

The 4T9er

LIFE IN THE OLD DOG YET!

**The 49 Squadron Association Magazine
February 2009 Issue 13**



**The remains of 49 Squadron's Hampden P1206 arrive back at
RAF Scampton after 67 years.**

IN MEMORIAM

**E.E. Smith J. Gambling J.C.G. Clulow
J. Aldridge W.J. Baird P. Velasco G.I. Stuffins**

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

WELCOME TO:

NEW MEMBERS

**John Galloway John McMahon
Michael Dinsmore (Come back) Paul Deakin**

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

**Mhairi Galloway Paul Gaunt
Madeleine Atkins Bettie Baird**

NEW FRIENDS

Trevor Arnold Philip Cole



Photo; Barbara Parr

**Remembrance Sunday, November 9th, at The Fiskerton
Airfield Memorial.**

OBITUARY
GEOFF STUFFINS
1936—2009



Geoff Stuffins finally succumbed to cancer, after a three year battle, at 0830 on January 5th. He was buried in Reepham Cemetery on Thursday 22nd January. Throughout his illness he was subjected to radical surgery and courses of chemotherapy which he bore with great courage and cheerfulness. After a stay in hospital in November during which he was brought back from the brink Geoff decided that he had finally had enough and expressed the wish that when it happened again he no longer wanted to be resuscitated. During his long illness he was lovingly supported by Mary and the family.

Geoff was born in Spalding and the family moved to Reepham when he was eight years old. Much of his life was involved with farming. During the war, whilst still a boy, he spent many hours at the perimeter fence around RAF Fiskerton watching the Lancasters come and go. He told of the time when a Lancaster veered into a ditch near the fence and he asked the corporal present if he could go inside. After consulting his sergeant the corporal gave him permission. Geoff also had vivid memories of the FIDO installation and the local reaction when it was first lit.

He married Mary in 1960 and in 1963 they bought part of the airfield and returned it to agriculture eventually being joined in the business by their sons Carl and Vernon. On their land was the former firing range which they developed as a commercial shooting range. Those using the range include the police and at least one television documentary (The Real Dad's Army) has been made there.

In August 1993 a light aircraft landed at Fiskerton carrying two ex 49ers, Johnny Moss and the late Len Bradfield. They were met by Geoff and the family plus our Hon. President, John Ward, and a few others including a team from Yorkshire Television. It was at this time that Geoff decided to offer a

piece of land on which to erect a memorial to those who had served at RAF Fiskerton. Through Johnny he was introduced to the then Association Secretary, the late Tom Gatfield. Geoff contacted the quarry at Ancaster and a suitable stone was selected and I understand that a nominal sum was agreed with the owner when he learned of the use to which the stone was being put. In May 1995 the memorial was dedicated and in 1997 two additional stones were added. In August 2006 a bench was dedicated and shortly afterwards Geoff and his sons erected a flagpole from which the RAF Ensign is flown in June and November. The bench was in memory of a 49er who had bequeathed a sum to the Association. Geoff arranged for it to be manufactured and installed. During these events one must also acknowledge the contribution made by Carl and Vernon who have carried out much of the physical work.

In June 2007 Geoff's family made him a present of a flight in a Spitfire after which he recorded an audio tape describing the experience. This was published in The 4T9er (August 2007, Issue 7) entitled, 'A day that I shall remember for the rest of my life'.

Mary told me that Geoff loved being amongst 49ers and this is acknowledged by her wishing donations in his memory to be made to Nettleham Medical Practice or 49 Squadron Association. We are much moved and grateful for this kind gesture.

When speaking or writing of someone after they have passed on it is too easy to over exaggerate by using words such as; kind, courteous, polite, gentle, friendly, thoughtful, courageous, inspirational etc. but there is no exaggeration when using these adjectives to describe Geoff. He was all of these things.

We shall miss him terribly but our loss is nothing compared with that of Mary, Carl, Vernon and the family to whom we extend our deepest sympathy.

We shall be ever grateful for our memorial which Geoff gave to us so that we could have a focal point to remember and honour those who served at RAF Fiskerton.

THAT MEMORIAL HENCEFORTH ALSO HONOURS THE MEMORY OF
GEOFF.

MEMORIAL TO GEOFF

As a mark of our respect and gratitude it is proposed to erect a plaque adjacent to the flagpole at The Fiskerton Airfield Memorial. This will be financed by donations from members and topped up by the Association as necessary. If you wish to make a donation then please send your cheque to our Chairman, Ted Cachart. (Address on the back cover.)

Make your cheque payable to; '49SA Petwood' and clearly write 'Geoff Stuffins Memorial' on the back.

EDITORIAL

This issue was originally to be published in January but it was delayed due to the sad news of Geoff's death.

The past year has seen our number of Members remain remarkably steady whilst the total number in all categories of membership has increased to almost 300. The 'Old Dog' is still full of life! As far as the finances are concerned you can relax.....we had no investments in Iceland, but where is safe these days?

From the crew, their families, Barbara and myself thank you for all the Christmas greetings that you so kindly sent. Oh that we could reply to them all!

Thank you to all who have sent donations and messages of good will. Whilst I truly enjoy putting this magazine together I am always relieved to hear that you enjoy reading it. I must share one note in particular that warmed the cockles', "When the magazine pops through my door it makes my day. Many thanks to yourself and the team for keeping us 'Old Dogs' so well informed". This is typical of the letters of appreciation and makes the job that I love all the more worthwhile. To give something to all those people who gave to us in the dark days is reward indeed. My colleagues have all commented on the true feeling of satisfaction that their various duties bring, serving veterans, reuniting long lost relatives or providing information to enquirers about their forebears. The passion for the subject and the thrill of 'getting a result' is what unites us.

It's booking time for the reunion. **If you wish to stay at Petwood Hotel** then before you read any further, fill in the enclosed Preliminary Booking Form and post it to me as accommodation is usually booked up in less than a week. It will be first come first served, I regret that no verbal bookings can be accepted. You have been warned! Those wishing to attend the banquet but who are not requiring accommodation have a bit more time. The Sunday evening event seemed popular last year so we are trying to make arrangements for something this year. For the Tuesday trip I have organised a group visit to Newark Air Museum. As an option we are planning to take the bus into Newark for those who would rather visit the town or go shopping.

The response to my appeal in the last issue for those on broadband who are currently receiving printed copies of The 4T9er to accept their copies by e-mail has been most disappointing. It is so easy for them to do so thus saving on printing and postage costs. I have to admit that there is also a selfish agenda here. Spending several hours every quarter stuffing envelopes is not my favourite way of passing time especially when I know that it could so easily be reduced. **Come on, receive your copy by e-mail!**

We sadly record the passing of seven 4T9ers of whom five served with 49 Squadron during WWII. Canadian Ed Smith, former Gunnery Leader, fought

long and hard for the Bomber Command Campaign Medal and in his last email to me he felt that the Canadians might be getting somewhere. In the October issue I thanked Ed for his help in distributing The 4T9er to our Canadian members. I am grateful to his son and daughter-in-law, Ed and Jo-Anne Smith, for offering to continue this service. Associate, Jan Gambling was the daughter of pilot, Sgt. Len Coxhill who flew 24 ops before failing to return on 21st January 1944. Australian WoP John (Jackie) Clulow, who did 24 ops, died in October. When accepting my invitation to become an Associate Member his daughter Madeleine Atkins gave me the continuing sad news that Jackie's wife had died in early December. John Aldridge, who died 17th December, was a stalwart of the reunions and for many years he has read the lesson at our Memorial Service. John completed his tour with our late Secretary, Tom Gatfield, and Member Lou Crabbe. They spent many holidays together but now Lou is the sole survivor. John was laid to rest wearing his 49 Squadron blazer. In the October issue we listed Bill Baird as 'Resigned', he had been ill for a long time. Sad to say he died on December 10th. As Sgt WJ Baird, he was the pilot of Hampden P4299 which was shot down during a raid on Dusseldorf, 4/5th February 1941. He and his crew became PoWs for the next four and a half years. Peter Velasco who lived in Chile died on 17th December. He was the sole survivor when his aircraft went down on his 11th op, March 23rd 1944.

It is probably appropriate here to remind members that the Association has a coffin cover comprising the RAF Ensign. This is normally held by me and can be easily sent through the post should it be required. Sorry to raise such a sombre note but sadly it has to be done. If you wish to carry it on your last journey then please let your next of kin know now whilst there is still time.

On a much brighter note we welcome all those who have recently joined us amongst whom are Members John Galloway, John McMahon, Michael Dinsmore and Paul Deakin. John Galloway joined '49 as a Lincoln flight engineer in 1952 serving at Waddington, Wittering, Upwood and two stints in Kenya. John McMahon was shot down on the crew's first operation, February 3rd 1943. He became a PoW in Stalag VIIIIB before surviving the long march to the west. John has written an excellent book, 'Almost a Lifetime', in which he describes his wartime experiences. He now lives in British Columbia, Canada. Michael Dinsmore was in Australia during the atomic bomb tests. He was responsible for decontamination. Paul Deakin was co-pilot in the O.C. 49 Squadron, John Langston's crew at Marham. It was Paul who received the new colour on behalf of 49 Squadron, from Princess Marina.

Welcome also to New Associates; Mhairi Galloway (No relation of John as far as I know) is the niece of pilot, F/L Somerville Galloway who was lost on his 26th op on February 8th 1945. (See page 441 of 'The Dog'.) Paul Gaunt, whose father Philip (Tubby) Gaunt was a pilot on Hampdens at Scampton. Paul

has written a book of his father's career, 'Shadows of the Past'. As previously stated Madeleine Atkins is the daughter of the late Jackie Clulow. We are also delighted to welcome Bill Baird's widow Bettie.

New 'Friends' Trevor Arnold and Philip Cole are the sons of Members James Arnold and Bert Cole respectively.

On a bitterly cold Remembrance Sunday we attended the service at Fiskerton followed by wreath laying at the Airfield Memorial. This was immaculately prepared again by Carl and Vernon Stuffins and we are most grateful to them for their efforts. Sadly their father, Geoff, was not well enough to attend, the first time that he has missed for many years. We were pleased once again to have the 5th Lincoln Scout Troop form the Guard of Honour. Ted Cachart laid our wreath whilst wreaths were also laid at Scampton Cemetery by Eric Clarke, Fulbeck Memorial by Lou Crabbe and Bransby Memorial by Stan Smith. I know that Remembrance Crosses were laid in Denmark and no doubt in many other places in memory of 49ers who gave their lives in the cause of freedom.

On November 22nd Colin and Pam Cripps with Barbara and myself visited the International Plastic Modellers Society exhibition at Telford. The reason for our visit was the launch of the latest book, in two volumes, of Nachtjag War Diaries by 'Honorary Friend' Dr Theo Boiten. Colin and Theo have been of mutual help with each other's researches. From a personal point of view I was delighted to renew my acquaintance with Peter Spoden, the former Luftwaffe night fighter pilot who was signing copies of the books together with another former night fighter pilot Rolf Ebhardt. It may be remembered that Peter met the late 49er, Bill Carman, when he visited the crash site where all his crew lost their lives. [See The 4T9er, Feb 2007, issue 5.] Sadly Bill died very shortly after this visit but Peter remembered that he was very happy to have made the pilgrimage. Our conversation led to Peter's first aircraft, he refuses to call them kills or victims these days, this being a Lancaster over Peenemunde. It is now widely known that this was the rocket research installation on the Baltic coast headed by Dr Werner von Braun. After the war Peter flew Boeing 707's for Lufthansa and on one transatlantic flight he noticed von Braun's name on the passenger list. He went back into the aircraft and invited the scientist to visit the flight deck. This was in the days long before strict security measures of course. The subject of conversation got round to Peenemunde at which point Peter said, "You were down there in your shelter whilst I was up above in my aircraft." Some time ago Peter kindly gave me permission to quote from his book 'Enemy in the Dark' which I will be doing in future issues. When Barbara and I had left Peter we agreed that talking to him was just like talking to a 49er. What a devastating difference a military uniform can make!

Once again our intrepid webmaster has been travelling Europe photographing

cemeteries and the graves of 49ers. The account of his latest expedition appears on pages 10-11. There are a few cemeteries and graves in England that are not yet photographed. Visit our website and see if there are any near you. If there are and you are willing and able to photograph them in the digital format presently used on the website then you will be helping us to perpetuate the memory of those who died whilst serving with 49 Squadron.

Associate Member Graham Bairnsfather, from Bowral, New South Wales, visited England in September last year to see places that his uncles Bruce and Ralph Bairnsfather had known during the war as pilot and bomb aimer respectively. I was pleased to spend a little time with him during which he gave me a copy of a letter from Ralph to his brother Hugh, Graham's father, who was serving with Australian forces. It gives a fascinating insight into the reaction of a 23 year old Australian boy in a dangerous job thousands of miles from home. See pages 14 and 15.

Whilst researching The London Gazette our Archivist, Ed Norman, came across an amazing story. I have great pleasure in featuring this account of a 49er's courage, tenacity and devotion to duty on page 19.

In the Sunday Express 'Honour the Bomber Boys' campaign, November 16th, they covered the unveiling of a statue to Barnes Wallis. The business community of Herne Bay, Kent, had raised the money. They awarded the commission to Texan sculptor Tom White, who said that he had never heard of the hero when he accepted the task. Mr White is quoted as saying, "Barnes Wallis was an amazing guy. As I got into my research I realised how brave those aircrews were and how dogged Wallis was in getting the project accepted." Within days it was announced in the press that there was an outcry as the inscription on the base of the statue described him as '...the infamous dambuster.' This was quickly altered but how on earth does something like that happen in the first place?

In the same feature it was announced that Historian, Sir Martin Gilbert has written to every member of the House of Commons and the House of Lords asking them to take action to issue the Bomber Command medal. Forty-four have written back to him pledging their support. Supporters in the House of Lords are arranging a debate and in the Commons 194 MPs have signed Grimsby MP Austin Mitchell's Early Day Motion for a debate.

During WWI the liner Lusitania was sunk off Ireland by a German submarine. The loss of American lives tipped the balance and brought America into the war. The Germans claimed that the liner was carrying munitions and was therefore a legitimate target. The USA and Britain denied this and deemed the sinking a war crime. In early December a newspaper article claimed that divers had found considerable quantities of 303 ammunition on the wreck!

On January 12th the national press announced that lawyers will launch their case for compensation on behalf of nuclear test veterans. Around 22,000 British servicemen attended the trials in Australia and the South Pacific. [Many of then 49ers.] Campaigners say that many British veterans died young, had diseases such as cancer or saw their wives suffer miscarriages or give birth to deformed children. We wish them success.

I hadn't realised that the world is still such a dangerous place. According to the media it is illegal to sell Christmas crackers to those under 16 years of age. This is due to a law passed in 1875 relating to the sale of explosives to minors. To think that I played with lead soldiers, chased mercury round the school laboratory bench and.....pulled crackers. It is a miracle that I have reached 70!

For some years now Ringwood Brewery have donated a number of cases of their delightful 'Fortyniner' beer to our reunion raffle. This has been collected by Eric Jones. I was fortunate to win half a dozen bottles and loved it. As Ringwood is over a hundred miles from my home I was resigned to having to win some more next year but then during a visit to Waitrose in Lichfield I beheld 'Fortyniner' on the shelf. Oh joy!

There was an excellent one and a half hour programme on TV recently covering the 90 years of the RAF. Bomber Command was given good coverage including a piece on the annual air gunner's gathering at the Bomber Command Memorial in Holland. It was noted that Holland is the only country to erect a memorial but hopefully that is all to change, see next item. The programme went on to show extensive footage of Operation Grapple with excellent air to air shots of XD818. Of interest to me was the comment by John Peters who was the Tornado pilot shot down in the first Gulf War. He was commenting on the fact that he, as a bomber pilot with nuclear weapons, was trained in minute detail up to the point of dropping the weapon. There was no instruction given on what to do afterwards presumably as there would be nothing to return to! Coincidentally I had been discussing that very subject a few months earlier with one of our ex-Valiant aircrew members. Sobering thoughts indeed!

We have been informed by Doug Radcliffe MBE, Secretary of Bomber Command Association, that the total raised so far for The Bomber Command Memorial is £800,000 and counting. Have you made your donation yet? If you wish to do so then send it to;

Bomber Command Association, RAF Museum, Grahame Park Way, London, NW9 5LL. Make cheques payable to; Bomber Command Memorial Fund.

To those of you who are not experiencing the best of health we wish you well and our thoughts and prayers are with you.

‘Til the next time.

PASSPORT TO POSNAN

By Malcolm Brooke

The trip didn't get off to the most auspicious of starts. I was thrilled to find a set of three days where flights to Poland were very cheap and after booking them I proudly told my wife of the great deal I'd found. "Very clever," she replied, "but those are the dates when you're on stage with the theatre group."

A few weeks later having rebooked, I found myself hurtling down the runway at East Midlands Airport in a packed Ryanair 737-800. I'm not sure if the passengers were especially religious or whether they'd had some previous bad experiences but most people were crossing themselves and a few actually clapped as the wheels were safely retracted. The next ten minutes were spent listening to a lengthy list of culinary delights that were available on this flight, there were details of the wonderful prizes that could be won with their scratch-cards and offers of tax free shopping guaranteed to delight.

We landed, to thunderous applause, at the very pleasant and seemingly new airport at Poznan. As my hotel was only about 7km away and I needed the exercise I thought that I would walk. I set off at a brisk pace, armed with my set of Google maps.

It was a mild night but there had been heavy rain and large puddles covered the roads and pavements. The street lights were dim and it seemed a little like the film set of an old Cold War movie; I expected the Polish secret police to pick me up at any moment.

I progressed well, ignoring the planned route that took me into what appeared to be a deserted Soviet Barracks complex. Eventually I neared the supposed location of the hotel but the route on the map seemed to dive down the slip-road onto a dual carriageway. There was no pavement and I wasn't at all keen on that. I thought I'd try to outflank the hotel with a track to the right but realised after a few hundred yards that it wasn't going to work.

As luck would have it, at that very moment, I noticed two shadowy figures walking quickly towards me. I did what men don't like doing.....I asked the way. "Do you speak English?" I asked. They did and beautifully so. They were quite puzzled about what I was doing in the area at this time of night and concerned that I reach the hotel safely. They didn't know where it was exactly but thought maybe we'd try a flanking move to the left this time and they insisted that they come with me to ensure I was all right. This time the plan was successful and after struggling through a muddy field I was at the hotel.

My guardian angels were two students from the University and you would have to be very lucky to find anybody more kind or caring. They were fine ambassadors for Poland.

I slept well and enjoyed a splendid breakfast but the weather looked very grey

and dull. However, the heavy rain eased and I resolved to walk to the cemetery which was about 6km from the hotel towards the centre of town. This time the maps and the map reading were spot on and I found the cemetery with ease.

I thought I understood Polish history but I found that the cemetery was full of puzzling contradictions.....there were Polish graves from the 1956 anti-communist uprising but there were also graves of fighters who had supported the Russians in capturing the Poznan Citadel in 1944 together with massed graves of those who suffered at the hands of Fascists. There also were the graves of hundreds of Russian soldiers and, of course, the beautifully kept CWGC cemetery.

I have to admit that in the cemetery there was an atmosphere; it made me aware of the complexities of Polish history and the anxieties that people must have experienced living between the jaws of two enormously powerful and not entirely friendly neighbours. Some of that fear was still “in the air” and I could feel it.

I photographed the CWGC cemetery and the headstones of the 49ers as well as those from other squadrons who were killed on the Peenemünde raid of August 1943. They are a long way from home.

On my way back to the hotel I thought I'd stop at a supermarket and buy a few “snacks”. Finding a supermarket is difficult enough and when you do they are nothing like the ones we are used to in the UK (and Western Europe). I couldn't find any crisps or nuts and I noticed that any alcohol was behind the counter in a cage. I'm sure you can remember shops long ago where tins were stacked in pyramids on shelves behind the counter; it was just like that. Poland may be a new, vibrant EU country but you can still spot that its roots were planted in the communist era.

That evening I read the free guidebook that was in the room and saw that many of “The Great Escapers” were buried in Poznan. As the next day dawned fine and clear I thought I would revisit the cemetery and take more photographs.

On my arrival a platoon of Polish soldiers was clearing away the leaves in the cemetery although there was a lot of leaning on brush handles and chatting. One of them spoke excellent English and told me about Malbork Cemetery in the north of the country. I needed photographs from there and he promised that he would email me the images I required.....what luck!

I also learned from him that Poznan was the birthplace of the Auschwitz Kommandant, a fact that I'm sure the town wishes to forget. However, there is a lot that they don't wish to forget as the town is littered with memorials of every size and shape.

Finally, I headed back to the airport and as I climbed on board the plane for the return journey I could hear over the intercom, “the sandwiches we have on board are.....”

P1206 - LANDED



On October 21st 2008 the wreckage of Hampden P1206 was returned to Scampton just eighteen days short of 67 years after it took off. Five pallets of pieces plus some loose items were delivered to RAF Scampton Museum courtesy of Capt. Paul Petersen and The Royal Netherlands Air Force. P1206 and its crew have featured in the 4T9er issues; 7, 8 & 11. In March 2009 it is planned to hold an official opening of the section containing the wreckage to which relatives of the crew and other interested parties will be invited.



Photos, This page, Top; Fittingly the tyre was the first item to be returned. Above; The pilot's .303 Browning machine gun still attached to part of the airframe. Right; The red inner tube is still flexible and shows no sign of perishing. Facing page, Top; Capt. Petersen presents a picture of a Hampden to S/L Shane Powley, Engineering Officer, RAF Scampton and OC RAF Scampton Museum. In the background are Deputy Curator Roger Crisp and Hampden veteran Eric Clarke. Centre; On a 1944 RAF reconnaissance photo Paul Petersen points out the crash site of P1206. On the extreme right is W/C Mike



Coleman, OC RAF Scampton. Bottom; Eric Clarke identifies himself on the photo of 49 Squadron taken at Scampton in October 1941 which Sheila Hamilton, daughter of the fiancée of Sgt John Kehoe, P1206's gunner, presented to Paul Petersen. Sadly Sheila's mother died a few days after the ceremony, but she was aware that the remains of her fiancée's aircraft had been returned to Scampton.

see The Quaker Girl at The Stole Theatre in Kingsway - a beautiful theatre; one of London's best. We were sitting in the second row in the centre aisle - makes you think of cameras, doesn't it? - and it was perfect. I fell madly in love with Phoebe but that's passing. Really it was a grand show. I had my Leica with me but didn't use it. Although I could have got some perfect shots I was honest. Next time I'll see 'Fledermaus', the 'Three Waltzes' and 'Night in Venice'; all Strauss and a few 'straights'.

Of course London has Piccadilly.....that's an education for you! I well believe Bill Brookes' story about "the ladies have all gone in now....." There are some lovely types in the world and that's no mistake. I was only there once at night and offers were definitely forthcoming. Very frightening, I tell you, although it opened my eyes no end.

There remains London's pubs. Wonderful places, the English pubs, and not at all the curse that some people might have you imagine. Quite the reverse in fact. They are the 'poor man's' club and can and do provide a lot of entertainment.

Well I've never known the days to pass so quickly as they did down there; and now I find myself back on the station, and have already done another trip; a 10 hour stooge across the Reich, too. Still it's a great life if you don't weaken and it does give you a kick to read about it in the papers next day. That's ego no doubt, I suppose that even out there you have heard them screaming about Dresden. I was there and I figure he had plenty to scream about. We could see the place burning like a Belisha beacon 150 miles away after we left, and then there was another team had a do at it 6 hours after us, finishing up with a Yank daylight attack the following day. Must have been hell let loose in amongst it all. However they started it all.

Had a letter from Bruce the other day. He's just gone to a squadron - Lancasters too so soon there should be two of us over here waging war against the forces of barbarity etc. while you are knocking over the little brown men.

By the way when's your crown going up? Well brother, this is the end of the paper, so I must away. My best wishes to Nancy and the best lady in the world Hooray 'Dad'.

Cheerio brother and keep knocking 'em.

Ralph

As can be seen from the postmark the letter was posted on March 7th 1945. That night Ralph and his crew, piloted by 23 year old Australian F/O Roussell Stark, went to Harburg with 232 other Lancasters and 7 Mosquitoes. It was the crew's 13th operation. They did not return. Three members of the crew survived to become Prisoners of War. The remaining four, including Ralph and the pilot, were killed. They are buried side by side in Becklingen War Cemetery, Germany..... Exactly two months later the war in Europe ended!



Photo; Carol Parr

AIR ATLANTIQUE / CLASSIC FLIGHT OPEN WEEKEND COVENTRY AIRPORT - 11th & 12TH OCTOBER 2008

Air Atlantique operate a wide range of vintage aircraft including DC3's, a DC6, Dove, Twin Pioneer and Rapide with a Heron, Vampire T11, Venom FB4, Sea Prince, Canberras B2 & T4, a further Rapide, Anson, Prentice and Meteors T7 & NF11 waiting in the wings with others. Fair weather after a very wet week blessed the annual open days during which flights in the Dove and Dragon Rapide were on offer. My family had bought me a flight as part of my seventieth birthday present and it was no contest as to which aircraft I would fly. Having said that I have a passion for all De Havilland aircraft and I aim to add more types by that company to my logbook. The present count is four; Fox Moth, Tiger Moth, Trident and now Rapide. The Dove will be added at the next opportunity and then maybe a Chipmunk if I can find one. The flight lasted half an hour and included flying over Kenilworth Castle, see main photo on the facing page, followed by Warwick Castle. It was all very enjoyable and I recommend it. The DC3 shown at the top of this page performed taxi runs, can't fly with passengers anymore, EC rules y'know! No lighted guide strip down the aisle among other things. I expect that the Dove, or Devon whilst in RAF livery, will bring back memories to some of our post war members. A tour of the hangars rounded off a very pleasant visit.





Following my flight I have received the following details of:-

CLASSIC FLIGHT CLUB

“I would like to give you some details of our exciting and ambitious plans for the Classic Flight Club which we launched on 4th December 2008.

“I want the club to be a vibrant, focal point, a home even, for individuals like you who are passionate about historic aircraft. The club will represent a truly unique opportunity for you to actively participate in the preservation of key aircraft and in keeping them flying. We will be looking at home and abroad for worthy airframes to support, and who knows, with enough support from people like you, we may even be able to “Bring back the Dak “.

“I will be using the latest technology to communicate regularly with members, to ensure that they feel involved.

“To summarise the outstanding benefits available, members will be entitled to:
4 Discount vouchers for half price Pleasure Flights during the year (Gold level members will be entitled to unlimited half price flights)

At current rates this represents £130 worth of value

4 free admissions to the Visitor Centre (to be opened in Summer 2009).

High quality Club magazine every quarter plus regular newsletters/mailings.

Free admission to an exclusive “ members only “ Air Show. An opportunity to get up close and personal with aircraft and crews on a very special day.

Discounts on all purchases from the Club website or shop.

“Our membership fee is set at £65, but we very much hope that members will feel able to donate at least £100. All amounts over the minimum £65 will be allocated directly to the aircraft of their choice, and they will become members of the “Meteor “ group for example, and be invited to special events in support of their aircraft.

“Gold members paying a minimum of £500 will be able to allocate £435 to their chosen aircraft as above. In addition they will have unlimited half price flights, will be able to take up to 4 friends/family with them to the members only air show, and will be eligible to join our jet support team and potentially fly on a positioning flight to an air show during the first 2 years of their membership.

“If this sounds like a good deal to you, and you would like to help us preserve our aviation heritage, please join our club.

“Full details are also available on our new website www.classicflightclub.com
Or by all means call me on 08703 304777 if you would like to, or mail me on alistair@classicflightclub.com

“I am very excited about the great potential of this Club for the future of our aviation heritage and also for the opportunity it presents for us all to have a great time, I hope you are too.”

Alistair Rivers, Classic Flight Club. Tel: 02476 882617 Mobile : 07872 823402

Ed Norman found this remarkable story of courage and determination:-

SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE, 17 MAY, 1946

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the following award:-

***Military Cross.* Warrant Officer David YOUNG (745910) Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 49 Squadron.**

W/O Young was the wireless operator of a Hampden aircraft that crash-landed near Courville in December 1940. His companions were all badly injured, so he went to a nearby farm for help. The occupier, a German, promised to get a doctor, but instead of doing so, he informed the Gestapo and later, the crew of the Hampden were arrested. They were taken to Dulag Luft at Frankfurt and transferred to Stalag Luft I at Barth in March 1941. In July 1941, while at Stalag Luft I, W/O Young, with four others, dug a tunnel through which he and a colleague made their escape, each carrying a day's food. They hid in a wood until morning, but were discovered by a German forester who informed the German authorities. The two escapers were recaptured and were eventually returned to the camp. W/O Young made a second attempt to escape from Stalag Luft I in September 1941, whilst he was being sent to a flour mill to work. He got clear and made for Rugen Island in an effort to reach Sweden but, after two and a half hours walk, he was seen by a guard and was escorted back to the camp. On the 5th June, 1942, W/O Young was transferred to a camp at Sagan. The camp had just been opened and owing to the chaos which existed, W/O Young was able to walk out of the confines in company with some civilian workers. He walked 25 miles in an effort to reach the river Oder, but was stopped by a civilian policeman. Failing to produce an identity card, he was eventually escorted back to the camp where he received a week's punishment. W/O Young made another attempt to escape, this time from Stalag Luft IV in September 1944. He hid underneath a cart used to deliver food and managed to leave the camp. For 2 days he walked to the port of Colberg, and on arrival there he found the Germans were evacuating the town. After waiting 24 hours, he decided it was hopeless to try and leave the port by ship. In a starving condition he went to a house posing as a Dutchman, and was given food. While he was there a German came and asked for proof of his identity. W/O Young was forced to produce a letter which bore his R.A.F. number. The authorities were informed and he was sent back to Stalag Luft IV. W/O Young made his fifth attempt to escape in March 1945. While on the march with other prisoners, he broke away from the column and walked to the town of Parchin. Here he made contact with a Russian who took him to a house where he found a R.A.F. sergeant suffering from a poisoned leg and seriously ill. The latter had been left by the Germans. W/O Young conveyed him to a hospital and stayed with him for a week until he died. W/O Young moved on to Sternberg where he was ultimately liberated by the Russians on 4th May, 1945

4T9ers VISIT THE RAF MUSEUM'S HAMPDEN P1344

In Issue 12 of The 4T9er I asked if anyone would like to visit the workshops at Cosford to see the Hampden that is under restoration there. On Friday 14th November a visit was arranged and former Hampden men present were Jim Flint DFC GM DFM, Eric Clarke and Bill Pyrah. Ted Cachart represented



The fuselage of Fairey Battle L5343

the Lancaster era whilst John May, Red Arrows, brought the party bang up to date.

The conservation area is not normally open to the public but private visits can be arranged. The man in charge of the Hampden restoration is Darren Priddy and he gave us a most interesting tour of the facility. I was intrigued by the presence of the Hendon Fairey Battle as this was the first time that I had been up close to this type of aircraft. Although the Battle was phased out early in the war due to heavy losses in the Battle of France they were used extensively for gunnery training.

The star of our visit however was undoubtedly the Hampden. This particular example was converted to the torpedo version prior to being flown out to Russia. However, the flight was intercepted and a number, including this one were shot down. Darren said that they are very much aware that men died in this aircraft and it is treated with



Jim Flint, Bill Pyrah and Eric Clarke with the Hampden fuselage in the rear.

due reverence. I did notice a British Legion poppy fixed to the fuselage.

When restoration commenced it was found that the port wing was from another Hampden, P2133, whilst the rear fuselage was from a Hereford L6012, this being identical to the Hampden apart from being fitted with Napier Dagger engines. Interchanges like this were common during the war as aircraft were repaired or modified.

Every effort is made to utilise original components but where these are missing or too badly damaged then the replacement parts are numbered and recorded in a database. Darren was at pains to stress that he and his team are always delighted to meet ex Hampden air and ground crew, nevertheless 49 SA is grateful to all involved at Cosford for giving us a most enjoyable visit.



Ex Wop/Ag's Ted Cachart and Eric Clarke discuss the finer points of the T1154 / R1155 Transmitter / Receiver.



The veterans pose in front of a slightly later 49er, the famous Valiant XD818.

FAIREY BATTLE L5343

Having been up close to Fairey Battle L5343 at Cosford I was most interested when FlyPast magazine covered it in some detail in the January 2009 issue. I have a personal interest in the aircraft as a type as my late uncle, and no doubt many other 49 Squadron gunners, did most of their gunnery training in the Battle, particularly in Canada. It is also a little known fact that 508 Fairey Battle aircrew alone were killed in the Battle of France against 544 total aircrew killed in the whole of the Battle of Britain. This item is dedicated to them. L5343 was built by Austin Motors at Longbridge, Birmingham, and eventually delivered to 266 Squadron at Sutton Bridge in December 1939. When 266th converted to Spitfires in February 1940 it passed to 98 Squadron at Gatwick via 20 MU at Aston Down. Fearful that neutral Iceland, due to its strategically important location, would be invaded by the Germans, Britain established itself, invaded if you like, in Iceland. Reinforcements, including 98 Squadron's Battles, were flown in on August 27th. L5343 was probably the first RAF aircraft to land in Iceland. It was flown by 98's C.O. W/C G R Ashton AFC. The Battles were employed in coastal and maritime patrols, searching for German surface vessels and U-boats but with little success. Ironically L5343 was not only the first to arrive but also the first to be lost. On a flight in low cloud across Iceland the Battle's engine cut and a forced landing was made on the beach of a small lake. The two man crew walked 44 miles (70km) across inhospitable country in freezing temperatures before being found by the search party who were mounted on horse back. L5343 was destined to remain where it came down, at the mercy of the weather, scrap dealers and souvenir hunters until recovery commenced in 1970. The epic recovery would cover a multi page feature in itself. The engine arrived at Lyneham in a Hercules whilst the bulk of the airframe returned 'home' by Short Belfast in November 1972. The aircraft has been superbly restored, in two phases, and by the time that these words are read it will be back in Hendon Museum.



The photograph of RCAF Fairey Battle 2072, shown left, was taken from Sgt Bob Slaughter's photo album. It was based at No.3 B & G School, Macdonald, Manitoba and appears in his logbook with two flights on 15th and one on 19th October 1942.

49 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION TIES AND SCARVES

We are examining the viability of ordering a supply of Association ties and scarves. The proposed design is 1 cm. high 49 Squadron badges running in parallel lines diagonally across a dark blue background on polyester material. As the total financial layout could be over £1,000 we need to have an idea of the sales potential. Due to restrictions imposed by the MoD on our use of the badge these items will only be on sale to Association members. If there is sufficient interest and we order 100 of each the price would be approx; Ties £10.50 and scarves £12.50. If we only order 50 then the prices will increase by £2.00 and £4.00 respectively. An order for both items would be £21 and £26 respectively. All prices are plus p&p. Potential demand will dictate whether or not we proceed.

**NOTE; THESE ITEMS WOULD BE 49 SQUADRON
ASSOCIATION NOT AN OFFICIAL 49 SQUADRON PATTERN**

Contact Ed Norman whose details are on the back cover if you are interested.



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Wed 1st April 11.00am & 1.30pm

Wed 8th April 11.00am & 1.30pm

Sat 11th April 1.00pm & 3.00pm

Mon 13th April 1.30pm & 4.00pm

Plus Aircraft Flying Display

Wed 15th April 11.00am & 1.30pm

Wed 22nd April 11.00am & 1.30pm

Wed 29th April 11.00am & 1.30pm

Lancaster Taxi Ride places are available for this year,
Please ring Louise on 01790 763207

Refreshments all day.

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READERS LETTERS

Cyril Hunter wrote;

“During WWII I was a member of 119 Squadron (Scunthorpe Air Training Corps.

“In July 1943 approximately 20 cadets were detailed for a week’s camp to experience life in the RAF on an operational bomber station. Our destination, RAF Fiskerton near Lincoln, the home of 49 Squadron. Due to a number of ATC Cadets having been killed, all ATC logbooks had to be signed by our parents giving us permission to fly in service aircraft.

“During my stay I was assigned to fly with Sgt. G A Edy (Pilot), for some reason everyone called him Vic, and his crew of a Lancaster, EA-S LM337. When the aircraft had been on ops the previous night and after repairs, if any, had been carried out, the aircraft was then on NFT in the afternoon prior to the coming night’s ops. For me it was beyond words. To fly in a Lancaster over Lincoln Cathedral and the surrounding area was really exciting.

“One evening there was a big do in the Sergeants Mess, music, dancing and a pint or two. During the course of the evening I met many of the aircrew guys, my entire heroes.

“Now what has prompted me to write to you is, over the years I have always had a great interest in 49 Squadron. I have the books, Dog at War and Dunholme ‘Lodgers’. Also from time to time I visit the memorial at the end of the runway. I have also met with John Ward. On seeing the photograph of you on the net holding a photo of the crew of JA691, I thought that you might like a copy of the signatures that I obtained when at the Sergeants Mess do. Included is that of Sgt Norman Buchanan RAAF (Air Gunner) back row left on your photo.

“In 2006 on one of our trips to see our daughter in Australia, we visited the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. In the Hall of Memory there is a long series of bronze panels recording the names of the Australian dead. There I found the name of Sgt Buchanan.

“However, to come back to Sgt Edy. On the night of the 24/25th July he was on ops, target Hamburg. It was also his 21st birthday. Meeting up with him and the crew the next day I had a piece of his 21st birthday cake.

“Before I left Fiskerton Sgt Edy DFM, 1238568, later F/O, gave me a pair of wings from an old tunic.

“He completed his tour of ops, the last one being Leipzig on Dec 3rd 1943. He then went on to be an instructor.

“After the war I met up with him again. He became Sub-Postmaster in Sheffield. One day, shortly after our meeting a large brown envelope was delivered to me. It contained two RAF Pilot’s Logbooks and a note from Vic saying to keep them forever.

“They are now my most treasured possessions.”

20/7/43
Norman Buchanan SGT
RAAF
49 Squadron
T. Tommy

Hones hoping
you get all
trying to get
RAAF
Sgt. R. W. Slaughter
RAAF
49 Squadron

20/7/43
Rev. Allwood
49 Squadron
Sgt. R. W. Slaughter
49 Squadron

20/7/43
John Nugent SGT
have a
D. H. J. Randall
49 Squadron
H. B. 617

Lancaster IV
Sgt. Mac' McDonald
A. G. Rear
Gordon Hedy
Sgt. R. W. Slaughter
S. W. Mason RAAF

Of those who signed Cyril's autograph book on July 20th 1943, Norman Buchanan was killed 18th August and John Nugent on 23rd September. The website to which Cyril refers is 'The Loss of Lancaster JA691' by Malcolm Brooke. My uncle, Sgt. R W Slaughter was the rear gunner in the crew of F/O H J Randall, Sgt. N W Buchanan was the mid upper gunner. I am intrigued that Norman wrote T Tommy as the crew's regular aircraft was L Love. Maybe L Love was too sissy for a jackaroo! Between each bronze plaque

in Canberra there is a slight gap into which people insert the wire of poppies, opposite the names. When Barbara and I visited the Memorial in 2004 I placed a poppy against Norman's name. However, the gap was very narrow and it was difficult to get the poppy to stay in place. I was interested to find that Cyril had the same problem. Ed.



ATC Cadet, Cyril Hunter, is second from the left.

Photo courtesy; CF Hunter

Ever busy, Eric Clarke e-mailed;

"What a year! Such an upsurge in public interest and demand for my attendance here and there - I am so glad I am fit enough to respond, Duxford, Waddington, Wendover, Elvington, Scampton and Duxford again on the 29th November. I am so grateful to the people who take such care of me and get me here and there, it is so heart warming, and it is wonderful to find myself with fellow survivors of Bomber Command.

"I am Yorkshire born and bred, but also a Lancastrian since I survived 12 Ops and many hours in our famous Lancaster in 1942, so it was a unique occasion to be offered a private `inside view` of the newly restored Halifax "Friday the 13" at Elvington recently.

"Cosford - The Royal Air Force Museum, the recovered Hampden from Scandinavia in process of partial restoration for future exhibition. A private view with your good self, Wing Cdr Jim Flint DFC GM DFM, (1 month my junior !!) Ted Cachart, Bill Pyrah, John May and the Senior Technician in charge of the restoration team, Darren Pridday, who gave us a mind boggling insight into the work on the Hampden. Jim and I were the two ex-Hampden air crew, Jim a Sgt.Pilot, later Wing Cdr (see page 91 in Beware of the Dog at War) and myself, Sgt.Wop/Ag, later Flt.Lt Signals, and Bill Pyrah ground engineer. Looking at the partially restored fuselage, minus nose and tail, the radios and so many bits and pieces I am again reminded of Alfred Lord Tennyson`s words, "I would that I could utter the thoughts that arise in me."

"Laying the wreath at Scampton Village Memorial on behalf of our 49 Squadron was particularly poignant on Remembrance Sunday - having in mind the recent return of our Hampden from Holland."

I received an e-mail from artist Trevor Meads;

“I understand from my uncle, Geoffrey Brunton, that you might be interested in showing one or two of my paintings in the '49 Squadron Association Magazine'. Please find attachments of my paintings which are directly connected to 49 Squadron. The first is Lancaster EA-U which my uncle flew in during 1944. He now has this painting. The second shows Lancasters of 49 Squadron ready to leave on a mission from somewhere in Lincolnshire. Originally it was going to be RAF Fiskerton but Geoff has since told me the aircraft used to queue up in the opposite direction at this airfield. This painting is Acrylics on canvas and measures 24"X 18". If I were to sell this one it would I hope to be for around the £200 mark just to give you some idea of cost. A commission would probably be on a larger scale and would ,depending on what might be wanted, at least double the price. It might sound expensive but the time taken goes into weeks not days.“

See page 31 for illustrations. Ed.

In a routine email our Australian Secretary, Bob Barnes, told this tale;

“.....Here is a true family story. Nephew, who lives on the plains, was recently swimming in the irrigation canal which is a few yards from the family house. He saw a tiger snake which was sharing the same part of the canal, caught and killed it. Trusty Swiss Army knife enabled Tim to cut off its head which was placed inside his shorts, and forgotten. After getting ready for school a while later he sat on the snake's head causing the fangs to inject an unknown quantity of venom into his backside. He told his dad who promptly wrote a 'letter to teacher' as follows. 'Tim was bitten by a tiger snake earlier today. If he shows any signs of illness please get him to hospital; fast'.”

Moral; If you've got something in your trousers don't forget about it! Ed.

On October 20th Dave Harrison was moved to e-mail me as follows;

“Did you read the article in the Mail on Saturday ref. The memorial to be constructed in Regents Park to Bomber Command? Matthew Hickley the journalist wrote a good piece but he had a photo of an American who was supposed to be Arthur Harris and although he 'brought up' Dresden he didn't mention the Baedeker raids ordered by Goering on Coventry, Hull etc etc ;- 'Dear Matthew, As a former member of 49 Sqdn 5 Group Bomber Command I feel your article on Saturday 18.10.08 could have been better balanced if you had mentioned the 'Baedeker' terrorist raids by the Luftwaffe which were ordered by Hermann Goering. These concentrated incendiary and high explosive attacks caused firestorms and reduced many of our city centres to rubble and caused the deaths of thousands of innocent people. Needless to remind you, the **American officer**, depicted and giving an 'American salute', **was not** Sir Arthur (Bomber) Harris and illustrates an elementary but very common mistake by journalists in not checking out material.' ”

Ron Eeles also spotted the 'Mail' mistake and sent me a copy of the article. It was not a good day for that paper as the headline of a piece on the same page read, "Last survivor of Great Escape camp dies at 87." It goes on, ".....Mr Thomas was captured as he scrambled for the exit but persuaded guards to spare his life. He left the camp when it was liberated in 1945....." Ron then drew my attention to the letters page, four days later, which contained four letters responding to the article and its headline; "My late husband W/C WE (Tim) Thomas OBE AFC did help to dig the tunnel at Stalag Luft III but he wasn't captured scrambling for the exit and did not persuade the guards to spare his life. Sagan wasn't a German Air Force Camp, but a German PoW camp for Allied airmen. My husband wasn't liberated from the camp; together with many other prisoners, he started on January 27, 1945, on what became known as 'the long march'...." The second commenced, "My father is also a living survivor of the Great Escape. F/L Alan Bryett, who flew with 158 Squadron was shot down over Berlin in 1943 and sent to Stalag Luft III.....He is 86 and is living in Kent." The next read; "Further to the death of W/C Thomas, there's at least one other Great Escape survivor. My brother-in-law, Leslie Broderick, 87, a former Lancaster pilot lives in Natal....." And finally "My father Howard Pearce is still alive and well, aged 89, and a survivor of Stalag Luft III....."

Where do these journalists get their information?

Computer whiz-kid, Nora Crabbe, e-mailed the following extract from the RAFA magazine on behalf of her husband former F/S but now W/O Lou Crabbe. [Congratulations.....Sir!];

Those who were demobbed as flight sergeant but eligible for promotion on the time basis can apply for their Royal Warrant if they served more than two years from the date of initial promotion to flight sergeant because records will show their length of service. Apply to:-

S/Ldr McKenzie, MOD Medals Office, Building 250, Innsworth, GL3 1HW

Provide; Details of service, service number, date of birth, dates of entry and discharge.

Next of kin may apply.

Non Member, Graham Boyd sent the following disturbing e-mail which relates to his late father, Bill Boyd, who was shot down during the Peenemunde raid;

I wanted to show Grandad's website to one of my daughters so I Googled in his name. Imagine my surprise to find his Caterpillar Badge being auctioned. It was stolen many years ago during a break in. He subsequently acquired a replacement from The Caterpillar Club. I am thinking of notifying Winchester Police but I suspect that it will be a waste of time

Your Association will be disgusted, I suspect.

CAN YOU HELP?

Colin Cripps would like to get in touch with anyone who was involved with the aircraft (Air or ground crew) which took part in the raid on Wintershall synthetic oil refinery at Lutzkendorf. Colin's details are on the back cover.

In the letter from Cyril Hunter describing his 1943 visit to Fiskerton as an ATC Cadet he finishes;

“Alas, the only thing that I never managed to obtain is a photo of the Edy crew. If anyone can help or knows of someone who might have a photo it will be very much appreciated. I will gladly pay for same.”

The Sunday Express is running a campaign called ‘Honour the Bomber Boys’. On November 14th it featured the efforts of some people in Holland to positively identify a crashed Wellington, thought to be R1397 of 103 Squadron from Elsham Wolds. The crew were recovered from the crash and are buried in anonymous graves in a CWGC cemetery. The Dutch wish to raise a memorial at the site of the crash and positively identify the crew. It is reported however that the RAF have refused to help. Douwe Drijver, a Dutch historian and Honorary Friend of our Association, is quoted as saying, “We know a great deal about Wellington R1397. We know the identity of each crew man, but without confirmation by the RAF we cannot build a memorial. We hope relatives of the crew will add their voices to our cause and help the RAF change its mind.” He goes on, “It is very sad. We believe the relatives of the men would like their final resting place to be properly acknowledged. Many people here find the RAF’s attitude hard to understand. We recognise that these men gave their lives for our liberation. We are grateful and feel it our duty to commemorate their sacrifice.” An RAF spokesman is quoted as saying that it is impossible to confirm the men’s identity. He is reported to continue, “A Wellington did go down on the night in question but we have no record of where.” It is suggested that one way to settle the argument is to excavate the crash site, as a piece of wreckage may be enough to identify the bomber.

The following week the Sunday Express appealed in the column, “...but first they must officially identify them and to do that they have to excavate the crash site. The support of the crew’s relatives is vital for this to go ahead.

The crew of members of R 1397 are;

P/O Mervyn Sydney Lund from Auckland, New Zealand.

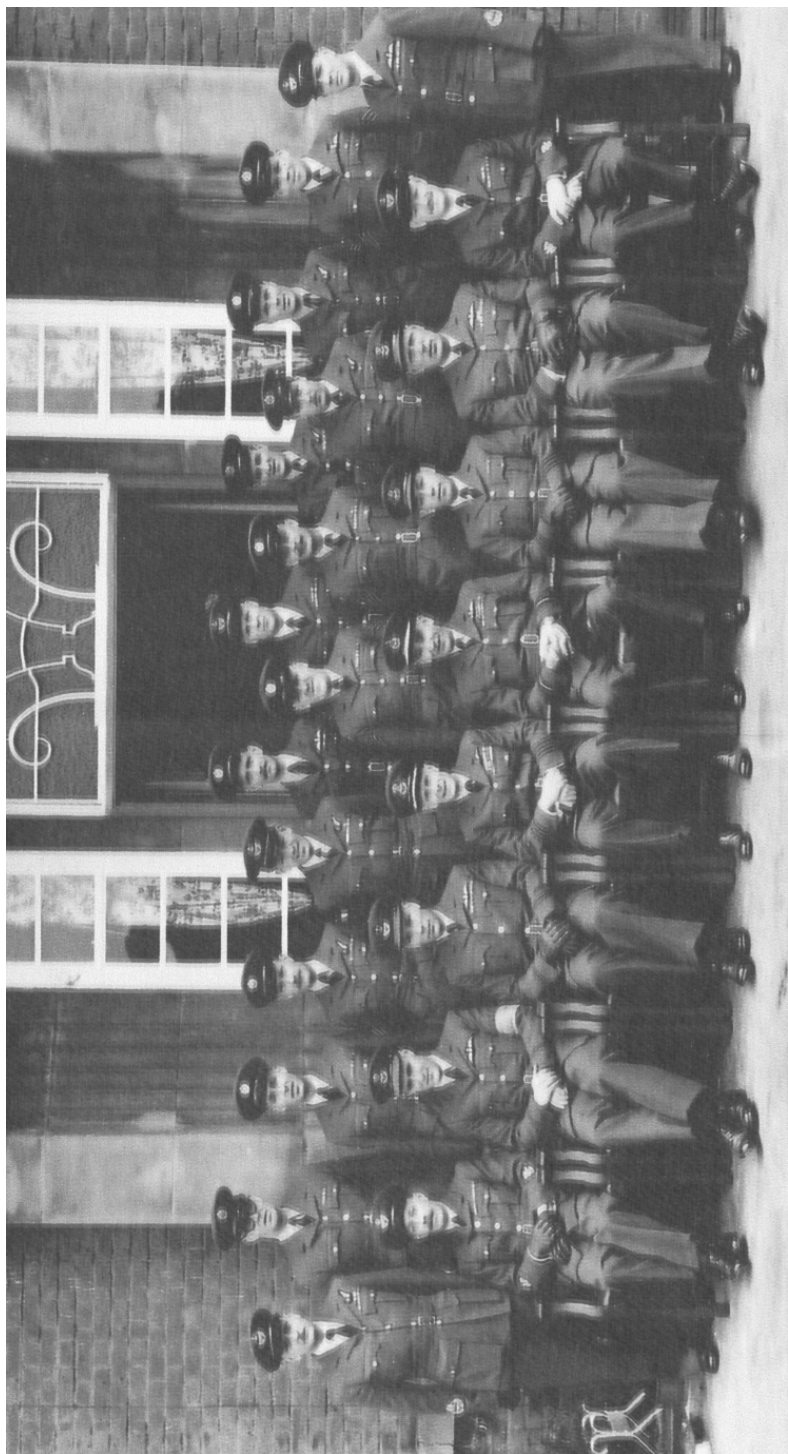
Sgt John James Cox of Knowle, Bristol.

Sgt Alfred Le Poidevin from the Channel Islands.

Sgt Arthur Edward Owen of Birmingham.

Sgt Frank Gordon Walker of Hornsea, Yorkshire.

Sgt Ray Williams from Bridgend, Glamorgan.”



Stuart Key writes; "I am certain that the photo was taken at RAF Upwood after the AOC's inspection, year uncertain, possibly 1955. I have indicated those I know as 49ers. Memory fades after a time. Perhaps we may be lucky to identify a few more. **Stuart** is standing second right. On his right is **Jim** ? Later to become the **Sergeants Mess Manager** at RAF Marham. Standing in the left of the doorway as you look at it is **Roy Thomas**. Can you identify any more?

Non Member Mr W.D. (Jock) Millar phoned then wrote to me from France. He has been involved in a number of municipal ceremonies and extracts from his letter read as follows;

“[We are searching for the relatives of the crew of] Lancaster EA-K [JB714] which was shot down on the night of 9/10 June 1944 falling on the town of Morigny-Champigny near Etampes south west of Paris. A ceremony will be held to honour the memory of the seven crew whose graves have been looked after by the town ever since. The ceremony will also honour the crew of another Lancaster of 44 Squadron shot down later the same night. The intention is to hold the ceremony exactly sixty-five years afterwards, i.e. 9/10 June 2009. The crew from 49 Squadron is; P/O T S Smiley RAF (26), F/S L A Hinch RAF (23), Sgt D V Blaikie RAF (22), Sgt L J Rainbow RAF , Sgt D Sanderson RAF (20), Sgt B F Webb RAF (20), F/Sgt R D Stuart RAAF (20).

I would just add that I have represented the RAF at many such commemoration ceremonies all over the country. Tradition has it that a British soldier is buried where he falls. This is certainly true of aircrew shot down over France and what impresses me is that sixty odd years later their 'last resting places' are still looked after by local municipalities.

Ted Cachart is looking after this one so if you can help then please contact him, details on the back page Ed.



**Paintings by Trevor Meads, See letter page 27.
For more paintings see
Trevor's website;
www.meadsart.co.uk**

