as they only had one wheel. The pilot, Harry "Benny" Bennett subsequently received the D.F.C. Frank Hudson was recommended for a D.F.C. by the gunnery leader Flight Lieutenant Phillips, but so many had been issued that month, that Frank was told he would receive his at the end of his tour. Frank never completed his tour so he never received his D.F.M. but the Group Captain did congratulate him.

Leslie got the unexploded shell from beside the navigator, "Paddy" Paddick, and put it in his pocket, no doubt thinking that if it fell on the concrete it might go off. He threw it into the long grass, but the captain made him go and look for it in case a mower hit it. So he took it to the armourers and they were very interested, as they had never seen one like it before. On x-raying it, they found it to be of a new design. The downing of the Junkers 88 was confirmed by several other crews, and also later by Bomber Command. All of the crew got back safely except Ernest Paddick, the navigator. He died on 8th February 1945, at the age of 23 and was buried in St. Marylebone cemetery in London.

From BBC's website, *A Bomber Crews Story* by Bill Knight.

THE FATAL NIGHT

On the night of 3 - 4 March 1945 RAF Bomber Command despatched two forces of bombers, 234 aircraft to attack a synthetic oil plant at Kamen near Dortmund, and 222 aircraft to attack the Dortmund to Ems Canal at Ladbergen.

In addition to various diversionary raids by Mosquito bombers and a diversionary sweep over the North Sea by 95 training aircraft, Bomber Command also sent 61 aircraft, Fortresses, Halifaxes and possibly a small number of Stirlings, on radio counter measures flights.

At 6.40pm on Saturday 3 March Leslie's aircraft, Fortress III HB815, bearing the code letters "BU-J" took off from Oulton. He was on his third tour of duty, having completed 120 operations in the previous two.

As Frank Hudson was suffering from bronchitis and found it very difficult to cough at height due to the cold and difference in air pressure, he was off sick. The special operator, Steve Nessner, was also in sick quarters with tonsillitis. The navigator on this occasion was "Barney" Barnfield, who replaced Paddick. Some men from Crosbie's crew made up the numbers; Patrick Healy took Frank's place, Alistair McDirmid took "Jock" Murdoch's place as waist gunner, Lindsay Odgers, an Australian, was substitute for Nessner and Leslie Billington was flight engineer.

The ten man crew consisted of:-

Pilot	F/O Harry "Benny" Bennett DFC
Flight Engineer	Sgt Leslie Ernest Billington

Navigator	F/Sgt Harry "Barney" Barnfield
Special Radio	W/O Lindsay Joseph Odgers RAAF
Radio Op	F/Sgt William Briddon
Air Bomber	F/Sgt Frank Hares DFM
Gunner	F/Sgt Leslie Arnold Hadder
Waist Gunner	Sgt Alistair McDirmid
Waist Gunner	W/O R. W. "Bill" Church
Tail Gunner	Sgt Patrick James Healy

The principal purpose of this sortie was apparently to drop quantities of WINDOW radar-jamming tin foil to confuse the enemy radar.

However it was on this particular night that the Luftwaffe mounted their long planned operation GISELLA. This was a large scale intruder attack by long range night fighters directed against the RAF bombers as they were returning to their bases in Britain. It was a bright moonlit night and this greatly aided the Germans.

The story is taken up by Alistair McDirmid who volunteered to go on this op, as he had missed two previous ones with flu, and this would help him finish his tour of duty at the same time as the rest of his usual crew.

Bennett was the skipper of the crew who shared our billet. When he came in and said they were flying that night I was interested. Here was the chance to make up one of my outstanding trips, with a crew I knew, rather than being asked to fly 'a spare' with strangers. So I volunteered to go as the starboard Waist-gunner. I was already aware he had some vacant positions, through illness and injury, because on returning from his previous trip they had been in combat with a German night fighter, which the rear gunner had shot down, and his navigator had received fatal injury. So in all he included three other members of Crosbie's crew.

As an experienced crew, it was our hope, as always, that the trip on 3rd March 1945 would be completed successfully, without incident.

We left about 18.45 hrs on a routine Bomber Support mission to the Ruhr area, radar jamming and windowing. Take off & the outward leg proved uneventful. After we turned for home I ceased to open and eject my packets of Window, I resumed careful observation of the area from my starboard waist-gunner position, only interrupted for a few minutes when the Spec. W/Op took over whilst I got a cup of hot coffee from my Thermos. Resuming duty we arrived back at Base without mishap around midnight in advance of the 'Target Bombers'. The skipper contacted control (Woodside jig to Azure) and was instructed 'Your turn to land No.3'. We now joined the circuit until the prior 2 landed safely. Then it was our turn, the 'drome was lit up, we had our lights on, flaps down and wheels down coming into the funnel, when suddenly another aircraft called control stating that they had a damaged engine and requesting permission to come straight in. This was granted and control shot us a red flare, so we turned away to complete another circuit. Nearly in the same instant I observed tracer coming in from behind me and going away in the distance. With no 'bandit' warnings and no action calls from the other gunners on the

intercom my first thought was that it may be some careless Air-gunner unloading, but I quickly realised it was far more serious as flames were then streaking from the engine (or wing) past my window, appearing almost close enough to touch. As there were still no calls or instructions over the intercom (possibly damaged) I bent down & put on my chest parachute, so the port waist-gunner did the same. I intended next to remove the rear door which was specially hinged, so as to make a quick exit at the opportune moment, but fate now took a hand.

It must have been at this moment we hit some tall oak trees at the side of the main road. The pilot had possibly tried to come in on the other runway, but not had enough control of the damaged aircraft. I was told later that the aircraft had now exploded, disintegrating into small pieces, none much larger than an engine nacelle scattered over quite a wide area near Sick Quarters. So close in fact that the medics only needed to walk out of the door, rather than getting into the ambulance, in their quest for survivors.

The M.O. told me later in hospital that he found me sat on an ammo box, as rounds popped with the heat & it reminded him of Guy Fawkes. If it had been a less serious occasion he would have been tempted to go back for his camera.

The first memories I have after the crash were at the hospital [Norfolk & Norwich] where a nurse cut me out of my clothes to allow examination for broken bones or other injuries, which appeared to be only concussion and bruises.

After a week McDirmid was transferred to the RAF hospital at Ely for another two weeks before being deemed for a spot of Sick Leave. When he reported back to Oulton Crosbie's crew, with its four replacements were just finishing their tour.

There had been no major enemy air attacks against the UK since the end of May 1944, and although the RAF had some intelligence warnings of the impending attack, it still took the British defences by surprise, causing major confusion amongst returning aircraft. In all 43 RAF aircraft were attacked, the Germans shooting down 19 bombers, destroying three on the ground and damaging 8 more. They also attacked at least 14 airfields. It is thought about 30 of the 140 German night fighters operated over Norfolk and Suffolk between midnight and 2am on the morning of 4th March.

Leslie's aircraft was coming in to land at Oulton at 00.50 hours when it was hit by fire from a Junkers Ju88G-6 of Luftwaffe unit 10/NJG.3 based at Jever, piloted by Lieutenant Arnold Doring. He reported flying over an airfield showing the letters DH in white, where he spotted a Drem light system in operation and a four engined aircraft with 'festival' (sic) lights showing. Doring flew beneath this aircraft, and recognised it as a B-17 Fortress from its tail shape; he attacked it with upward firing cannons, and thought he had hit the fuel tanks in the fuselage and wings, starting fires. He noted that the fire in the fuselage seemed to flare up and then diminish, and speculated that the crew were using fire extinguishers on it. The B-17 crashed just short of the Drem lights in 'a large cloud of dust but with no fire.'

In addition to Leslie's aircraft two Halifaxes, a Lancaster, and a Mosquito were shot down over Norfolk that night, the Lancaster by Doring's crew.

The crash was witnessed by Leslie's Flight Commander Squadron Leader Bob Davies who was approaching Oulton at the same time in another Fortress; it was his aircraft that had been damaged and was given priority to land; Leslie's Fortress had to make another circuit, which led to its being attacked.

Davies's account is taken from *Confounding the Reich* by Bowman and Cushing.

'Our return to Oulton in the early hours of 4 March was normal, the individual aircraft switching on their navigation lights some time before we crossed the Norfolk coast. As I approached Oulton I heard control give P/O Bennett clearance to join the circuit. I called saying I was on three engines and was told to come straight in. A few moments later Bennett, who I think was on longish finals, was told to go around again as I was turning long finals and was cleared to land on runway 45. I saw Bennett climbing away, and above me, to my right. Then I saw a fairly long burst of cannon fire and his No.2 engine and wing caught fire. I lost sight of him still climbing and turning right. At this time I heard the tower say 'Bandits! Bandits! Switch off all lights.' All airfield lights were extinguished. I had landed by now and was stationary. I switched off my navigation lights, or so I thought. However, my rear gunner said, 'There is still a white light shining somewhere above me!' I told him it was impossible as both my flight engineer, F/O Fitzsimmonds and I had checked all switches and they were definitely 'off.' While we started madly to check again all the switches the two of us began to feel very naked and also very panicky as we were expecting to be blown apart at any moment. I finally found the small switch which controlled the white formation light situated at the very top of the vertical stabiliser and switched it off. All ten of us only dared to breathe again when we finally found our blacked out dispersal.

However, the night and the fright were not yet over. As my Hillman pick-up was parked at dispersal, I drove with my flight engineer to the still fiercely burning wreck which must have roughly impacted in a flying position. The fuselage (or what was left of it) had broken off aft of the radio room and also aft of the beam gun position. I could not believe any of the crew had survived but both waist gunners, Sgt Alastair McDirmid and W/O R. W. Church, had 'walked' from the blazing inferno. They had been taken to sick quarters where I spoke briefly to them.'

My mother remembers dreaming that night that she heard her brother cry out 'Mum!' The one thing Leslie feared was to be burnt. The last time she had seen him was when he left Norwich bus station on his way back to Oulton after being on leave. Although she had now left school and was working at the bus station she did not usually see Leslie leaving.

Mr. & Mrs. Hadder were notified of their son's death by telegram on the Sunday morning. Pamela accompanied Leslie's fiancée Barbara to her home in Sutton Coldfield, returning with her and family members later in the week for the funeral. The family were not allowed to see his body.

The crash was also witnessed by other people on the ground.

One was Murray Peden who recollected it in his book '*A Thousand Shall Fall.*'

'It got dark very early. 214's aircraft departed, did the operation, and were arriving back before midnight. Meantime, I had been up at the aerodrome all night as Officer-in-Charge of night flying, had seen all my charges safely down, and was cycling back to the hut as our returning operational Fortresses began droning into the circuit. As I was propping my bike against the side of the hut, I heard the noise of an unfamiliar engine. We were so used to the sound of our own Wright Cyclones, and the Merlins and Hercs of the ubiquitous Mosquitoes, Lancasters, and Halifaxes, that anything outside that category attracted attention. This one was definitely out of place. I looked up but could not see any navigation lights in the area from which the sound appeared to be coming.

For a few moments I stood uneasily looking over in the direction of the aerodrome, then saw a pair of navigation lights heading steadily towards the funnel. A few seconds later I heard, and saw, a long burst of fire streak towards the aircraft in the funnel. It was not machine gun fire but the slower, heavy pounding of cannon fire. The target aircraft burst into flames, but maintained for several seconds its steady descent toward the runway; then, as the flames spread and leapt in the clear night air the dying aircraft slumped into a gentle curving dive and crashed a few

hundred yards away from the hospital. Every member of the crew died. It turned out to be Bennett's crew.'

The farmer who owned Lodge Farm where the crash happened was on leave from the army and cycling home from Aylsham when the Junkers attacked and he had to dive for cover. Three years ago he was still church warden at Blickling Church nearby, and unlocked the case for my cousin Richard Harris (son of Leslie's sister Rose) to inspect the Roll of Honour.

Leslie Arnold Hadder, Flight Sergeant 180464, was first to be buried at Thorpe St. Andrew cemetery in Norwich.

Leslie was given three awards from the Campaign Stars, Clasps and Medals which were instituted in recognition of service in the war of 1939-45. These were the War Medal 1939-45 itself; the 1939-45 Star and the France and Germany Star.

After the war the Eastern Counties Omnibus Company dedicated a memorial plaque to their employees killed during the war.



Leslie, after his promotion to Flight Sergeant, with his sister Doris (taken by Raoul of 15 Prince of Wales Road in Norwich)



Mum and I at the Memorial at Oulton



SHARED EXPERIENCES

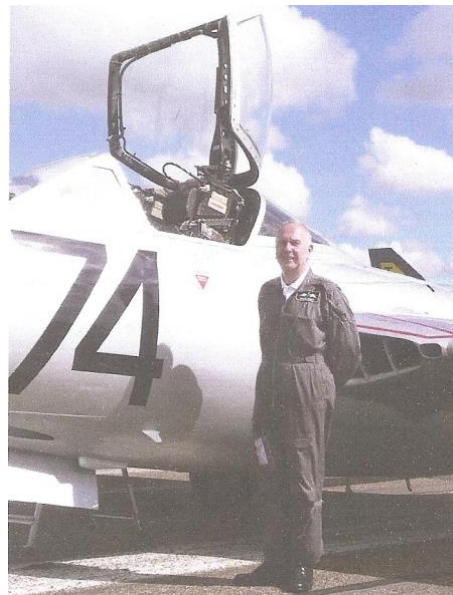
Pleasures of Aviating in 2008

by Howard Deacon

Rod Vowler's piece re his fantastic trip in the Harvard (Spring 2009) has prompted me to share some of my 2008 flying pleasures.

I am actively involved with the Coventry based Air Atlantique Classic Flight and 2008 was a particularly eventful year since with the passing of much authority from the British Civil Aviation Authority to the European Aviation Safety Agency passenger flying in the Douglas Dakota (DC3 – Gooneybird – C47 – Skytrain, etc) had to cease 16th July 2008 as a direct result of European EU-OPS regulations.

In order to provide the opportunity for as many people as possible with the opportunity to experience flight in this iconic aircraft, it was decided to embark on the 2008 Dakota Tour which in addition to offering flights from the Coventry base added a number of other venues from which enthusiasts and other interested parties could indulge themselves in a memorable experience.



The other places on offer in which I was actively involved included:

Norwich	31 st May & 1 st June
Newcastle upon Tyne	11 th & 12 th June
Teesside	13 th & 14 th June (RAF Middleton St George)
Edinburgh	15 th & 16 th June
Belfast	7 th & 8 th July
Blackpool	10 th July
Leeds Bradford	10 th & 11 th July

Special Farewell to the Dakota at Coventry 14th & 15th July



As well as the above and local flying in the Coventry area in these aircraft the year held other enjoyable times including a weekend in May when we took a DH Rapide to Shoreham for pleasure flights. The weather was not good and the further south we traveled the worse the visibility until, in order to avoid IFR flight for which the aircraft was not equipped, consideration had to be given to returning, Air Traffic

Control advised that it was clearer west and so we headed west until we could go south to the coast and then along passing Worthing to our destination – Shoreham. This turned out to be a most suitable venue for this 1930's designed aircraft built in the 1940s by Brush at Loughborough because it fitted in so well with the period terminal building. In RAF service this aircraft was known as the Dominie.

One of our pilots who had a great love for this beautiful old biplane was a lovely lady by the name of 'Sybille' and she was unfortunately one of those killed in a mid air collision whilst on approach to Coventry Airport on 17th August 2008 when the Cessna 402C in which she was crewing was in collision with a Rand KR-2 micro-light.



In memory of her, the aircraft shown (G-AGTM) now bears her name and on the 24th November 2008, her birthday, we flew down in this aircraft in formation with our other airworthy Rapide (G-AIDL) to her home town of Banbury overflying the family home and her resting place. On return to base, there was a message to call her husband, he had taken their daughter out to see it and the little girl had looked up and said 'that's Mummy's aeroplane' and the icing on the cake was that the other aircraft was the very one in which she had first flown.

Other Rapide flying apart from the local area has included Doncaster and Oxford plus a weekend at Southend (used to be RAF Rochford).

I have also had the pleasure of flying the DH Devon (VP981) or to give it its civil register name the DH Dove. The type was of course used to transport officers of Air Rank and VIPs and this particular example flew with the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight as a support aircraft. I first flew in this aircraft in August 2001 and have since been with it at Durham, Edinburgh and Kemble. Happy days indeed!



DH Devon (VP981)



DH Devon C1 Office

Another memorable experience occurred in August 2008 when having flown a Grumman AA5 Cheetah from Cranfield to North Weald I had the privilege of flying in the only DH Vampire T11 back from North Weald to Cranfield. After take off from North Weald I was given control and as Luton was by now very busy, the pleasure time was lengthened by my having to avoid Luton's controlled airspace. All too soon we were visual on Cranfield and it was time to let the expert execute the approach and landing.



Following arrival in Cranfield

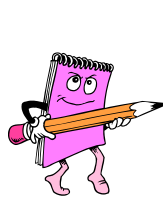
I will finish with a return to a type which I flew many years ago, an Auster, a friend of mine was going to take an early evening flight and asked if I would like to join him. It did not take much thinking about.



Once airborne, he handed me control and told me to go to Wellesbourne. On the return journey we mooched about and studied ground features from the air by indulging ourselves in steep turns. It was many years since I had flown an Auster and we were arriving back for a night landing. I joined downwind, completed base leg and now on short finals I said that my good friend should take over the landing. It would be awful to 'bend' someone's aircraft after they had been good enough to let me pole it. He was busily hanging out of the window taking photographs!

*Above, Howard Duncan at the controls
Right, returning home from Belfast*





NOTICEBOARD

A place where members can keep in touch

 **Leslie Barker**, whose article about his uncle appears earlier in this edition, has two requests to make of members – 1. *Does anyone have photos of Norwich bus station? I had been through it several times before embarking on the project about my uncle, but it was demolished about six months before I went to photograph it.* 2. *Does anyone know the whereabouts of the Memorial that Eastern National buses made to commemorate their employees killed in WWII?*

Contact: Leslie Barker, 'ChezEzra' 24 Mill Gardens, Tring, HP23 5ES Tel: 01442 823598

 **Janine** would like to offer her apologies as Editor for not being able to make room in Newsletters for the now many log books she is receiving from different members. I will always make mention that these are available, or a copy at least, from the member who usually sends them in with an article. **Leslie Barker**, I hope what is included here feels right with you about your uncle, and I'm only sorry there is not the space to include all the wonderful photographs you sent. I would also give my apologies to **Don Francis** for not being able to add more of your very interesting material and articles. There were so many Don, I hope you understand. But again, if any member would like to learn more, I know Don would be only too happy to hear from you.

Contact: Don Francis, 14 Scarsdale, 28 Douglas Ave, Exmouth, EX8 2HA Tel: 01395 272065

 **Don Francis** born 5th July 1919 ... Happy happy birthday to you, Don, now 90 years old. And thank you for the very special article shared with us in this Newsletter.

 **Eric Dickens** has more information than we have room to put here in editions of the Newsletter. For example, there is a six page copy of his father's log which many of you have asked about and I know would wish to see. Please make contact with Eric direct. I know he would be happy to hear from you.

Eric Dickens: 8 Oak View, Bretton, Peterborough PE3 6YE Tel: 01733 265432 edickens@supanet.com

 **Reunion 2010** – with preparations now well under way for next year's Reunion, the Spring Newsletter will be going out early so that you have the programme of events and can make your plans accordingly. *Please note the change of venue!* It would also be helpful if anyone wanting to put anything into the first 2010 Spring edition to send me material as soon as possible. Space will be at a premium. It is wonderful to receive so many interesting articles, shared experiences, information and unique photographs from years gone by. Please don't stop sending them. But be aware that if it doesn't hit the next edition then I promise to make room for it in the next. It will not be forgotten. And as always, my promise is to return all photographs immediately as I know they are precious to those concerned.





Final Postings

*Death is but crossing the world as friends do the seas
- they live in one another still.*

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

Founders of RAF 100 Group Association – remembered with 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 has left memorabilia to the Museum archive collection.
192 Squadron	Ron Phillips passed away in late 2005.
192 Squadron	Ted Gomersall passed away on 30 th November 2004,
192 Squadron	Hank Cooper DSO, DFC passed away in 2005.
192 Squadron	Michael Simpson W/Op & F/O passed away on the Isle of Man.
192 Squadron	'Richie' Richards Rear Airgunner flying Wellingtons has passed on.
192 Squadron	Air Commodore Vic Willis, C.O of RAF Foulsham passed away 30.7.06
192 Squadron	Group Captain Jack Short passed away December 2006. Chair of RAF 100 Group Association until 1996.
192 Squadron	W.O (later P/O) A G McEachern RCAF died 15th August 2007 at home in Lanigan, Saskatchewan aged 85.
192 Squadron	LAC Harris, Ground Crew passed away 15 th August 2007. Grandson James Kerslake is now a member of the Association.
192 Squadron	Wing Commander David Donaldson passed away 15.1.2004.
192 Squadron	Wilhelmson, F/O Sander Willie Raymond (J10026). Distinguished Flying Cross. Home in Elbow, Saskatchewan.
192 Squadron	Flight Lieutenant Richard (Dick or Dobbie) William Dobson, died 1996, remembered by his son, Roger and daughter Susan, both new members.
192 Squadron	W/O John Rhys Powell, rear gunner flying Wellingtons, died 1992 remembered by son John Powell.
192 Squadron	Sgt George Richards, tail gunner, posted missing evening of 4th/5th July 1944. Remembered by niece Cheryl Cairns nee Colgan & sister Agnes Colgan (nee Richards).
199 Squadron	F/O Ed Emmerson, Navigator to Flt/Lt Paddy Passmore DFC, a Canadian Pilot, has passed away.
199 Squadron	Arthur Fitch, former RAF Bomber, passed away July 2006.
199/171 Sqdn	Group Captain George Cubby, MBE, FRMets; passed away in 2005. His wife donated memorabilia to the Museum. He is also remembered by Roy Smith, only surviving member of his crew.

171 Squadron	Joe Brogan, Halifax pilot, who finished the war at North Creake; passed away 2004, remembered by his widow Sheila.
171 Squadron	Arthur Adcock passed away February 2008 & Syd Love, Canadian crew member, passed away April 2008. <i>'Friends to the end!'</i>
157 Squadron	Bryan Gale Flt/Lt passed away 2 nd January 2009 and is remembered by daughter Valerie & son Chris (<i>see In Memoriam in this issue</i>).
214 Squadron	Geoff Liles, pilot, passed away 4 March 2006.
214 Squadron	Mr J Creech passed away April 2006.
214 Squadron	Don Austin passed on and is remembered by Les Bostock.
214 Squadron	Air Vice Marshall Jack Furner passed away 1 st Jan 2007.
214 Squadron	Squadron 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, has passed on.
214 Squadron	Robert Moorby W/Op passed away January 2008. His two sons gave memorabilia to the Museum. He is also remembered by Shirley Whitlock.
214 Squadron	Ft/Sg Hadder, Air Gunner in Fortress III HB815, bearing code letters "BU-J" killed 3/4 th March 1945, remembered by nephew Leslie Barker (<i>his story will be told in our next Winter edition</i>).
214 Squadron	Alan Mercer passed away 6 th June.
223 Squadron	Flt Lt A E L Morris (Tony) died June 2005. He is remembered by Andrew Barron, his skipper: Oct 44 – 1945.
223 Squadron	Tom Butler <i>'Bishop'</i> , is remembered by Peter Witts.
223 Squadron	C. L. Matthews (Les) rear gunner, Peter Witts nose gunner in Flt/L Stan Woodward DFC crew before Peter went on to 214 Squadron.
223 Squadron	Arthur Anthony, Flight Engineer, passed away May 13 th 2006. A member of our Committee at the start of the Association.
223 Squadron	F/Lt Jack Brigham DFC passed away 2008. Original Captain when 223 reformed. Flew mainly Liberator TS 524, 6G-0; 36 ops. Remembered by Len Davies, Waste Gunner only surviving member of crew.
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. Len & pilot Johnny Moss survived as war prisoners when their Lancaster ED625 was shot. Len returned to Britain with injuries sustained in escape attempt, nursed back to health by Nora, who he married.
462 RAAF Squadron	F/O H .R. Anderson DFC 'Andy' passed away 6 th April 2008 at home in New South Wales with family around him.

A Quiet Corner



My England

Goodbye to my England, so long my old friend
Your days are numbered, being brought to an end:
To be Scottish, Irish or Welsh that's fine,
But don't say you're English, that's way out of line!

The French and the Germans may call themselves such
So may Norwegians, the Swedes and the Dutch.
You can say you are Russian or maybe a Dane,
But don't say you're English ever again!

At Broadcasting House the word is taboo,
In Brussels it's scrapped, in Parliament too.
Even schools are effected, staff do as they're told
They must not teach children about England of old.

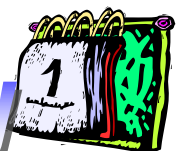
Writers like Shakespeare, Milton and Shaw,
The pupils don't learn about them any more.
How about Agincourt, Hastings, Arnhem or Mons,
When England lost hosts of her very brave sons?

We are not Europeans, how can we be?
Europe is miles away, over the sea.
We're the English from England, let's all be proud
Stand up and be counted - shout it out loud!

Let's tell our Government and Brussels too
We're proud of our heritage and the red, white and blue.
Fly the flag of St George or the Union Jack
Let the world know -

WE WANT OUR ENGLAND BACK!!!!

Dates for your Diary





15th November

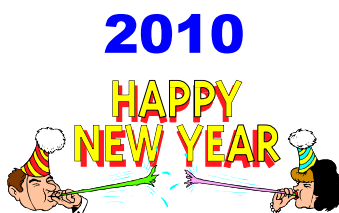
Members are invited to attend an event being held on Sunday, 12 noon near Station 113, Cheddington – the Gremlins old WWII airbase (after Oulton). It is the setting for a ceremony dedicating a memorial to honour and remember the 36th Bomb Squadron and Squadron pilot Lt. Norman Landberg's two crewmen, Navigator Lt Walter Lamson and Gunner Pfc Leonard Smith who perished in a take-off crash 65 years ago.

They are currently trying to get a P51 Mustang flyover or possibly an F15 Strike Eagle from Lakenheath.

For details about this event please contact: Stephen Hutton, 4016 Old Sturbridge Drive, Apex, NC 27539, USA. His website is www.36rcm.com which will be updated to reflect this new event, email: smhutton@36rcm.com

31st December

Please *please* could members send cheques for 2010 Association membership with the Renewal Form to Secretary Janine Harrington. It is easy to let it drift after Christmas, which means that you won't then receive the Spring 2010 Newsletter and those which come after. It takes time and money sending out reminders. Cheques should be made out to: **RAF 100 Group Association**, and sent to the Secretary Janine Harrington (address on Editor's page).



As soon as possible

Final date for inclusions in the Spring issue of the Newsletter.

Friday 7th/8th/9th May

RAF 100 Group Association Reunion



100 Group Order of Battle

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

Produced by
JANINE HARRINGTON