

# The 4T9er

LIFE IN THE OLD DOG YET!

**The 49 Squadron Association Magazine  
July 2008 Issue 11**



Photo; SAC Adam Houlston, Courtesy MoD

**The memorial to the crew of Hampden P1206, Berkhout, Holland.  
The aircraft came down in the field in the background.**

## **IN MEMORIAM**

L. Orchard    G. Wood    N. Bradfield

**WE WILL REMEMBER THEM**

**WELCOME TO:**

**NEW MEMBER**

**Lionel Ayling**

**NEW HONORARY MEMBER**

**Malcolm Brooke (Formerly 'Honorary Friend')**

**NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

**Mike Ling    Vivienne Mengham    John Scott**  
**Rosemary Howard    Dominic Howard    Greg Burton**  
**Ray Wilde    Graham Inns**



Photo; Janet Norman

**4T9ers and their guests gather outside Fiskerton Village Hall following the Services of Remembrance in Fiskerton Church and at The Airfield Memorial and the buffet lunch in The 49 Squadron Lounge.**

## EDITORIAL

Another reunion has come and gone but a lasting memory for me was to see Eric Clarke and Reg Woolgar examining logbooks and exchanging experiences. They served together as Wop/Ags on Hampdens at Scampton in 1942 and were reunited at Petwood Hotel after 66 years, thanks to The 4T9er.

Thank you to all those Members and Associates who returned their Continuation of Membership slips. Whilst it was not intended as a fund raising exercise we are grateful for the donations enclosed. Thank you for the kind words regarding The 4T9er. It is great fun compiling it but it is always nice to know that the effort is appreciated. I am particularly pleased that so many ladies enjoy reading it and get something from it. I must thank also those who have contacted me with items of interest that are included in the popular Reader's Letters section. These play a great part in making The 4T9er interesting and from an editor's point of view greatly assist in compiling a worthwhile publication. Please keep them coming.

The ongoing story of Hampden P1206 took a decisive step on May 7th when the two crew members who had lain buried in a Dutch field since 1941 were finally laid to rest in hallowed ground. A full illustrated report appears in this issue. Capt. Paul Peterson of the Royal Netherlands Air Force has informed me that it is now planned to return the remains of the aircraft to Scampton in November. We are truly grateful to the people of Koggenland for their amazing devotion, at great expense, in ensuring that the mortal remains of the two boys are properly buried and reunited with their fellow crew members.

Sadly I must report the passing of three of our members. Les Orchard was Ted Cachart's bomb aimer and, after a collision, went down and was taken prisoner with the rest of the crew on January 2nd 1944. George Wood died suddenly on March 25th. George was on Hampdens with 49 Squadron and spent seven days in a dinghy in the North Sea. An account can be read in Chan Chandler's book, 'Tail Gunner' although George is referred to as 'Jock'. Associate Member Norah Bradfield was the much loved wife of late Member Len Bradfield.

We are pleased to welcome new Member Lionel Ayling who was a F/Sgt Flight Engineer on Lincolns. He was posted to 49' at Waddington and moved with them to Wittering then Upwood. He also did stints in Shaluffa and Kenya.

At the reunion banquet I was pleased to announce that Malcolm Brooke, our Webmaster, has been appointed an Honorary Member. This is in recognition of his dedicated work in compiling our website which is the envy of many. In particular Malcolm has travelled Europe, at considerable personal expense, to photograph graves and cemeteries which has made our Roll of Honour second to none. In addition the website has increased the number of enquiries and with

it the number of new members thus strengthening the future of our Association. New Associate Member, F/Lt. Mike Ling, is in his first season with The Red Arrows. He flies Red 3, on the leader's port wing. He formerly flew Tornado F3's with 111 Squadron. Mike's grandfather Sgt James Parkinson served with 49' as a Flight Engineer from April '45 to April '47. Vivienne Mengham is the daughter of Phil Taverner and John Scott is her cousin. They featured in Ed Norman's piece in the April issue entitled 'Sister and Brother Reunited'. Rosemary and Dominic Howard are the niece and great nephew respectively of P/O Cyril Anderson who flew on the Dams Raid with 617 Squadron and was killed on September 23rd, 1943 whilst flying with 49'. Australian, Greg Burton is the great nephew of P/O Bill Myers RAAF, lost when returning from the daylight raid on Milan, 24th October 1942. Ray Wilde is the son of the late Harry Wilde. Alf Ridpath tipped Ray off that his dad was mentioned in The 4T9er Issue 10, page 15. Harry was part of the concert party and I'm told that his 'drunk' impression was most impressive. Ray tells me that his dad was a professional entertainer but when at work with 49' he was a corporal on airframes. From Australia again, Graham Inns is the nephew of F/Sgt Maxwell Whitehill who was killed on 6/7 June 1942 whilst flying MuG to S/L D. M. De Mestre DSO DFC. He flew four ops in Hampdens and five in Manchesters.

I apologise to Leslie Pyrah who was introduced in the last issue as Keith. I have absolutely no idea where I got that from.

I was sorry to hear of the passing of Bill Boyd, not Hopalong Cassidy but the 49er who became famous a few years ago when it was found that he had been living for sixty odd years with a broken back. Bill's story was featured in many national newspapers when the discovery was made during a routine examination that he dislocated his spine when he bailed out during the Peenemunde raid in August 1943. I invited him to join the association but he never did. His sole surviving crewmate, 'Andy' Anderson is a 4T9er however.

On April 1st Ted Cachart and I were invited to RAF Wittering. 'Friend' Anthony Stannage was on Christmas Island and together with some of his ex colleagues has raised a considerable amount of money for the school and children on the island. Tony and his team have visited a number of RAF stations to raise awareness, and money, and the visit to Wittering happened to coincide with the 90th Anniversary celebrations of the RAF. The team had put on a display in one of the rooms at Wittering and this was attended by a number of senior officers and airmen. During the day the Red Arrows plus four Typhoons were touring the current RAF Stations and London and we went outside to see them fly over. One had to feel sorry for the Typhoon pilots trying to hold formation with the immaculate 'Reds'. After lunch in the Airman's Mess, during which we were joined by the Deputy Base Commander, we enjoyed an in depth examination of a Harrier. This I found most fascinating as

we were accompanied by a Pilot Officer trainee pilot who knew the aircraft inside out. On returning to the room previously mentioned Ted presented the station with a copy of 'The Dog'. Ted and I left at this point due to the longish drive home in the rush hour traffic but Tony told me later that we had missed a personal display by a Harrier...pity! Even so it was a very enjoyable day.

In the last issue of The 4T9er we included, for the Brits, a copy of the letter that I received from Austin Mitchell MP requesting us to ask our MPs to sign the Early Day Motion regarding a campaign medal for Bomber Command. Coinciding with the report on The BBMF Lancaster flying over the Derwent Dam in commemoration of the Dams Raid The Sunday Express has taken up our cause and is printing chits to be cut out and sent in demanding a medal. I appeal to you all to obtain a copy and send it in to the paper. The Express has run some successful campaigns of late and I doubt if we'll get a better chance.

A number of 'post war members' have told me that they enjoyed reading about the Kenya era. I try to strike a balance of the various times in the existence of 49' but most of the letters and articles that I receive are from WWII members. I would love to include more post war features but I need your help. If you don't write it, I can't print it!

Geoff Brunton phoned to say that he attended the Mailly le Camp Memorial Service on May 2nd along with son Michael, Michael's fiancée Nicky and Roger Bedford. Geoff and Michael returned to France to attend the VE Day Commemoration on May 8th at Ugny sur Meuse where Geoff's pal, Sgt Richard Hainsworth, is buried. Terry Atkinson and wife Ann were also present.

Paul Strong, the Head Teacher of William Farr School, Welton, Nr Lincoln, has written to advise that they are having a grand opening of their latest building project in the autumn. As many of you will know, the school is built on part of Dunholme Lodge airfield. Paul goes on to say that 4T9ers are welcome to attend this event, dates to be advised. He also says that individual 4T9ers and relations are welcome at the school at any time by prior arrangement.

I congratulate The Royal British Legion on the record sum that it raised in last year's Poppy Appeal - up 15 per cent from £26 million in 2006 to just under £30 million. It proves that the British public has still got an awareness of the Legion's work and an appreciation of the role played by our armed forces.

How times have changed. Barbara and I were in a pub the other day, there was only one other couple in the bar. They had ordered their bar food just before us. When their meals arrived there was a mistake as her gammon came with mashed potatoes, she had ordered 'jacket'. Barbara said, "I'll have that as I ordered mashed," but the waitress replied, "I can't do that". A few minutes later the chef came out and apologised and said that the girl was in tears. "She's only eighteen and can't make a decision like that." 'Only eighteen', I ask you!

As if that isn't enough I then read that Britons are depressed and traumatised-similar to being in mourning-when their favourite television series ends. "After forming bonds with TV characters, one in five viewers said that they were severely affected when the show finished. Almost a third said that they had become romantically attached to a character. More than one in five said that they felt depressed when the series finished, with those aged between 16 and 24 the most affected." Ah! It's a shame! I suggest that an army of councillors, paid for by the tax payer of course, should be made available. I remember being disappointed when 'Dick Barton, Special Agent' finished on the Light Programme but loco spotting and a growing awareness of those long haired people at school who did PT in baggy dark blue knickers with elastic at the legs (Yes we had names for them too!) soon created a diversion.

I have criticised Hollywood on a number of occasions but recently TV showed my favourite film once again. I have lost count of the number of times that I have watched 'Apollo 13' but I never tire of doing so. No doubt Tom Hanks' portrayal of Jim Lovell is a bit over the top but the story of courage, ingenuity and persistence is second to none. I always get a bit emotional when they splash down but as Barbara will tell you I 'do emotion' in a big way!

Yesterday, June 14th, I watched Trooping the Colour on TV. The immaculate drill certainly made my efforts look very amateurish. Those rifles that they use today with the huge magazine look rather tricky to handle, I'm glad that our early rifle drill was done with the .303 Lee Enfield which I enjoyed. I remember that half way through my time the Belgian FN or SLR as it was known came into service. This meant that we had to relearn the drill which was bad enough for us 'old sweats' who thought that our drill days were over but even worse, those infernal weapons had bits sticking out all over the place. On one of the rare occasions that I did a parade with one I caught the back of my thumb on the sight and had a cut which bled profusely. I stood for an hour with my life blood dripping onto the square via the rifle, hoping that I wouldn't pass out. I had been told that if you passed out and didn't smash your face on the ground it would be assumed that you were not genuine and the next day you'd be marking time outside the CO's Office! It proved that the military system of discipline and fear of repercussions overcomes common sense. I just stood there, trembling!

After The Queen and Co had returned to the palace the RAF showed what it could do. The fly past commenced with the Lancaster flanked by two Hurricanes and two Spitfires, Her Majesty showed real excitement. Pity we can't get her to back the medal campaign! The BBMF were followed by nine Typhoons and so on until 15 Tornado GR4s in immaculate diamond formation brought up the rear. I believe that there were 52 aircraft in all. Magnificent!

**'Till the next time.**

## 2008 REUNION

1st—4th June

The proceedings started in a rather disappointing manner as the BBMF Lancaster was due to fly over Petwood Hotel at 1600hrs. Due to the poor weather the aircraft landed at Wittering and so those waiting on the lawn found themselves in rather moist conditions.

Petwood' had kindly set out, at no cost to us, a suite in theatre fashion in which Malcolm Brooke set up his laptop with PA and data projector. At 2000hrs he gave a most interesting presentation describing his researches and the events that lead to him becoming involved with our Association. This was followed by a rather nervous demonstration of a computer flight simulation of a Lancaster take off and forced landing. I say nervous as I was very aware that there were many professional eyes watching, plus, I had been grounded for eighteen months and my flight engineer, Malcolm, had made his first trip only an hour previous. All went well however and then I invited Eric Jones DFC to demonstrate how he successfully completed a tour of ops. I was most impressed at the way in which he unhesitatingly called for 15 degrees of flap before taking off from Woodhall Spa. There was only one snag, on the flight simulator the control column is a joystick which includes a firing button, mainly for use when flying fighters, which fires the guns in the nose turret. Eric's index finger kept straying to this button and he succeeded in shooting up most of the airfield buildings. Fortunately he was first off otherwise we would have lost any preceding Lancasters and he would have decimated the Pathfinders. It has to be said however that for a first attempt this was a very creditable performance. Further volunteers were invited but none were forthcoming and so the audience drifted away. Miraculously there then appeared a few who were eager to try their skills away from the public gaze.

Contrary to some forecasts the Monday dawned fair. The coach departed Petwood' and inspite of a diversion through Wragby due to a road closure delivered us right on time for the Memorial Service at Fiskerton Church. I hadn't bothered to count heads as the passengers embarked but I became increasingly alarmed as the coach filled. I had booked a 54 seater, including the courier's perch, and on climbing aboard myself I found that this was the only seat available. It made the head count easy but I won't push my luck in future.

With this number plus the local congregation we had a full church. Rev. Clive Todd conducted the service, John Aldridge and Brian Taylor reading the lessons. The wreath was laid by Reg Woolgar DFC, 30 ops on Hampdens followed by a tour on Halifaxes, escorted by Ted Cachart and Harry Cowan.

Following the church service we repaired to the Airfield Memorial which was beautifully prepared as always by the Stuffins family. We were very

pleased to see Geoff and Mary there as we knew that Geoff's illness would prevent him from attending the banquet that evening. Eric Clarke, another Hampden man, laid the wreath. He was escorted by Lou Crabbe and John Aldridge. Our Padre Rev. Tony Butler read a poem that he wrote to send to his MP illustrating the reasons why a Campaign Medal should be awarded to Bomber Command. I hope to publish this in a later issue. There then followed a two minute silence, broken by Colin Cripps reciting, 'They shall not grow old...' The service closed with the Kohima Epitaph after which we embarked on the coach to travel the short distance to Fiskerton Village Hall. Here our friends had prepared a superb buffet which the gathering of around seventy people thoroughly enjoyed. Photographs of the whole party were then taken in front of the hall together with some shots of the 'Old Lags'.

My part in the proceeding nearly came to an abrupt halt. I was talking to Pam Cripps alongside the coach as the passengers climbed aboard. In front of the hall is a low wall against which we were standing. I noticed some stragglers who were not responding to calls so I decided to round them up. Still talking to Pam I swung a leg over the wall not realising that at the far side the ground is a foot or so lower. It is just as well that I am 32 inches inside leg but even so I finished with a sweating brow and a badly bent membership card!

Whilst the guests rested for the afternoon I was assisted by the trusty gang in preparing the suite for the banquet, laying place names, menus, raffle prizes etc. When we finished the whole set up looked beautiful. Where would I be without the help of the gang? As I remarked in the previous issue we had been allocated the Woodland Suite as we have outgrown the Petwood Suite. Eleven tables were prepared, each having eight or nine diners. Thus Members and Guests, 94 in all, sat down to dinner at 1930hrs.

Padre Tony Buckler said Grace and as we sat down Colin Cripps took up the mic' and made an announcement. By sheer coincidence I swear June 2nd is my birthday, strangely enough it always has been, but on this occasion it was my seventieth. (Thankfully I don't feel it.) A lovely cake was then brought in which had been made by Janet Norman. On it, in icing, Janet had skilfully depicted the Lancaster that is very special to me, EA-L, and it was distributed after the meal and was delicious. [*See photo, page 23.*]

Speeches followed with our Chairman proposing 'Guests and Ladies' to which Alan Walker replied. John Dodkins proposed 49 Squadron Association after which it was my turn. I was pleased to announce that attendance at the banquet of 94 was an increase of 35% in two years. I suggested that, "If anyone doubts that there is life in the old dog yet, then just look around you!" All categories of membership stands at 295 although we will lose 20 or so following the recent census. There is no cause for concern here though. Just look at page 2 of recent issues of The 4T9er. The healthy financial position that we inherited is



maintained although we should not be complacent about this as a drying up of donations could very quickly reverse the situation. I was pleased to thank all our friends at Fiskerton for their continued help, interest and cooperation. Honorary Friend John May, Adjutant of the Red Arrows, retires later this year and we wished him and Pat a very happy and long retirement. Our connection with the 'Reds' continues I am pleased to say as one of our latest Associate Members, Red 3 pilot Mike Ling is now a keen 4T9er. Mike was accompanied by his lovely wife Natalie and the couple charmed all who spoke to them. We were particularly honoured to have them with us as Mike had performed at Cosford Air Show the previous day and the following morning the team would fly across the Atlantic for a tour of the US and Canada. I closed by introducing and thanking my 'Crew' on whose contribution we so much depend. When I took office I never dreamed how important my selections would be. As I have said before we owe them a great deal. My selection of Barbara, or as she would have it, her selection of me, was cemented 49 ( That figure again!) years ago and we still work well together. I am so fortunate!

Next morning the bad weather returned with a vengeance as we visited the former 1 Group Station of Hemswell. This is now one of the foremost antique centres in the country and there are a large number of dealers operating there. In addition the majority of ex RAF buildings are still in good repair making this a most interesting venue. Unfortunately the continuous rain prevented a comprehensive visit and the return was brought forward to 1430hrs. I do recommend a visit, on a sunny day, should the opportunity arise.

Wednesday was a free day and was calm, sunny and warm. Fred and Harold Panton staged two taxi runs of their fabulous Lancaster at East Kirkby. A fair number of 4T9ers who had booked four nights at Petwood' were in attendance.

'Friend', Betty Grundy told me that her late husband, Bill, had been a rear gunner and she would book a trip in the Lanc in the future. Ted 'had a word' and Betty duly sat in the rear turret. This she found a most exciting and moving experience. After she had climbed over the tail spar into the turret, she said that she felt that Billy was pushing her in. I bet he was too! She commented on the small size of the ammunition, .5 in this particular Lancaster, and was amazed when I told her that Bill's guns fired .303 which we were able to see on display in the hangar. "We shoot crows with that!", she exclaimed. "Were they supposed to shoot down aeroplanes?" Yep! 'fraid so Betty!

Again the sun shone on the Thursday as we bade each other goodbye with the fervent wish that we would meet again in 2009. (7th-10th June.)

**STOP PRESS:** Just as we were closing for press I was sorry to hear that Reg Woolgar and his wife Doris were involved in an accident on their way home from the Reunion. Their car was written off and they received injuries from which Reg tells me they are making a recovery. We hope that this will be speedy and total.



**Left; Eric Clarke lays the 49 Squadron Association wreath at The Airfield Memorial escorted by Lou Crabbe and John Aldridge.**

**Right; Padre Tony Buckler leads the airfield service. In the background, left to right are; Lou Crabbe, John Aldridge and Eric Clarke.**



**Left; Your secretary thanks Eric for laying the wreath whilst your researcher furtively does his impression of Napoleon searching for his wallet!**

All photos on this and the facing page; Ed Norman



**Above left; Eric Jones DFC, right, and his trusty flight engineer, Ron Harris.  
 Above right; l-r Harry Cowan, John Beck, Eric Jones, Lou Crabbe.  
 Below; The 'Old Lags'.**





## TWO 49ERS ARE NO LONGER MISSING

On November 8th 1941 Hampden P1206 EA-Z of 49 Squadron took off from Scampton at 1714 to bomb Bocholt. It was intercepted over Holland by a ME110 piloted by Seigfried Ney, and shot down. Just after 2100hrs it crashed into a field near the village of Berkhout and burned for many hours. The bodies of the pilot, W/O Christopher Saunders DFM and the navigator Sgt. James D'Arcy were thrown clear and were recovered by the Germans and buried in the cemetery in Bergen. The bodies of the two gunners could not be recovered and sank into the soft ground with the remains of their aircraft. Sgts. Stanley Mullenger and John Kehoe lay with the aircraft until September 2007 when a Dutch salvage team led by Capt. Paul Peterson RCAF, excavated the site and recovered human remains as well as substantial pieces of the Hampden. *[See The 4T9er, November 2007, Issue 8 for accounts of the events culminating with the excavation and the recovery. Ed.]*

On May 7th 2008, A Commemorative Service for the crew was held in Petrus and Paulus Church, Bergen and during which the funeral service, with full Military Honours, for the two gunners was held. The single coffin, containing the mortal remains of the gunners and draped in the Union Flag, was borne by six SAC's of the Queen's Colour Squadron, 63 Squadron, RAF Regiment.



Photo; SAC Adam Houlston, Courtesy MoD

The service was conducted by Reverend (Squadron Leader) Tim Wright and Father Kees Groenwoud. Mr Lyn Parker, The British Ambassador to The Netherlands, read Psalm 121. The second reading, by Mr Richard Ryan, The Irish Ambassador to The Netherlands, was from Ephesians 2; 13-22. The third and final reading was from John 15; verse 9, and was read by Air Commodore Andrew Sudlow MBE BSc RAF, representing The Chief of the Air Staff. It ends; “Greater love hath no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”

Following the church service the cortege, with police escort, travelled the two kilometres to the Military Plot in Bergen General Cemetery. The coffin was borne to the graveside by the Queen’s Colour Squadron followed by the relatives of the crew and a gathering of around three hundred people including many local people and representatives of the three Dutch Armed Services.



Photo; SAC AdaM Houlston, Courtesy MoD

The ceremony at the graveside commenced thus;

“On this day, we gather here to remember in gratitude those who lost their lives, that we might have freedom and peace, and who are now at rest. For the pain they endured, that we might know that suffering may be turned into joy and hope.

Turn your deep feelings into determination as was theirs and that they died for peace, may we live for the sake of the Prince of Peace, even Jesus Christ, our Lord.”

A poem, 'Gone but never forgotten', was then read by Jackie Purser, one of the twin daughters of W/O Christopher Saunders.

The Last Post was sounded by a trumpeter of The Band of the RAF Regiment after which a two minute silence was observed.

As the coffin was lowered into the grave the unmistakable sound of Harvards could be heard and a pair of these aircraft, of the Bureau of Air Display of The Royal Netherlands Air Force, made a number of passes.

The Netherlands Army Band then played the National Anthems of Great Britain, Ireland and The Netherlands.

Official wreaths were laid followed by individual tributes. Our Chairman, Ted Cachart, laid the Association's wreath and I laid one on behalf of 4T9er Eric Clarke who was flying from Scampton at the time that P1206 went missing. Four Crosses of Remembrance, one for each member of the crew, were laid.



Photo; SAC Andrew Houlston, Courtesy MoD

**Defence Attache, Col. Jerry Heal, Royal Marines and  
Air Commodore Andrew Sudlow MBE BSc RAF.**

By happy coincidence, W/O Saunders and Sgt D'Arcy are buried at the end of a row, adjacent to The Cross of Sacrifice. Sgts Mullinger and Kehoe were laid to rest behind their comrade's graves and their headstones are now planted back to back with them. Thus, the mortal remains of the crew of Hampden P1206 are at last truly reunited.





**The headstones of W/O Saunders DFM and Sgt D'Arcy, are in the foreground.**

They are in good company as the Military Plot holds 247 graves, mostly RAF, including S/L H.M. 'Dinghy' Young DFC & Bar and five of his crew who were shot down on the way home after successfully breaching the Ruhr dams.



At the end of the ceremony I had a few words with Captain Paul Peterson and said, "You must have the best job in the Air Force." Paul replied, "I love my work, especially when I see this", as he turned and looked across at the grave and the families.







## THE UNVEILING OF THE BERKHOUT MEMORIAL

From the cemetery we travelled to the farm of the Schilder family at Berkhout in whose field the remains had lain for sixty-six years.

Here a buffet lunch was enjoyed during which an account of the events both in 1941 and more recently was made by the Mayor of Koggenland, Leoni Sipkiss. Further addresses by family members and officials followed.



Photo; SAC Adam Houlston, Courtesy MoD



Folded flags of Great Britain and Ireland were presented to the families of Sgts Mullinger and Kehoe respectively by their country's Ambassadors.

We next went to the roadside memorial, just outside the farm, from where the crash site could be seen.

Behind the memorial were flag poles bearing



the flags of Great Britain, Ireland and The Netherlands, The members of The Queen's Colour Squadron were drawn up on either side. It was noticeable that all were wearing the Iraq Campaign Medal.

Mayor Sipkiss performed the unveiling of the memorial which comprises a brass plaque surmounted by one of Hampden P1206's bent propellers.

The Last Post was sounded and two minutes silence observed after which wreaths and tributes were laid.



Photo; Ed Norman



Thus ended the ceremonial on this bittersweet day, a day on which the good people of Holland once again showed their gratitude for the liberation from tyranny of their country. We in turn thank them.



Photo; SAC Adam Houlston, Courtesy MoD.

**88 year old Margaret Walsh-Kehoe , proudly wearing her 49 Squadron badge, thanks one of the young airmen who earlier had borne her brother's coffin.**



Photo; SAC Adam Houlston, Courtesy MoD.

**The crowds are gone. The grave is filled, the headstones erected.  
After the activity and ceremonial of the day,  
a day on which it was a privilege to be present,  
the cemetery once again falls silent.**

**AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN  
AND IN THE MORNING,  
WE WILL REMEMBER THEM.**





**2008 REUNION**  
Members and guests, ninety-four in all,  
attended the Banquet.





## 2008 REUNION MISCELLANY

**Clockwise from top left; Betty Grundy had her dream come true at East Kirkby on the Wednesday. Her late husband Billy was a rear gunner. - Old Hampden men, Eric Clarke and Reg Woolgar exchange reminiscences after 66 years. - The beautiful cake that Janet Norman made for your secretary's 70th birthday. - The real power behind 49SA! L-r; Janet Norman, Pam Cripps, Barbara Parr. - Aircraft ancient and modern at Coningsby.**

All this & facing page photos; Ed Norman

## READER'S LETTERS

*Former corporate jet and bush medical services pilot, Bob Barnes, e-mailed from Australia:*

"If I could share with you my only ride in a Lincoln, January 1958 (which I remember because I started my flying training in a DH-82 on 15th December courtesy of an ATC Flying Scholarship). I was a 15 year old CDT SGT on work experience at RAAF Base East Sale, about 100 miles east of Melbourne. It was home to the RAAF Schools of Navigation, Photography, and other training which involved Vampires and a squadron of Lincolns. I forget whether they were short or long nose aircraft. I was assigned to the Armoury Section and we were fusing 12.5lb smoke and flash bombs for a training flight next day. It was very hot; 100F +. However, idiocy was alive and well because every half hour or so a dreadful LAC would give everyone a cold water spray with one of the fire fighting hoses. Never mind the fused and unfused bombs littering the area!

"Next day, with two other ATC cadets, we heard the flight briefing from the CO (which took only a few seconds, along the line of, 'don't bend the b...r'. On arrival at the aircraft I was given the mid-upper and its two 20mm Hispano cannons. Having been in the Armoury Section I was slightly familiar with the turret and its bits and pieces so I powered it up, rotating the Hispanos. Fortunately, there was no ammunition aboard or I just might have been stupid enough to 'have a go' later in the flight.

"When we were airborne I realized why we needed ear protection; was it noisy? Wow! Then I saw that we had levelled off at about 200 feet and I remember thinking 'Sgt. Ratfeatures must be frightened of height'. About ten minutes later near Welshpool, on the Bass Strait, the aircraft turned very steeply and went down to about 100 feet, circling a small hill. Power up, rate of turn up, 'g' up but no climbing up, just me going down in my harness. The seats were obviously made for an adult wearing clothing against very low temperatures, and even while I had my harness tightened to the maximum I started slipping out of my harness and off the seat until one of the harness belts caught me under the chin, stopping any further movement. Unfortunately, the high 'g' turn continued and I could not breathe. I do not know how long I was in that position - probably less than a minute - and I cannot recall the moment when the aircraft resumed straight and level at 100 feet. By now we were heading northeast along the 90 Mile Beach which is longer than that but with beautiful sand, ocean surf and beach fishing. Still at high power the aircraft lost altitude so I turned the turret to see what was happening ahead. The pilot levelled off at about 30 feet, going like the thundering clappers along the water's edge. There must have been a dozen or so beach fishermen and on our arrival they threw their bodies and fishing rods onto the sand to avoid being hit by #2 and #3 props.



“Up to 1000 feet, so I later heard, bomb doors open and over Lake Dutson I saw the RAAF rescue launch which was towing, at full speed, a little device that looked like a submarine periscope 'spout'. The aim of the exercise was to drop the 12.5lb smoke and flash bombs on to the 'periscope' AT 90 DEGREES TO THE PATH OF THE PERISCOPE. The bomb aimer did well, as I recall. That was nearly two hours flying and the last time I had anything to do with a Sergeant Pilot. Fortunately they are an extinct animal these days.”

***Another one from Australia, Graham Bairnsfather sent the following by e-mail:***

“Another wonderful issue, I especially liked the article about the V2 and your thought provoking comments. Well done! [Editorial, *The 4T9er*, April 2008. Ed.] I enclose two photos that my Uncle Bruce took of a V2 in Trafalgar Square. I think that it is the only way that Londoners liked to see the weapon, pointing up and stationary. I don't know the date of the photos but assume it was an intact one recovered from Germany.”



*Pleased to hear that you enjoy The 4T9er Graham. Did anyone else see this V2 in London? Maybe it is the one now housed in the Imperial War Museum? Ed.*

***Ed Smith e-mailed from Canada regarding an ongoing discussion:***

“Re page 27, The 4T9er, Issue 10 re explanation of "yellow spot" on back of pilot's seat indicated only piece of armour plate on Lanc. This is a misconception as there was also a piece of armour plate in FN 20 (120) rear turret. The plate measured approximately 12x6x1 inches and was situated under the canvas (Brown) soft? seat. This was, of course, to prevent Flack from entering the 'wrecked um' and on upwards. TRUE; it saved me over Hamburg , Germany, 1st Nov 44 (Meerbeck Oil Plant). It did not save me however from a large dose of piles by tour end.”

***Bill Pyrah e-mailed:***

“My contribution on Scampton [*The 4T9er, February 2008, Issue 9. Ed.*] brought me a letter from George Wood of Eynsham. He was posted to 49 Squadron in November 1940, and his first op. was with Jack Morphett in P2145 EA-B on 17th December 1940. On return the weather closed in, and short of fuel they made an emergency landing at Tangmere - a fighter 'drome with a short runway. They overran and ended up on a sunken road, and all four returned to Scampton by rail. I answered his letter to find out more, but I've heard nothing from him. Have you heard any news of him recently? I was hoping to get some info on what has been bugging me ever since EA-B failed to return.”

*Sadly George died suddenly a few days after writing to Bill. He is remembered in this issue. Ed.*

***Regular correspondent, Eric Clarke wrote:***

“You remember that Jorgen Jorgensen invited me to view his website for his article on the 'English Airmen' which I did and found it quite fascinating, a saga spanning 60 years, and I also realised that I had an affinity of a sort since my son Raymond married a Danish girl from that area and were married in Graasten in 1968, and the mention of Flensburg, just over the Danish/German border being bombed immediately brought to mind my operation to Flensburg on 18<sup>th</sup> August 1942 our target being the submarine yards.

I was with F/L J K M Cooke DFC in Lancaster Mk1 W4113 as the Wop.Ag, taking off at 2100 hrs. and the incident that still haunts me is that, over the North Sea, on course for our target, Sgt Plant the rear gunner reported that he could see a light off the starboard wing – panic, of a sort !! until it was found that we were flying with navigation lights on.

“On the starboard fuselage wall to the right of my position was an electrical panel at the bottom of which was a row of square section toggle switches one being for the navigation lights and the switch was in the 'on' position. It was located by the Flight Engineer and switched off and our operation completed.

“On course for our target with Navigation lights on !!!!!????? The outcome was that a modification (electrical) was carried out on all Lancasters. A small

hole was drilled in the square sectioned toggle, a wire passed through which anchored the switch permanently in the off position henceforth the navigation lights only being operated from the Pilots' position.

"In 1997? I attended Sheffield City Council, who had adopted our 49 Squadron, along with the Author John Ward and Doug Saxton, when John presented a copy of his now famous 49 Squadron history – Beware of the Dog at War- to the Lord Mayor. A splendid occasion and I felt it an honour to be invited as a 4T9er to join the presentation group. When I learned that Doug was an aircraft electrician I recited the incident to him and he remembered carrying out the required modification.

"But the question still remains!! How did the switch come to be 'on'??? and a suggestion was proffered that my parachute harness could have caught it on one of the frequent occasions when I got up from my seat to operate the Loop aerial or stand in the astrodome look out position, my harness brushing against the panel. Interestingly, I was never officially interviewed and interrogated on the incident but at dispersal we discussed it as a crew and F/L Cooke spoke to the dispersal 'Chiefie'

"Are there any records still available which might endorse the incident? On one occasion, my close friend Sgt Pat Maloney accused me ??? of being the cause for grounding all 5 Group Lancasters Mk1 for 48 hours. True or false ??"

***Also a regular correspondent, Ron Eeles wrote:***

"I have read a couple of newly published books. Both were a super read although as to be expected the Berlin Airlift was somewhat statistical:

BERLIN AIRLIFT– THE SALVATION OF A CITY.

By John Sutherland and Diane Canwell

ISBN 978 1 84415 420 3 Published by Pen and Sword Books Price-£19.99

MEN OF AIR

By Kevin Wilson

ISBN 978 0 297 85321 3 Published by Weidenfeld and Nicholson

"Issue 10 of the magazine was of considerable interest with regard to the tending of graves at Oosterbeek War Cemetery. My grandson (age 14) is going on a school trip to Holland in early July and visits include this cemetery, Arnhem and other sites of interest. I will raise the subject of these graves with the organisers of the trip in case a visit is possible.

"I am not very active these days and undertake regular visits for progress, tests etc. It reminds me of the snag lists we used to have with training aircraft-one difficulty after another."

*I am sure that like me our readers are delighted that such a trip is being undertaken by the youngsters. We wish them every success. However, I have advised Ron that the graves in question are not in the Arnhem Military Cemetery but at the north end of the Renkum (Oosterbeek) General Cemetery*

*which faces the Military Cemetery. The disaster of Arhem was still a year away when the Cole crew were shot down. I'm sorry to hear that Ron is less than 100 % and hope that his 'snag list' is soon signed off. Ed.*

***From North Wales Allan Brown wrote:***

"I was reading with interest Archie Ross' e-mail [*Readers Letters, The 4T9er April 2008, Ed.*] I have a photograph taken by myself on Christmas Island of airmen working on what I believe was a Dakota engine. I do not have their names. If Archie is interested would you give him my e-mail or address. I have had the photograph fifty years and I still don't know their names!"

***New Associate Member, Greg Burton, great nephew of P/O Bill Myers, lost 24th October 1942 e-mailed from Brisbane:***

".....I have visited Bill's grave, as have most of "my" generation of the family and have photos from the funeral when a small white cross was in place. In fact, there is quite a bit of 1942 49 squadron information that might be of interest so I'll scan it and send it to Malcolm.

"Bills mother put together quite a comprehensive album, probably after he died. Today the name Bill Myers is alive and well. Before him, his great grandfather, grandfather and uncle were all named Bill Myers. My aunt, born about the time of his death, is known to all as Billie, her son is Bill, another cousin's 6 year old son is Bill Myers.

"24th October was always a special day in our family. We'd get picked up from school, as opposed to getting the train and bus home, and the whole extended clan would gather at great grandma's house for "Bill's Anniversary". His portrait sat on a corner table, "Bills last leave" photo was on the sideboard next to a photo of the crew and his DFM. We all knew him although he was long gone.

"Ray Lawrence's mother and great-grandma would correspond regularly. The story from the website of their last flight has now been circulated amongst our family and has created some great interest so your team's efforts mean a lot to us....."

***Jack Shearing has written:***

"....I expect you know that I have been helping John Ward to make a chart to name the personnel on two squadron photographs taken at Syerston in May 1945 and Mepal in April 46. In addition I believe the Syerston photo was on display at the last Squadron Dinner in the hope that more names would be forthcoming. So far we have 60 names on the Syerston list and 28 on the Mepal. The Syerston photo was taken a few days after VE Day, not the best time for instructions to be followed. I wasn't on the photo because I was on a 48 because my dad had returned from a PoW camp. Apart from the senior ranks sitting in the front row every one else was in 'Dog's Dinner Order'. If only they had been in crews!...."

***F/L Gary Mennell was very involved with 49 SA and in particular with Hampden P1206. Unfortunately his posting from Scampton to High Wycombe came just at the wrong time for him to attend the funeral in Holland. In reply to my e-mail to him Gary replied:***

“I’ve only seen the media pictures of the funeral, there was however an excellent article in the Telegraph. Unfortunately, the date was the same as my check in my new job and whilst my new boss was extremely keen for me to go (and would have paid for it!), this was about the only day this year when I couldn’t go. Part of my check was to scramble a QRA Typhoon from Coningsby at around the time the funeral was taking place. As I scrambled the Typhoon, I thought of the funeral and mentally dedicated the launch to the crew of P1206. I was very pleased to see that they got a proper flypast as well, the Harvards were a very appropriate choice.”

***At the reunion Brian Taylor told me that Cosford’s Lincoln RF398, which we featured on the cover of the April issue of The 4T9er, appears in his logbook even though it was not a 49 Squadron machine.***

***Robert Hogg e-mailed:***

“Re. Early Day Motion on behalf of Austin Mitchell. I carried out his wishes, wrote to P.M. Brown, and M.P.s in my area, also Leader of the Opposition, D. Cameron. Received acknowledgements from all, except Mr. A. Mitchell. I can tell you, our P.M. & Government are not in favour, in fact, The P.M. & Government has nothing to do with this. D. Cameron has forbidden his troops in Upper and Lower Chambers to vote for this Motion. The only organisation that expressed any enthusiasm for the campaign was the "Scottish Daily Express". Everyone appears to be more concerned with casualties in Iraq & Afganistan than the 50,000 Bomber Command Aircrew, I Repeat 50,000 that gave their lives in WW2 without any publicity.”

*As reported in the Editorial the Sunday Express is also mounting a campaign. Ed.*

## **CAN YOU HELP?**

***I have received an e-mail from a French Primary School teacher who is setting a project for his pupils to investigate aircrew who crashed in the district. Almost 500 aircraft from both sides came down in the Oise District of Northern France. One 49 Squadron aircraft, brand new Lancaster PB195, EA-P, was one of these. The crew were on their 17th op. which was to St Leu D’Esserent (Criel). Does anyone remember; F/O HF Dod, Sgt VA Keen, F/S N Gordon, Sgt L Horner, Sgt BR Scott, F/S JL Cox, P/O LR Truscott RCAF?***

***Ted Cachart researched the numbers of the Hinds, see last issue of The 4T9er, and concluded that none served with 49 Squadron. The same can be said of the Mosquito.***

**Tom Bennett wrote:**

“....It’s about the ‘deckers’ query [*The 4T9er*, April 2008]. Being the proud wearer of the ‘Flying A...hole’ (not many of us left now, but quite a strength of them on 617 Sqn. from the early days until well into WWII!)... we underwent the full bombing and gunnery courses prior to the introduction of the separate ‘bomb aimer’ and ‘navigator’ categories, as you are no doubt aware.

I had recollection that the ‘weapon’, which I never saw but which was mentioned in my bombing course, was called a ‘dechseln’, but that is by the way, and the word does not figure in my German-English dictionary! It consisted of a series of separate small celluloid squares, in which were embedded a substance which combusted when exposed to air. The squares were immersed in liquid and apparently poured out down the flare chute, or some such orifice..over the target. As far as I can recall the aim was to set light to large areas where British Intelligence (?) felt there were arms dumps. I can’t recall if this was prior to the introduction of the ubiquitous 4lbs incendiary...but the ‘10-7-41’ dateline would be a help there.

“I do recall that our instructor did say that any German forester who picked one of these up and put it in his back-pocket as a war souvenir very quickly had cause to regret his action!

“Re the ‘yellow spot’ behind the pilot’s seat....perhaps that was to identify the armour plate more rapidly for maintenance purposes...can’t imagine it was to help the aim of any myopic German night-fighter pilot, in true British fashion!

“.....P.S. Is the ‘Leicester Airfield’ the old ‘RAF Desford’? [*Editorial, The 4T9er*, April 2008, Ed.] I flunked my pilot’s course there in spring 1941 but was recommended for Observer training on the strength of my classroom results and the rest, as they say, is HISTORY!...and great German regret!!”

*By coincidence we ‘Back Page Boys’ were recently discussing the meaning of ‘Razzling’, which Ed Norman had found mention of in the ORB. It was concluded that it referred to the dropping of celluloid strips as described by Tom so maybe the ‘weapons’ were known as ‘deckers’, as Tom says, and the act of dropping them as ‘razzling’. During our visit to East Kirkby following the reunion, Ted asked one of the two leading engineers what the yellow circle signified. Without hesitation his reply was, “Gas detection”. I suggest that we can now take that as the definitive answer. Regarding the Leicester airfield, it was not Desford as that has been covered for many years by a huge plant building Caterpillar Tractors. I had occasion to visit there on many occasions when I had a day job. Ed.*

***In this section in Issue 10, Mike Ling asked if anyone knew his grandfather, Flight Engineer James Parkinson. Geoff Brunton responded that ‘Jim’ gave him a lift from Syerston to Newark on his motorbike and also attended his wedding. At the reunion banquet I therefore seated Mike and Geoff together, also with Ken Read, and I understand that an interesting evening ensued.***



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<b>Wed 9th July</b>	<b>11.00am &amp; 1.30pm</b>
<b>Wed 16th July</b>	<b>11.00am &amp; 1.30pm</b>
<b>Sat 19th July</b>	<b>1.30pm &amp; 4.00pm</b>
<b>Sun. 20th July</b>	<b>Rover Car Rally</b>
<b>Wed 23rd July</b>	<b>11.00am &amp; 1.30pm</b>
<b>Sat 26th July</b>	<b>1.30pm &amp; 4.00pm</b>

<b>Wed 6th Aug</b>	<b>11.00am &amp; 1.30pm</b>
<b>Wed 13th Aug</b>	<b>11.00am &amp; 1.30 pm</b>
<b>Wed 20th July</b>	<b>11.00am &amp; 1.30pm</b>
<b>Sat 23rd Aug</b>	<b>1.30pm &amp; 4.00 pm</b>
<b>Mon 25th Aug</b>	<b>1.30pm &amp; 4.00pm</b>
<b>Wed 27th Aug</b>	<b>11.00am &amp; 1.30pm</b>

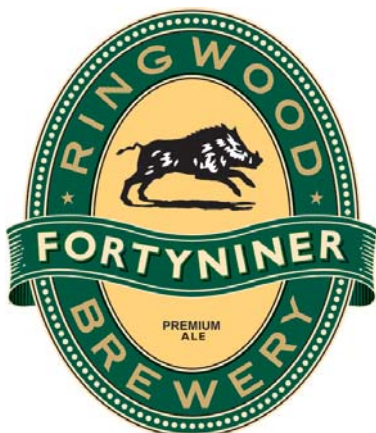
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