

The 4T9er

LIFE IN THE OLD DOG YET!

**The 49 Squadron Association Magazine
October 2008 Issue 12**



Photo; Eric van der Meiden

**The Memorial at Boerdonk, Holland, to the crew of Lancaster ED497, lost
on June 17th 1943. It was unveiled and dedicated on June 14th 2008**

IN MEMORIAM

**K. van der Heide E. M. Webb C. Chandler
T. Hawkins R. Keen**

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

WELCOME TO:

NEW MEMBER

Anthoni Hollinsworth

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Dawn Webb Mike Alexander

NEW FRIENDS

Steve Pepper Ivor Ford Collin Beesley

NEW HONORARY FRIENDS

William Chorley Mervyn Hallam

RESIGNED

W/C 'Paddy' Mahon Bill Baird



Tragically, names continue to be added to The National Memorial at Alrewas.

EDITORIAL

As always I open by thanking all of you who have sent correspondence and donations since the last issue. Without the former there would be no magazine as we now know it and without the latter the same would apply to the Association. I hope that you will understand that it is virtually impossible for me to reply to all correspondence personally, much as I would like to, but I'm afraid that the Association Secretary cannot afford to employ a secretary!

Hitherto, with a couple of exceptions, The 4T9er has been printed by Ted Cachart. Sadly, Ted is no longer able to do this so we are now using a printing company. This unfortunately has increased the cost to a point that is barely sustainable, the July issue of The 4T9er cost £1-20 per copy in printing cost alone although it did contain more colour pages than normal due to the special coverage of the funeral. As the cost of colour printing is greater than black and white I have decided to limit the number of colour features and convert, where acceptable, colour pictures to monochrome. I hope that this will not detract from your enjoyment of the magazine. I could simplify the format but I see this as a last resort. I will keep a close check on printing costs and regularly review the situation. There is another way by which printing costs can be significantly reduced. Quite a few of our members receive their copy by e-mail. If you are on broadband and can accept attachments of around 2Mb then please consider this option as it also saves on postage costs (and envelope stuffing time). In the meantime I'm sure that you will join me in thanking Ted for his past efforts.

The 2009 reunion will be held as usual at Petwood Hotel, Woodhall Spa from June 7th to 10th. Our Remembrance Service and banquet will take place on Monday 8th. Booking forms will be sent out with issue 13 of The 4T9er, probably in January. This brings me on to a matter that has caused me concern since I started organising the reunion. It is a sad fact that we are entering a critical phase in the Association's history and with it the possible future of reunions as we know them. Petwood Hotel allocate us around 35 rooms per reunion of which only 5 or 6 are singles. That is nearly their full compliment of single rooms. Last year we had 13 single guests which meant that eight had to be accommodated in twin or double rooms. I fear that the number of single requirements will grow in the future. For instance, a couple sadly becomes a single, that single still wishes to attend and decides to bring a companion. Result - a double occupied room has become a requirement for two singles. Not only does this reduce the number of guests that we can accommodate, which will result in increased costs, but Petwood Hotel, being a commercial concern and therefore needing to make a profit, will sooner or later limit us in the number of single guests occupying double rooms. Whilst you might quite rightly say that we spend a considerable amount of money during the four days of our reunion it is apparent that they can fill the rooms if we are not there as I

have already been asked if I can release any of the rooms which have been allocated to us for 2009. I must stress that Petwood have been most understanding in the past and have not made any comment as yet but it cannot be long before we reach their viable limit. This will leave us with a few options. 1) To prioritise in favour of duos once our allocation of single rooms is booked up. 2) To book singles into alternative accommodation in Woodhall Spa. 3) To ask singles where possible to share a twin room with their companion. I know that on occasions in the past Tom asked if any single men would be prepared to share a twin room. I have agonised over the wording that I should use on this matter and I sincerely hope that I have not given the impression that single guests are not welcome. This is a matter that sooner or later will become critical, hopefully not this year but it will come.

On October 5th I received a recorded telephone message which said, "My father died last Friday." Unfortunately there were no further details given and if you can elaborate for me I would be most grateful.

It is with sadness that I record the passing of Ernest Webb DFC. Although he preferred to be addressed, Ernest, he was best known to 4T9ers as Ernie. He joined the squadron in August 1943 and was awarded the DFC on completing his tour. We will miss him terribly at future reunions, a true gentle man in all meanings of the term. Tom Hawkins, with whom I have exchanged many interesting e-mails, died in Australia after a short illness. I shall miss our light hearted exchanges. Associate Member Connie Chandler died on August 26th. Connie was the widow of 'Chan' Chandler whose book 'Rear Gunner' was referred to in the last issue of The 4T9er. I understand that Connie compiled this book from Chan's notes which may explain the reference to George Wood as 'Jock'. Honorary Friend, Klass van der Heide researched extensively the air war over Holland. Ron Keen was an armourer at Scampton and Fiskerton.

Another reminder of the passing years, if one is necessary, is the resignation of some of our members due to failing mental or physical health. Our thoughts are with them and their loved ones.

We welcome new Member Anthoni Hollinsworth who has the good fortune to live in Cyprus. Following Central Gunnery School at Leconfield Anthoni served at Wittering and Upwood.

Having reported the passing of Ernest Webb I am pleased to say that Dawn has joined us as an Associate Member. We look forward to enjoying her company at future reunions. Mike Alexander was born a few months before his father, Sgt L.G. Alexander, was killed whilst flying with 49 Squadron.

New 'Friend', Steve Pepper, is a co-organiser of The Victory Air Show each September at his farm near Leicester. Proposed by Lou Crabbe, Steve has already attended a reunion and has a keen interest in the squadron. Ivor Ford is

the stepson of, and was proposed by, John Dodkins. Ivor has already attended two reunions. Collin Beesley is the husband of John's step-daughter.

New Honorary Friend Bill Chorley was proposed by Eric Read. Bill is well known for his books listing Fighter and Bomber Command losses which are a constant source of reference to us in our researches. Mervyn Hallam is the curator of the museum at RAF Scampton and is actively involved in the 49 Squadron content there. He was proposed by myself.

Two items in July's issue of The 4T9er have given me food for thought. Seeing Margaret Walsh-Kehoe at her brother's funeral and Greg Burton's letter on page 28 caused me to reflect on the terrible loss to the families that the death of a young son, or daughter, created. I can identify with Greg's relations as my uncle's crew photograph was on my grandparent's sideboard for as long as I can remember. His photograph hung on the lounge wall and his medals hung in the cabinet. I know that they never truly came to terms with the death of their only son. For every death of the 55,000 there were probably four or more people whose lives were shattered. That is more than a quarter of a million people. Next time that you bow your head in remembrance may I suggest that you also spare a moment's thought for them?

Our Web Master has expanded our website even more and now includes a WWI and Post WWII Roll of Honour and in a similar way to the WWII R.o.H. includes where possible photographs of individuals, graves and cemeteries. If you are able to supply any of these then please send them to Malcolm.

Following the report on the funeral and memorial unveiling in July's The 4T9er I am pleased to be able to include the report on a further unveiling in Holland, see pages 8 & 9. I have often commented on the devotion shown by people of countries that were overrun during the war whilst in the U.K. there is a kind of apathy. It seems that freedom is only truly appreciated by those who know what it is to lose it.

Having said that, it has been widely reported in the national press that a Bomber Command Memorial is to be unveiled in London. So far I have heard of three sites, The Embankment near the Battle of Britain Memorial, near Lords Cricket Ground and Regents Park. A large fund raising event is to take place at IWM Duxford, adjacent to the Lancaster, on November 29th. This is to take the form of signing session which will be attended by many Bomber Command veterans. If you wish to join the signing team then get in touch with Steve Bond, telephone no; 01908 607349.

I was most interested to read in the daily press that an exhaustive investigation has been carried out by a team of scholars and military historians on the true death toll of the Dresden Raids. During the war the Nazi propaganda machine published a figure of 200,000. More recently a far right political party in

Germany has claimed it to be 500,000. The investigation has shown that the true figure is 25,000. Interesting!

In August I was amazed to read that Sir Arthur 'Bomber' Harris was placed fifth behind Nelson, Montgomery, Wellington and Richard The Lionheart in a poll to determine Britain's top war hero. Behind him came Henry V, Kitchener and Colonel 'H' Jones. The report did not state whether a list was issued on which votes should be cast but never the less it was a pleasant surprise. However, there is always a 'however' with this old cynic, the poll, commissioned by the United Kingdom National Defence Association, was carried out amongst 1,006 adults. Not very comprehensive in a country of 60 million inhabitants! Probably more by the time that you read this!

I was interested to see that the internet petition proposing a National Remembrance Day for The Fallen and Our Nation had the backing of half a million signatures. So people really do care about our armed forces! Then the cynic in me surfaced again - the petition was for a new bank holiday!

It has been published in the local press that Fred and Harold Panton have approved the return to the air of their wonderful Lancaster, Just Jane. I understand that this announcement is premature and that the matter is 'Under consideration.' We congratulate Fred and Harold on being awarded the Air League's Quill Medal in recognition of their splendid work at East Kirkby. Any acknowledgement of their achievements is richly deserved.

The crew got quite excited recently when we received copies from a WWI logbook. This belonged to Harry James Bennett who was killed in 1918 whilst flying with 49 Squadron. It was sent in by his nephew, Ian Bennett. The logbook was accompanied by a history of Harry's career and we are pleased to present these on pages 15-17.

The fly over of the BBMF Lancaster could not take place at the Petwood Hotel on the first day of the reunion due to bad weather. Those of you who braved the moist conditions in the hope that it would arrive will gather no consolation from the fact that earlier in the day the BBMF trio performed a fly over at the Gloucester and Warwickshire Railway in warm sunshine. (See photograph on page 20.) This was arranged with artist David Shepherd who owns the black engine number 92203 and who can be seen in the cab.

Since the last issue went to press there have been two significant events. Firstly it was announced that the Red Arrows are to move to Waddington in 2011. Whilst they will continue to practice in 'Scampton air space' one can't help but wonder about the future of RAF Scampton. Secondly, the Vulcan made its first public air display appearance at the Waddington Air Show in July but sadly it was not able to fulfil its air show commitments due to technical problems

which meant that £50,000 revenue was lost. At the time of writing a major sponsor has not been found, and is unlikely that one will be in the present economic climate. It is a distinct possibility that its flying days are over.

By the time that you read this the Adjutant of The Red Arrows and Honorary Friend W/O John May MBE will have walked out of RAF Scampton gates for the last time in uniform. We all wish John and Pat (Still got 4 years to do!) a long and happy retirement.

On occasions through life I have wondered what are the most common 'last words'. When the sudden burst of noise and mayhem struck as cannon shells ripped through the aircraft fuselage what was the instant verbal reaction? Similarly I have wondered how I would react. Well I almost had a chance to find out in early September. I was fishing the River Severn from a steep bank which due to its gradient had dried out after the recent floods although the river was still three to four feet above normal summer level, fast flowing and a dirty brown colour. My line became snagged on bushes to my left where the bank slope was much more shallow. Without thinking I tried to reach the snag but as the shallow slope had not drained it was covered with slippery, stinking mud. My feet went from under me and I slowly slid, face downwards, into the river. As the water reached my waist I muttered what could well have been my last words but fortunately I managed to grab some undergrowth and slowly pulled myself out. My potential last words? Not for me the profound utterances of King Charles I, "If 'tis to be done it is well that 'tis done quickly", or Nurse Edith Cavell, "There is no hatred in my heart". (May not be word perfect!) No, I'm afraid that mine were profane rather than profound, "Oh sh*t!", but I bet that I was not the first by many thousands!

We still hold a stock of 49 Squadron enamel lapel badges; 3/4" (19mm) at £3.50 and 1 1/4" (30mm) at £4.00. Please add £1.50 for post and packing overseas. These are available from me, address on back cover.

My thanks go to the 'back page crew' for their tireless work on behalf of the Association and to our 'Colonial Secretaries', Ed Smith and Bob Barnes who live in Canada and Australia respectively. Oops! Nearly forgot Barbara!

We wish you and yours a very happy Christmas and New Year.

'Til the next time.

***WHEN MAKING OUT CHEQUES TO THE ASSOCIATION
PLEASE ALWAYS MAKE THEM PAYABLE TO:***

49 SA PETWOOD.

THE UNVEILING OF THE BOERDONK MEMORIAL

JUNE 14th 2008

By Erik van der Meiden

This morning it is Saturday June 14th. I get into my car and drive to the Woensel Cemetery in Eindhoven. At 14.00 hrs there is the unveiling of the memorial to the crew of ED497 which crashed at Boerdonk on June 17th 1943. The little village of Boerdonk is 45 minutes from Eindhoven. But I want to go first to the Woensel Cemetery to lay flowers on the graves of the fourteen men who served with 49 Squadron. This will be flowers on the graves of crew of ED497 and also on the graves of crew Lancaster ME675 which crashed near Lage Mierde on June 22nd 1944.

My wife Anne and I bought some flowers this morning at the market and made fourteen nice bundles and into each we placed a card of the 49 Squadron. I arrived at Woensel Cemetery and look at the graves. They are kept very well. It is going to rain but I am armed with an umbrella and raincoat. I lay flowers on the graves. The graves are spread about this local civil cemetery but I can find them all. I look at the headstones, read the lines and look at the ages. The youngest was twenty years old and the eldest thirty seven. Seventeen years between them. When I was twenty I was a student, had a happy life and a future to live for. When I was thirty seven I was happily married, founded a family, and lived in peace. I was not there during the war when their lives stopped but I know what they are missing. I take some photographs in the rain and head to Boerdonk to be on time for the meeting.

In Boerdonk people come together in the Hall called 'de Hazenpot'. Many of the older people living in Boerdonk were there in June 1943. I meet some people and they tell me their stories. The crash of Lancaster ED497 is always with these people even sixty five years after the war. In Holland we have, every year, on May 4th our commemoration of WWII. In the evening there are silent marches to cemeteries where victims of the war are buried. At 20.00 hrs there is a two minute silence all over Holland to remember our civilian and military victims. I think the monument of Lancaster ED497 will be the place where the villagers will go every year during the evening of May 4th to commemorate WWII.

From de Hazenpot we all go to the monument. Boerdonk is part of the municipality of Veghel and there, the Alderman, Mr Kerkhof is speaking. Lieutenant Lee Blackburn of the British Embassy also gives a speech. The daughter of the farmer where ED497 crashed speaks on behalf of her father Mr Penninx. It is clear that the crash has made a great impression to the people of Boerdonk. Finally, Andrew MacDonald gives his speech. His speech is a personal and emotional story. His Great Uncle Flight Lieutenant Charles Dunnet was the pilot of Lancaster ED497. The monument is unveiled by

Andrew and Mr Kerkhof and is blessed by Squadron Leader Revd. Tim Wright. The 'Last Post' is played and followed by a one minute silence. Then both National Anthems are played by the local band. Wreaths are laid by Mr Kerhof, Lieutenant Lee Blackburn, Andrew MacDonald and Erik van der Meiden on behalf of the 49 Squadron Association and the inhabitants of Boerdonk. Following the wreath laying the participants are invited to have a drink in the village.

The children of the St.Nicolaas school at Boerdonk are going to look after the monument.



Photo; Eric van der Meiden

Following the unveiling of the memorial in Holland to his Great Uncle's crew, from Australia Andrew MacDonald sent the following e-mail:-

Yes, Holland went very well indeed and all the Family were well received by the Locals. It rained a little beforehand which worried me but thankfully it stopped for the service and the remainder of the day. The Dutch people have really gone up in my estimation. Magnificent people. I had one lady come up to me and hold my hands tightly as she spoke to me in her native language...I didn't understand a word of it but she was so lovely, it didn't seem to matter. I think she was telling me about the Bomber Boys and the impact they had on the local people many moons ago. One particular night, I walked out on my own to where my Great Uncle was found...a field close by. I did so at dusk and remained there for a while. It was an odd experience...no spirits....no presence but a sense of completion. It's all done now. My own personal journey is almost at an end...only our Crews' Flight Engineer has eluded me but I hope one day to trace his Family and tell them of the spot overlooking the fields where the Lancaster came to grief. It is a beautiful location.

I am incredibly proud of my Great Uncle and his Boys and I only wish that they had lived full lives.....such a waste.

FLYING LEGENDS

On July 12th and 13th the annual Flying Legends Air Show was held at Duxford, Cambridgeshire. The Royal International Air Tattoo at Fairford was also scheduled to take place on these dates. This unfortunate clash was expected to dilute attendances but the Fairford event was cancelled due to waterlogged car parks. Fairford's loss was Duxford's gain as the gates were closed each day around mid-day due to the car parks being full.

Fortunately the bad weather of the previous week gave way to light cloud and sunshine, thus the flying display went ahead without detriment. Some of the highlights were; eight Spitfires in a tail chase and two B17s escorted by two 'Little Friends', P51 Mustangs. As with all recent Flying Legends displays the flying closed with a mass fly over, a Balbo, this year being 22 aircraft. The sound of 24 piston engines was exciting to say the least.

Colin Smith of Vector Fine Art Prints had brought together an impressive array of WWII veterans to sign, in particular, copies of Nicolas Trudgian's new book, *Aviation Sketchbook* (see facing page), which was launched at the show. Amongst those signing were 4T9ers; Geoff Brunton, John Dodkins, Eric Clarke, George Cook, Lou Crabbe, Ken Read, John Aldridge and John Langston. The latter was 49 Squadron's penultimate C.O. and wore two hats as besides serving with 49' he had served during the war with 617' who were also well represented. Battle of Britain pilots such as 'Stapme' Stapleton were also present. He shot down 'The one that got away', Franz Von Werra. The US was represented by Donald Strait who finished the war as a major in command of a squadron. He flew Thunderbolts then Mustangs and had 131/2 confirmed kills, finally retiring as a major-general. Also from America was 'Ace' Major Alden P. Rigby.

Other 4T9ers who attended the show were Ted Cachart, John Ward, Colin Cripps, Ed Norman, Jo Cockburn and your secretary plus Honorary Friends Colin Smith, Nick Trudgian and Derek Vanstone.

As on the same occasion last year the abiding memory of the veterans was the courtesy and respect shown by the general public. This is well illustrated by an event experienced by Geoff Brunton. Geoff told me that he was standing outside the marquee during the lunch break when he became aware of a man looking at him. Eventually the man approached him and looking at his blazer badge said, "Were you on active service?" "Yes", replied Geoff, "I was on Lancasters." The man then shook Geoff's hand and said, "Thank you for giving us our freedom." It transpired that he was a Norwegian.

This was typical of the reception that the veterans received and from it one can see that although governments are not interested in acknowledging the part played by Bomber Command at least the public are.



NICOLAS TRUDGIAN AVIATION SKETCHBOOK

Most of the work presented in this book has been created especially for it and displays the uniquely detailed and precise style of this widely collected artist. An excitingly wide selection of aircraft is shown, from the fragile machines over the trenches of the Western Front to shapes that seem to be from another world like the SR71 Blackbird and the Sukhoi Flanker. Along the way there are many old favourites, especially of the Second World War, and even here are some 'rare birds' like the Dornier 355, the Ta 152 and the Boulton Paul Defiant. The drawings reflect the fascinating development of aviation in the twentieth Century, the many beautiful forms of these aircraft and the aircrews' heroic exploits in every corner of the world. It is rare for an artist with such obvious aptitude for mechanical subject matter also to be able to capture the beauty and atmosphere of the world's landscapes, and yet Nicolas Trudgian achieves this with both pencil and paintbrush. This book, devoted exclusively to his pencil work, is complemented by a number of aircrew who have added their personal recollections, some humorous, some poignant, about their experiences in the air and on the ground, embellishing a volume which readers will enjoy returning to again and again.

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Whilst carrying out research at the Public Records Office our Researcher, Colin Cripps, came across the following remarkable story.....

Account while a P.O.W.

1. On landing I was caught immediately by Dutch police and handed over to the Germans within an hour.

Dulag-Luft, Frankfurt 3.9.42 – 11.9.42

Stalag V111 B (Lamsdorf) 15.9.42 – 28.3.45

While at Stalag V111 B I spent about six weeks at Ieshen at Stalag V111 B, the Stalag at Lamsdorf being then called Stalag 344.

Stalag 1VC – Wistrity 30.3.45 – 8.4.45

Stalag 1VB – Muhlberg 9.4.45 – 5.5.45

We left Muhlberg for Riesa and then to Halle, being then sent to England.

About 23rd October 1942 I changed identities with Pte Knott of the West Kent Rgt. In order to get on a working party and facilitate an attempt to escape. In January 1943, Pte. Mead W. and I left the working party by loosening the barbed wire on a door and climbing the outer wire. We hoped to steal German uniforms and take an aircraft from Falkenau aerodrome. We were however, seen by the inmates of the room when we were obtaining the uniforms and we thought it advisable to return to the camp, which we did the same night.

About March 15th 1943, I left the same party by remaining in a cellar and then getting through the window. I got on the aerodrome and obtained the uniforms but owing to the guard being increased on the camp, Pte. Mead was unable to get away. After four days on the aerodrome, I was seen and caught by one of the guards there while looking for food

In June 1943, I changed identities with Pte. Slade of the New Zealand Army and went to work in Breslau. As the party only lasted a week no attempt was made to escape and on trying to leave the Stalag again I was recognised and detained by the Germans.

About March 30th 1944, I changed identities with a Pte. Corkan of the Border Rgt. And went to work at Mechtal where I obtained civilian clothes by exchanging food and clothing and escaped by leaving the factory in civilian clothes. I caught a train as a passenger, but was questioned and detained at Breslau by the railway police and subsequently returned to Teschen.

In June 1944, I went out as Pte. Corkan to a paper factory near Kattowitz where I again obtained civilian clothes by exchanging food etc. and escaped by leaving the factory via a fence during the night shift. I was free five or six days before being apprehended by the police near Krakoa, towards the end of June.

In March 1945 while being marched to a transport train near Lamsdorf, W.O.Clarke H. R.A.F, Pte. Johnston A.I.F. and myself succeeded in leaving the party and after trying to get shelter at a house in Annahof, we returned through

the barbed wire, first into the empty hospital, then into our vacated camp, where we spent eight days before being discovered by a German corporal, during which time we remained in a small room and lived on what food we had. (Pte. William Mead, was from Birmingham and in the Royal Artillery: W.O. Clarke H. RAF was from London: Pte. Johnston, who was, I believe, from Sidney, Australia. I was assisted in obtaining civilian clothes by a Polish lad at Mechtal, but I do not know his name or address. I also received fifty marks from W.O. Bunter R.C.A.F. at Lamsdorf. He was at the time a member of the' escape committee.'

I made no attempt to join any escape organisation or other form of subversive activity while in the main camp.

Liberated by the Russians 24.4.45 and handed over to the Americans about 28.5.45, reaching England on 30.5.45.

J. Allen W.O. 619244
Elswick Sanatorium
Elswick.



At The National Memorial Arboretum the 49 Squadron Memorial Pavior is located between the benches at the side of the covered walkway leading from the Main Entrance, (In the background) to The Memorial Chapel, (Behind the photographer.) To the left is The War Widows Garden.



THE RAF MUSEUM'S HAMPDEN

(A report based on the feature in FlyPast magazine, November 2008)

Hampden P1344 was originally built as a Mk.I by Handley Page at Cricklewood but after three accidents whilst with 14 OTU at Cottesmore it was converted into a torpedo bomber by 20 MU at Aston Down.

Interestingly, following the third of its misfortunes it was fitted with the rear fuselage section from Hereford L6012, traces of the serial number being visible, and during conversion it received the port wing from Hampden P2133. After conversion it was allocated to 144 Squadron, Coastal Command.

On the night of September 4th 1942 it was lost whilst in transit to Russia. After being fired on by flak and by two Bf109's from Petsamo the Hampden crash landed in woods and there were only two survivors who became PoWs.

The wreckage was discovered by the Russians in 1989 and eventually arrived in the U.K. in 1991. The Hampden is now undergoing restoration at The RAF Museum, Cosford, nr. Telford, Shropshire.

The aircraft's port side is being completely restored whereas the starboard side will remain largely in the condition in which it was recovered. The restored side will continue far enough over to give the impression of a complete Hampden when seen from that viewpoint. Original parts are being used as far as possible to maximise authenticity.

After reading the article in FlyPast I went to Cosford and thanks to very helpful staff was introduced to the Hampden Project Leader, Darren Priday. He told me of an open week, 24th to 28th November when the public can visit the workshop between 10.15am and 1.00pm. Admission to the museum and workshop is free. In addition I propose to arrange a number of private visits. They must be held on a Friday afternoon and numbers are limited to 12. You would have to make your own transport arrangements. Please let me know if you are interested.

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HARRY JAMES BENNETT, 1891-1918 - 49er

His Flying career;

6 Nov 1914....	enlisted 21 st Bn Canadian Infantry
9 Sep 1915	to France with CASC
2 Dec 1916	Attached 10 Sqn, RFC
4 Dec	Flew in BE2d with Lt EC Winkley
14 Jan 1917	Transferred to RFC and commissioned
13 Feb	Observer training with RFC at Brooklands
Mar	Returned to France with 2 Sqn as Observer
21 Sep	To UK and commenced flying training with 12 Training Squadron, Thetford on MFSH No. B 4718 and B1990; Instructor Lt Ferguson.
29 Sep	Transferred for further training to 99 Squadron, on BE2e No. B7731. Instructors Capt Gilmour & Lt Minter and No. B4528; Instructor Lt Cosgrieve, Later No. B5804 with Capt Miller .. mainly at 500 to 800 ft
25 Nov	Crashed B7731 "Write Off"
25 Dec	Formation flying BE2e No. B3700 at 2000ft. "Height testing" at 8,300 ft.
27 Dec	Cross country at 5000ft to Central Flying School where stayed night.
3 Jan 1918	Flying AW C3576 with Lt Cosgrave, courses included Yatesbury, Devizes, Southampton and Portsmouth. Crashed undershooting aerodrome, .
22 Jan	Photography on DH6 A 9687 at 2000ft; "Camera jammed"
24 Jan	Commenced bombing training on various AW s
1 Feb	Flying solo on DH4s including to Isle of Wight & Yatesbury 3,000 ft
8 Feb	To Canada for three months leave – [No reason known.]
19 May	To 109 Sqdn flying DH4s with Lt Latter; one course was mainly photography up to 8000ft.
	"Lakedown Aero" also "taking machine to 6 T.D.S."
29 May	"6000ft, camera obscura Passed"
30 May	"aerial firing"
3 June	"N.A.R.D. Sheffield Engine cut out. Landed on drome"
6 June	"Engine cut out taking off. Crashed"
17 June	Switched to DH9s, mainly No C1270. Camera, fighting, "rafts" and also bombing practice. Courses included Turnberry. Intensive up to 4 flights a day.
15 July	With Lt Mason "Stonehenge, Bombs dropping live" frequently over next weeks. Training now intensified. Cross Country,

Formation, Diving and Climbing Turns, Aerial Firing,
[Various passengers often shown with rank "A.M." - Aircraft
mechanic?] Twice recorded "Engine dud. Landed in drome"
on DH9 Four flights a day.

- 15 Aug "Forced landing. Landed to repair machine" [He had an auto
business in Pembroke Ontario after working with Buick so
mechanically quite capable.]
- 20 Aug "Delivered machine DH9 No C2189 to Old Sarum. Passenger
F/Sgt Patterson
- 2 Sep To B.E.F. France with 49 Squadron, DH9s.[On leaving UK had
139 hours total flying time of which 125 hrs were solo flying]
- 3 Sep First flight in DH9 No. D1732 then practice flight nearly every
day.
- 6 Sep "Bombing raid St Quentin. 11000ft. Observer Lt Armstrong. 7
Huns. Escort #32"
- 13 Sep "Bomb raid Semain. 12,000ft. Escort #32 Visibility bad. Saw
1 Gotha"
- 16 Sep "Bombed Orchies. 11000ft Lost 1 of escort #62. Intense AA
Haro/ Huns?"

[62 Sqdn was providing escort for the bombers of 49 Sqdn and the plane shot
down was that of Lt RH Stone and 2/Lt NF Adams, both of whom were taken
prisoner.

No further entries in log book but it is recorded that; 24 Sept. Shot down while
bombing Aulnoye Junction and died of burns. Observer Lt Armstrong survived
and was captured. He was shot down by either Paul Baumer or Otto Loffler,
both of Jasta 2. He had flown only 16 hrs in France.]



Photos; Courtesy Ian Bennett

‘Honorary Friend’ Jorgen Jorgensen sent the following piece from Denmark. Whilst not directly involving 49 Squadron it is a fascinating tale of how coincidences conspire to bring about a pleasant ending. It is also gives an insight to the war when viewed from occupied Europe.

THE ENGLISH AIRMAN

By Jorgen Jorgensen

April 1942;- I remember we were standing late in the evening on the road at my home, a farm some 15 miles west of Flensburg, my parents, my sister, my brother and me. I was 10 years old. We looked at the searchlights swinging in the sky over Flensburg. The FLAK was firing, heavy FLAK exploding on the top and light FLAK streaming upwards in rows of fireballs. It looked very much like a huge New Years fireworks. To my father, my brother and me it was an exciting event, but my mother and my sister found it awful.

All the time we heard aircraft passing over a bit to the north heading eastwards, exactly the track Nicholas Pollock in 1998 drew on a map to me for the attack on Rostock.

Next day in school someone told that a big English bomber had crashed and burned out at Visgård some five miles away. My friends and I made up to go to the crash site. But in the next night another English bomber – a Short Stirling from No. 15 Squadron, I later found out, crashed at my home. Pieces from the aircraft were spread all over the fields round our farm. No reason to go to Visgård, and I missed to see the wreck of the 106 Squadron Manchester. Two airmen were killed in the crash of the Stirling at our farm.

August 1942;- In August my father went to the horse market at Klipleve to sell our two foals. Home again he told, that he met someone on the market who told, that as their foal was born and they were helping the mare, they saw someone looking into the stable through the window. They went out and found an English airman outside the stable. This told much to my fantasy. Very exciting! Why could such not happen to us in my home? All my life I have thought of this. Who was this airman, and what happened to him? Did he survive the war?

September 1955;- Now a lieutenant in the RDAF, I read Guy Gibson’s book ‘Enemy Coast Ahead’. In his book Gibson tells about a young pilot, P/O Harry M. Stoffer. He was killed in action few days after his wedding. My service at that time was in SOC West, Sector Operation Centre West, in the RDAF, and I really understood the situation - Mary Stoffer at the Operation Board writing in the time for returning aircraft.

April 1978;- I went to the cemetery at Aabenraa to see the graves of the two airmen who were killed in the crash of the English Short Stirling bomber at my home. I found the headstones, but Oh dear! This can’t be true! Between the two

stones was another headstone with the name **H. M. Stoffer!** Really a surprise it was! Could it be Harry Murdoch Stoffer from Guy Gibsons book? A research stated, that he really was the pilot mentioned in the book, and – a new surprise – he was killed in the crash at Visgård, which I remembered.

March 1992;- In April 1992 it was 50 years anniversary of the crash at Visgård. I wrote an article about the crash told after Guy Gibson's book. The article was published in a Danish aircraft magazine.

March 1996;- Just retired I gave the article to a newspaper. This ended up with a contact to Desmond Richards, Secretary and Historian of No. 106 Squadron Association. Des wrote that he knew a crewmember from Stoffer's crew, Squadron Leader Nicholas Pollock. Unfortunately I did not make anything about this information. I thought that I knew everything of interest about this crash.

May 1998;- I got copies from Des of three pages from Paul Brickhill's book 'Escape to Danger'. A new surprise! I read, that the airman Nick from Stoffer's crew came to a farm and saw a foal being born. Nicholas Pollock must be the airman I had heard about and often thought of all my life! Now nothing could stop me! I had to meet this airman! I found the farm, and I met the farmer's daughter. In 1942 she was 14 years old. She clearly remembered the English airman, who in an early morning came to her home. Her parents, her brother and she did not speak English, and the only word they understood was "Sweden", a word the airman repeated again and again. They were unable to help and called the civilian authorities, which again informed the Danish police, she told.

August 1998;- I took contact to Des Richards. He promised to introduce me to Nicholas Pollock, and in September 1998 we met at Swindon. I gave Nicholas Pollock pictures of the farm and the family and a little piece from the wreck of Manchester IA L7463. "I really wish I could pay a visit to this farm again!" Nicholas said, and we made up to arrange a visit to Denmark as soon as possible. "Keep in touch as long as memory serves!" Nicholas said as we parted. We really did!

May 1999 ; - From the 10th to the 20th of May 1999 Nicholas visited Denmark and we saw persons and places he and his crew fellows met in 1942. He stayed with us during this visit, and in a way a wish from my childhood came true.

My wife Ingelisa and I had 10 unforgettable days together with Nicholas. Later we twice visited Nicholas in his home at Westbury. We all the time since Nicholas' visit here were in close contact through letters and calls on telephone.

Nicholas Pollock died the 5th of August 2007 nearly 90 years old.

The account of the crash of ZN-S from No 106 Squadron now is on www.flystyr.dk and pictures from Nicholas Pollock's visit to Denmark are under the menu point "Pollock på besøg".



Photo: Jeff Cogan

THESE ARE A FEW OF MY FAVOURITE THINGS!

On June 1st the BBMF flew over Classes 9F and West Country locomotives at the Gloucester and Warwickshire Railway.

SUMMER ODYSSEY 2008

By Malcolm Brooke

We had just returned to the UK from our home in Cyprus and we were packing our bags once more to travel to Europe to photograph more 49Sqn headstones for the “Roll of Honour” on the Association’s website.

Initially we travelled to Germany to stay with friends in Bad Lippspringe, near Paderborn. This small town with its airfield was the departure point for many of the German paratroopers destined for the Ardennes campaign in 1944. It is currently the sort of town where people leave their satellite navigation systems attached to the windscreen when they park to go to the supermarket.

We left our friends in Paderborn (in temperatures of 34°C) to join the Autobahn and 630km later we approached our “Ausfahrt” south of Munich and headed for the tiny hamlet of Fischbach near Bad Tölz.

Arriving at the Gasthaus it was immediately obvious that this was a very different Germany to the one we had left earlier that morning. The sound of bells could be heard clearly as a picture postcard herd of cows wandered down from their alpine pasture to the milking sheds nearby.

A large group of slightly florid men wearing lederhosen were drinking huge flagons of beer served by a buxom waitress wearing Trachtenmode (traditional dress). Shortly afterwards a brass band struck up and the scene was complete - we were certainly in Bavaria!

That evening we wandered around the local churchyard and noted that a significant number of recent headstones recorded the fact that the deceased was a “Kreigsteilnehmer” (war veteran). Interestingly, the dates shown extended beyond 1945 probably indicating that they had been a PoW.

Built into the entrance to the church was a formal war memorial and I could see that the vast majority of those lost, died on the Eastern Front. There were only a few different surnames in the long list and the loss of so many young lives from each family in this tiny rural community must have had a huge impact.

At breakfast, on the wall of the dining room, I noticed what I thought was a large framed family tree complete with photographs. However, this turned out to be a pictorial record of those who lost their lives during WW2. Most of the faces looked just like the photographs of the young RAF aircrew I had added to the 49Squadron website over recent months.

Some issues were obviously still very sensitive and one picture had been edited, the SS insignia being erased from the most visible of the uniform collars.

The Commonwealth War Graves cemetery at Dürnbach was only a short ride away and, surprisingly after the Mediterranean weather of the day before, the sky was overcast and the temperature cool. The mountaintops were covered in

cloud and there was rain in the air. The cemetery is large, holding almost three thousand graves including the fifty from 49Sqn.

There is much renovation taking place but I was fortunate to be able to locate all the headstones. In two sections, new stones replaced the old and, in areas, the grass had been removed for reseeded.

Interestingly, the old headstones were stacked at the back of the cemetery for “recycling” but the details of each individual had been removed with a sanding tool.

The cemetery has an interesting range of casualties ranging from a Wing Commander, a large group of SAS soldiers and a memorial to thirty Indian soldiers who had been killed and then cremated as their religion specified.

Leaving the cemetery I met an English couple and, sensing a possible story, asked them if they were visiting a 49Sqn grave.....they weren't! They told me that they were just passing and were surprised to see a CWG site as they didn't realise that any existed in Germany.

Turning westwards, the car's GPS indicated that the first navigational instruction was a “keep straight ahead” in 239km. My navigator had plotted the cemeteries on the homeward leg and they produced an almost straight-line heading approximately WNW. I wondered how many pilots had received a similar direction by their navigator so many years ago.

Some of the villages we visited were so isolated that my ‘sat-nav’ had some difficulty in guiding us there. It tried to direct us across the middle of the Mailly-le-Camp training area and on another occasion it seemed to give up completely and start afresh with a new route. The alternative however, would have been an expensive set of maps.

At the churchyard of St Ouen en Domprot we were spotted by the local handyman who took us to see “Monsieur le Mayor” who was busy ploughing his fields. He pointed out the approximate location of the crash-site and there was something very poignant about the image of aerial combat and an aircraft falling onto these vast, isolated, gently undulating fields of stubble.

Many cemeteries have an almost sterile, clinical feel to them and I pondered some of the descriptions I had read recently in a book entitled “Bomber Crews”. The actuality of death was vividly portrayed and, for some time, I have been haunted by these descriptions. Above these fields in dark, hostile skies, those events actually took place.

The landscape and buildings looked almost as they would have in 1940 when the Germans occupied the area and it wouldn't have been a surprise to come across a Panzer or Kubelwagen stationed on a street corner.

It is worth noting that, amongst the local population, there is a commitment and an enthusiasm to remember those who died in the war. We were given names and addresses of local historians who could provide more information about the crash as the last person to have first hand experience had just died.

We promised to make contact and it was time to move on.

The other two cemeteries to be visited that day were located quickly and apart from provoking all the village dogs into a barking frenzy there were no other problems.

Whilst the Commonwealth War Graves website is superb in many respects the location details of smaller cemeteries is woefully inadequate. What was a few hundred metres south of a village is now well within the boundaries of a small town. Stopping close to a hospital to ask for directions, my wife fortunately asked a lady who had noticed a cemetery from the top floor of the clinic.....it's over there in that directions she gesticulated!

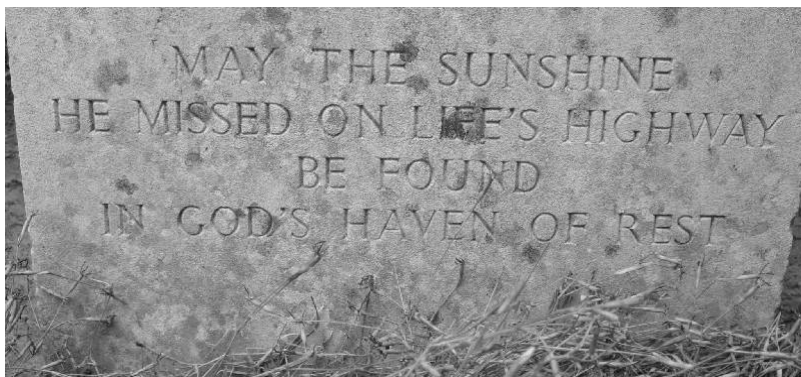
Over the next three days we completed our list of 49ers, one hundred and fifteen to be precise, and headed for Calais and the long journey home.

Earlier in the week, I decided that I should really try to concentrate on gathering images of Runnymede. Our friend in Paderborn, a talented artist, had kindly offered to create a montage using photographs that we provided. Several photographs had already been sent to me but I decided to make a detour via Runnymede and the RAF memorial. The effort was rewarded by beautiful sunshine streaming through the various windows of the memorial creating wonderful patterns on the stonework.

The completed image should appear on the website shortly to honour the several hundred aircrew who have no known grave and are remembered at Runnymede.

Twelve days and three thousand seven hundred and forty four kilometres later we arrived back home in Stamford Bridge and I couldn't wait to unpack the car of its load of wine and download the images to my computer.

"Will be we going again next year?" asked my wife. As I was considering my reply, one image became clear and sharp in my mind. It was an epitaph from a headstone in the cemetery at Beauvais ;



Photo; Malcolm Brooke

"Yes, I have another plan for next year," I replied.

READER'S LETTERS

(And e-mails, and telephone calls.)



Associate Member Graham Bairnsfather sent the above photograph from Australia. The picture depicts his uncle, W/O Ralph Bairnsfather, who was killed on March 7th 1945. Graham commissioned our Hon. President John Ward to paint the picture from a photograph whilst depicting Ralph in his bomb aimer's position. Graham is seen to the left whilst on the right is 'Friend' Ralph Gray whose father was a close friend of Ralph Bairnsfather and named his son after him.

Ken Read of Thetford, Norfolk, wrote enclosing a two page extract from his local paper, Eastern Daily Press. It is headed by a photograph of Valiant XD818, at Cosford Cold War Museum, with the 49 Squadron badge prominent on the nose. The article gives considerable detail of Ken Hubbard, who was O.C. 49 Squadron when he piloted XD818 to drop Britain's first hydrogen bomb. Note that I do not call it Britain's first megaton bomb as it was reported at the time as it has since been published that the yield was a 'mere' 1/3 megaton. The purpose of the piece regards the republication of Ken's book 'Operation 'Grapple'. It is however to be retitled 'Dropping Britain's First H-Bomb.' The book has been brought up to date by long time friend Michael Simmons who helped Ken with the first issue. The new edition is published by Pen and Sword Books at £19.99. ISBN 9781844157471

Following the publication in The 4T9er February Issue 9 of his story of the search for his father, David Beesley e-mailed the following extracts from letters written towards the end of his life by his father, Jack Kermode, to his sister. His Lancaster flying days were with 49 Squadron where he completed his tour of ops in 1944. The Liberator references are from 99 Squadron where he was based on the Cocos Islands until the end of the war:

“Another Armistice Day has been and gone. I watched some of it on T.V. but it really brings back too many memories. At the time the war didn't really touch me, in fact I consider I had a very easy time; events which made me think that I was not “fire-proof” – invulnerable – was when the seven beds on the other side of the Nissen hut became vacant overnight. It did not occur to me when we arrived at the Squadron that we were moving into dead men's' beds in the months of 1944.

“I sometimes muse on what it will be like on the other side. I am not a bit fearful, just an interesting conjecture, will there be about three or four thousand German men, women and children all pointing an accusing finger, ‘You killed us, you English bastard.’ I would only say, ‘You simply were in the wrong place at the wrong time, you were not my target.’

“There was a programme last night about A.T.S. and their role in the anti-aircraft guns and searchlights. We had reason to be very grateful to the searchlight crews, coming back in less than good conditions. They would point the way home by pointing up to the vertical, then sweeping down and lying flat pointing roughly over our ground course to over our base. It was not without danger, the German intruders soon learned what it all meant, so we had to watch astern.

“In the past I have been asked to give talks on my war experiences. I always refuse. To talk for half an hour or so would make me as tight as a drum. I do now, after all these years, get tense just talking about it to one person. At the time we took it much as any other job and thought nothing of being harassed by ground fire, stalked by night fighters for up to six hours and watching many of your comrades going down as burnt torches. Just as well we could build up a thick skin of impregnability; it is all happening to that lot over there and we are quite safe, but full knowing that if a 110 is a hundred yards behind us we are all dead – a dreadful business. The Japanese war was boring rather than lethal.

“I was probably too insensitive to appreciate that my chances of survival were as slim as one in five, being thick has its advantages. I suppose we should not have looked on the men who went LMF with such contempt, they were the ones who wanted to ensure their survival or they had experienced an incident far worse than the rest of us and their mental make up could bear no more. Yet after all these years are they ashamed of having run away? The Germans shot theirs, The Japanese had none.

“Do they ever fly the Lancaster or is it just a static display? The Lancaster & Liberator, though doing the same job, were really different animals. The Lancaster was a ferocious, noisy, cold, uncomfortable beast. It could be relied upon to do its job more effectively than any other bomber. The Liberator always reminded me of a pregnant duck and they flew like one. It was, however, reasonably quiet, comfortable and warm at low altitudes – of the two, give me a Lancaster. Did you know that the average life of a Lancaster was only 42 hours, and, of course, the life of its crew?”

“Thank you for the cutting of the two Australian ex-bomber crew members; by the model they are holding they flew Halifax’s, a very awkward aeroplane, upstairs and downstairs arrangement, not a continuous flat floor as with a Lancaster. But they did have quiet Bristol engines, not the raucous, howling, ear-splitting Rolls Royce Merlin. I think that eleven months of sitting between four Merlins are the reason for my deafness now; I can hear sounds but not speech. For hours after landing my head was full of screams and whistles and still is. The American Liberator which I was on in the Far East was a great big pussy-cat of an aeroplane, so different from the cold, noisy efficient Lancaster, the sound of which still gives me the shivers.

“I would love to go back there [the Cocos Islands], the airstrip will be permanent now, not the “Meccano” metal strips we landed on and it must be extended. It was not really long enough for us; if all four engines were going at least 75% of full power, we could just stagger off the end of the runway. But, as if often happened, the power was way down, they would not lift off. Sometimes they stopped in time, sometimes the reef claimed them. Our Liberators were tired old things, having served their time over Europe and really flying after that they should have been scrapped. One thing that did not help was that the RAF increased their all-up weight to danger point; every take off would seem like your last. There was little humour in that war; after take off there were only two places to land, shark-infested water or Jap-infested land and of all aircraft that failed to return there were no survivors. It was all a matter of sharks or Japs.”

Anthony Cheetham wrote;

“.....I especially appreciated the February 2008, issue 9, the crew of Lincoln SX984 shown on the National Arboretum. I knew especially well and in particular F/Sgt. ‘Chiefy’ North who was a close friend of mine. I have tried to contact his relatives but have thus far drawn a blank. I am on the ‘net’ and will let you know if anything shows up. [*Likewise Anthony. Ed.*] I recall that Sgt. Bartlett was the rear gunner and was aged 21 (Same as me). I recall the circumstances of the fatal crash also. (A total bloody show and waste of six lives.) I also very much liked the Lincoln on the cover of the April 2008, issue 10. I have touched the old lady many times even though she was not one of ours!”

Associate Member, Greg Burton of Brisbane, great nephew of P/O Bill Myers RAAF DFM, e-mailed a letter to me that was written by his great uncle's wireless operator, F/S Ray Lawrence RAAF, to a friend. Six of the crew were killed on a daylight raid to Milan three weeks after this letter was written. There is an account in 'The Dog' on page 164 onwards by the sole survivor, W/O Westmore Colquhoun:

“Saturday 3/10/1942

I am on an operational squadron and have been for five months. The first few months were spent in converting from Manchesters to Lancasters, but now have 18 operational trips to my credit. This means I have only — more to do to finish my tour as they term it over here. I wasn't in time for the 1,000 bomber raid to Cologne, but I've been to such places as Bremen twice, which is a pretty hot spot, Dusseldorf three times, Wilhelmshaven, Frankfurt twice, Essen which is the hottest place of all, Karskuke, Saarbrucken, Nurnberg, Munich, Osnabruck, Flensburg, Weismur and some minor trips.

“I was always looking forward to operations and they are everything I thought and hoped they would be. We have our own crew 4 Aussies and three Englishmen. For this month or last month I should say, September, our crew was placed top in all Bomber Command. You can't realise what an honour that is to us, they gave the pilot a DFC and the bomb aimer and navigator DFMs. I missed out but I'm told that I'm sure to be awarded with one before or on completion of my ops. There was a bit of bad feeling running through the station because we all didn't get a decoration but it doesn't worry me. I'm getting all the excitement I want and that is enough for me. How they select the top crew is by the number of photos brought back of the target we are briefed to bomb. I can assure you we've had some pretty shaky times to do this. Bremen was the worst looking spot of the lot, it was flaring up with light, medium and heavy flak and hundreds of searchlights. It is not so bad when you get into it but just before you get into it, it looks grim. The trouble was with us the first time we went to Bremen, we came out north and ran back over Wilhelmshaven instead of coming out the way we went in. As a result we were about the only kite over Wilhelmshaven and did they give us hell, they shot at us till we finally crossed the coast. The mid-upper gunner had a big flak hole through the Perspex of his turret, just above his head.

“I think the only time I've got a scare is when we went to bomb Weismur which is just between Lubeck and Rostock. It was mainly cloud and bad icing conditions all the way over but we finally arrived over Rostock. Every machine seemed to be bombing Rostock but we weren't satisfied so we cruised down the coast with flak ships taking pot shots at us for 35 minutes and then we finally pin pointed ourselves on the coast and began to run down the bay of Weismar. It was pretty cloudy and we were down to 6,000ft, whereas the safety level is 12,000ft. There was nothing going on at Weismar at all and when we

thought that we were just over the outskirts of the town they opened up on us. Well I think they threw every thing up at us but the guns, we were the only machine there and they had plotted us all the way in and did they belt us. I'm not kidding when I say I was resigned to die, the flak was rattling and flashing all round us and you could actually smell the cordite fumes in the machine. Well, the machine then went into a dive which the pilot pulled it out at 4,000ft. Meanwhile we had opened the bomb doors and got rid of our incendiaries which we were carrying that night as they were very unhealthy to carry as a piece of flak will set the whole lot off. We finally got out of it and looked back to see what effect our incendiaries had and sure enough they had landed we think in the town and a very rosy fire was visible even through the clouds for nearly a hundred miles. We also had seven very scared men in the kite too. To top it off we were diverted to another 'drome as the weather round ours was too bad for landing. The next morning we found we were the somewhat doubtful proud owners of seven holes through the machine. I have a piece of flak at the moment which entered the aircraft just behind me in the W/ops seat. The rear turret had a hole in the perspex this time. I honestly think I'll live to be 100 after escaping that night.

"After finishing our ops. we are supposed to get six months rest, but I have put in for a pilot's course and hope to do that in my rest. You never know I might be sent to Canada to train and nothing would please me more except to train back home. But I think that is only wishful thinking.

"I've had a good bit of leave since I've been over here, most of it is usually spent in London which is still a pretty bright spot. The blackout doesn't annoy us much over here, as we have got used to it now. As for food there still seems plenty of it if you know the places and like to pay for it....."

Air Commodore "Spike" Milligan sent the following e-mail which he had received from a friend:

"I was asked by a member recently about the criteria for wearing either a Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal (awarded 1977) or a Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal (awarded 2002).

"As a result I made some enquiries. There were only 30,000 silver ones awarded to the military and emergency services and so individuals were chosen at random or by other means. The Golden ones were issued to anyone serving in the military or emergency services who had 5 years service in in 2002.

"There is a campaign under way to enable anyone who was serving for 5 years during the Queen's first 25 years of reign or 5 years during her second 25 years of her reign to purchase and wear the medals. Some of course would qualify for both.

"If you wish you can visit the Downing Street e-petition and add your signature. The address is :- <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/silvergold/>

Associate Member, Alan Mitchell sent an e-mail:

I introduce myself as the son of a former member of aircrew who flew in 49. 9433315 Sgt. RJ Mitchell was shot down 26/27 April '44 as part of the Montgomery crew and you will be aware of his story as shown in John Ward's book. He was one of the Squadron's evaders. It is some time since I spoke to John but we have corresponded as I have with Ted. I naturally would wish to remain part of the association and although am still extremely busy in my professional life, still hold a deep interest in the Squadron and associated matters. It is my intention, when time permits, to collate all of dad's pictures/documents etc. and I would be happy to share them with you. Dad died very suddenly in 1968 while only 46 yrs old and still serving as a Warrant Officer at RAF Linton on Ouse where he was an air traffic controller. Although it is not confirmed, my wife and I are hoping to go to France later this year where I would like to visit the crew graves at Bure Churchyard. If I do I will take pics and supply you with copies. I do have a number pictures of dad both from wartime, and closer to his death, in uniform together other items including the telegram he sent on arrival in Berne in '44 after evading. To close, an interesting story is that my older sister was named Avril as the French couple who assisted in hiding him asked him to name his first child after the month of April in recognition of the start of the evasion process. Henceforth, after returning to England and marrying Mum who also sadly passed on in the 1980's, Avril was named in honour of the elderly French couple

John Fray telephoned to draw my attention to the November issue of Aeroplane magazine in which the featured aircraft in their Database series is the Avro Lincoln. Twenty pages cover the aircraft's history with drawings and photographs. There are also sections on foreign operators and the type's use as an engine testbed.

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CAN YOU HELP?

In response to our appeal on behalf of a French primary school teacher in the July issue for anyone who knew the crew of Lancaster PB915, I am grateful to Ron Eeles who replied;

“I enclose a copy of the ops brief of 28/29 April 44 when P.O. Dod came with us to Oslo as ‘second dickey’. I can’t profess to remember him at all but the information may be of some interest:

28/29.4.44 OSLO (KJELLER) - AIRCRAFT FACTORY

ND647 BALL, WARDMAN, MILLAR, KERNAHAN, RAE, QUICK,
EELES. P/O DOD AS 2nd PILOT

21.25 - 05.04 OSLO - KJELLER

HE 01.51 5500FT INCENDIARY

ORDERED TO OVERSHOOT RED SPOT BY 200 YARDS. NO BIG
EXPLOSIONS SEEN BUT BOMBING APPEARED CONCENTRATED.
VERY WELL PLANNED AND EXECUTED ATTACK.

Note; Above is a copy of briefing report, raid of 51 Lancasters, mentioned in ‘Beware of the Dog at War’- page 333.”

Ron continues; “Also enclosed is the address of a member of the Forced Landing Association (French). I appreciate it is a long shot but contact with M. Legout by the school in question could possibly yield information. You never know where enquiries can lead to, as the association still visits sites of crashed aircraft and you never know when the next one will turn up.

M. Legout Joel
Chemin de Chateau
Bordigny
27160 Breteuil sur Iton
France

Note; I have had correspondence with this gentleman since January 2003 following his approach to the then Secretary of the 49 Squadron Association. His home is very close to the crash site of LM541, hence his interest. Might this be a useful contact in relation to the e-mail from the French primary school? - Page 29, The 4T9er, July 2008 refers.

Thanks Ron. M. Legout’s details have been passed on to the school, Ed.

Whilst discussing the Rolls of Honour on our website with Megaton Club Secretary, Fred Vening, he told me that we lost a squadron member whilst serving on Christmas Island. Fred says that Sgt. ‘Phil’ Phillips died in his sleep and was buried at sea, there being no burial facilities on land. Can any of our former ‘Christmas Islanders’ tell us more about Phil so that we can include it against his name in the Roll of Honour?

Ed Norman asks if anyone can identify the medal ribbon worn by his late father. Unfortunately the colour reproduction is not good as the photograph was hand coloured as was common in those days. The two outer bars appear to be white and the centre bar purple, maroon or dark blue.



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Wed 5th November	11.00am & 1.30pm
Wed 12th November	11.00am & 1.30pm

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