

The 4T9er

LIFE IN THE OLD DOG YET!

**The 49 Squadron Association Magazine
November 2009 Issue 16**



Photo; Margaret Boughton

**Ted Cachart, Sandra Donner and Ken Warner lay wreaths at
The Fiskerton Airfield Memorial on behalf of
49 Squadron Association, 5th Lincoln Scout Troop and 576 Squadron.**

IN MEMORIAM

H. Trimnell G Sacker K. Gibson
WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

WELCOME TO:

NEW MEMBERS

Derek Jones Malcolm Maxwell David Brady Bill Cooke

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Jane Sacker Claire Britton Pat Gibson Penny Gilpin
Diana & Rik Rackshit (Formerly 'Friends') Oliver Everott

NEW HONORARY FRIEND

Peter Hare



Mounted beneath the RAF ensign in Scampton Church is the brass plaque in memory of the crew of 49 Squadron's Hampden P1206.

Alan Walker writes; "The plaque was provided by RAF Halton following a visit made by Jacqui Purser and Frankie Newman, W.O. Saunders' daughters, and it was their idea for it to be erected in Scampton, St John Church. The cadets at RAF Station Cranwell helped to mount it. I should add that the Church authorities were very helpful particularly at local level. The Churchwardens have been thinking of a short service of dedication subject of course to the Vicar's approval. But it would be nice to tie in with the display at RAF Scampton Museum and its opening with suitable invites to family members."

Photo; Alan Walker

EDITORIAL

I've got to start with an apology. In the August issue I incorrectly stated that the reunion in 2010 is to commence on Sunday 10th June. Thank you to those of you who have drawn my attention to the fact that the 10th is a Thursday. The reunion actually starts on Sunday 6th June. That date should ring a bell! Booking forms will be sent out with the next issue of The 4T9er.

A special thank you to those who enquired after my eyesight. I have now been discharged by the consultant and although there is some distortion in the vision in my left eye my sight has improved considerably.

Thank you once again to those who have sent donations over the past three months. They are much appreciated. In the August issue we included a large number of coloured photos of June's reunion. This was to provide as complete a picture as possible for those who were unable to attend. Whilst I believe, for that reason, that the expenditure was worthwhile the printing costs alone amounted to £295. In order to recoup some of that cost the printed version of this issue has much less colour. The e-mailed copy is not affected.

Thank you also to those who have sent in articles and items for inclusion in this and future issues. One of the Association's main aims is to keep alive the spirit of the squadron that ceased to exist 43 years ago. It is crucial that we continue to publish material that recalls the squadron's history, so keep it coming. Incidentally, I have received much positive comment on Bettie Baird's Land Army reminiscences which we published in May and August's issues so articles don't have to be pure 49' to be interesting.

I am saddened to report the passing of; Hugh Trimmell on September 1st. Hugh flew his 30 op tour as navigator to pilot George Lee between 15th July to 11th December 1944. Former Associate Member Geoff Sacker was the brother-in-law of Sgt Dennis Imber who was lost on 16th October 1940. A regular at reunions, Ken Gibson DFC was Bombing Leader by the end of his tour in 1945.

The inscription on the plaque opposite reads;

IN REMEMBRANCE OF

W.O. C.A. Saunders D.F.M. Pilot (Killed in Action)

Sgt. J.M. D'Arcy - Navigator (Killed in Action)

Sgt. J.E. Kehoe - crewman (Killed in Action)

Sgt. S.G. Mullenger - crewman (Killed in Action)

Their Hampden aircraft was shot down near Hoorn in Holland whilst on operations against Essen on the night of 8-9th November 1941

We welcome four new Members. Derek Jones, who was 4192608 AC2, an Assistant Instrument worker on the Valiant Mk1 preparing, both in the USA and Christmas Island, for the Grapple tests. Derek liked Australia so much that he settled there. Malcolm Maxwell RAAF flew 35 ops as navigator between 1st August 1944 and 4th May 1945. Malcolm now lives in Adelaide. His daughter lives in Happy Valley, a name that has less than happy memories for those who flew to the Rhur Valley. Former pilot, David Brady completed 34 ops during his tour between 1st May and 15th August 1944 after which he was awarded the DFC. Three 'sprog' pilots flew their second dickie trips with David including our late chairman, Leslie 'Uncle Will' Hay, on 7th August. Bill Cooke flew his tour between July and December 1944 as mid upper gunner in F/O J. Parkin's crew.

Of our new Associate Members, Jean Sacker is the widow of Geoff Sacker whose passing is recorded above. In the May 2007 issue of The 4T9er we acknowledged the kind donation of £95 by Jean and Geoff, this being the proceeds that they had received on the occasion of their Diamond Wedding and was dedicated to the memory of Jean's brother Dennis. Claire Britton is the niece of F/S Stanley Smith who was navigator in P/O Montgomery's crew. He was lost on his 11th op, to Schweinfurt, 26th April 1944. Pat Gibson has become an Associate Member on the sad death of her husband Ken as have her daughter and son-in-law, Diane and Rik Rackshit who were previously 'Friends'. Oliver Everott is the nephew of Sgt Arthur Blanchard, navigator, whose aircraft was lost without trace on an exercise, 11th December 1944. Penny Gilpin is the daughter of W/C Gilpin who commanded A Flight at Fiskerton in the summer of 1943.

New Honorary Friend, Peter Hare, a local resident, has taken it upon himself to maintain the Fulbeck Memorial, a service for which we are most grateful.

On Sunday October 11th we gathered at Duxford Air Show for the launch of 'Beware of the Dog at War' Second Edition. An illustrated report appears on pages 16 and 17. I read the 1st Edition from cover to cover but on first inspection of this latest release I must say that the presentation and additional contents made me feel that I was looking at something completely new so don't be put off from buying the 2nd Edition. The total content is now staggering and our congratulations go to John and Ted for producing a masterpiece. Whilst on the subject of signings don't miss the notice at the bottom of page 6.

Canadian, Maurice Price DFM who joined recently finished a letter to me; "Thanks to yourself and the Association I am now corresponding with my navigator, Donald Andrew, also with my skipper's son Rodney George in Australia." Thank you Maurice, this is all the encouragement we need.

The aviation world was saddened by the news of the death of Gunther Rall at the age of 91. He was the third highest scoring fighter pilot in history bringing down 275 aircraft. He flew in the Battle of France, Battle of Britain, Balkans Campaign, Eastern Front (272 of his victims) and Defence of the Reich. After the war he was involved in the formation of the new Luftwaffe de Bunderswehr becoming its chief with the rank of Generalleutnant. He was also military attache to NATO. I met Gunther on a couple of occasions and he was most courteous. His friend, artist Nick Trudgian, told me, "He was one of the best even though he had crosses on his plane."

I watched a TV programme called 'Wounded' which focussed on the treatment and rehabilitation of two young soldiers who had been seriously wounded in Afghanistan. One was 19 and the other 23, they had lost both legs, the former was blinded and the latter had also lost his left arm. Whilst following their treatment and observing the amazing courage of them and their fellow patients one was almost reduced to tears. Their continual comment was, "If I sit in a corner and cry it won't change anything but it will ruin the rest of my life. I've got to get on with it." Whilst the ambition of the 19 year old was to be with his partner at the birth of their child, the two of them just wanted to get back to their regiment and take part in the Medal Parade. This they achieved by sheer guts and bloody mindedness.

Conversely it would appear that the services' long time practice of NCOs yelling at recruits, "You aren't supposed to think you 'orrible little man", may have backfired on the RAF. Apparently an LAC is suing on the basis that he was 'allowed' to dive head first into a shallow pool during a 'It's a Knockout' type game (Jeux sans Frontiers, to our continental readers). Whilst I have every sympathy for the lad's condition, he is now confined to a wheelchair, I am having great difficulty in finding common ground with his argument.

On Monday 26th October, Honorary Friend' Flt Lt Gary Mennell took Eric Clarke on a flight down memory lane. Picking him and Assoc. Sheila Hamilton up from RAF Waddington they flew to RAF Scampton where they landed for a short time before returning, over Lincoln to Waddington. I spoke to Eric the following day and was he excited!

On November 8th Services of Remembrance were held at Fiskerton. I would like to thank Rev. Peter Collins and his team for their hospitality. Our thanks as always go to the Stuffins family for their dedication to the Airfield Memorial which this year included the mounting of two plaques on our behalf. Finally thank you to 5th Lincoln Scout Troop for providing the Guard of Honour.

In the August issue I wrote briefly about the accidental take off of the Bruntingthorpe Victor. The intention was to taxi the aircraft at high speed

down the runway, shutting down well before V1. Apparently the co-pilot 'froze' and didn't close the throttles when instructed. Whilst he was a ground engineer the pilot was fully qualified on the Victor apart from the fact that he hasn't held a licence since the seventies. Happily his skill is not diminished and no blame has been attributed to him.

On the other hand the pilot who skilfully crash landed the British Airways jet at Heathrow when both engines failed, saving the lives of 150 people in the process, is now on the dole. Having been made redundant by BA he had his application to join Korean Airways turned down because he has a crash on his CV. I would have thought that a pilot with experience of crashing, through no fault of his own, would have been an asset!

On August 29th Barbara and I celebrated our Golden Wedding Anniversary on board a Eurostar train enroute for Avignon. On the return journey a week later Eurostar whisked us up to St. Pancras (Who was St Pancras?) to arrive dead on time. On attempting to buy tickets from Euston to Lichfield we were told, "There aren't any trains running on London Midland Railway as no crews have turned up." This was a Sunday and apparently they run trains if train crews turn up! If not...no trains! As this was the first Sunday on which the management had decided to pay ordinary time, surprise, surprise - no crews! "Virgin are running a special offer to Birmingham New Street at £12-50 each." As Birmingham is 100 miles nearer home than Euston we decided to take that. Whilst waiting for our son-in-law to collect us Barbara stayed with the luggage on a very quiet New Street concourse whilst I visited the gents. When we watched the Midlands News reporting on the cock up we were surprised to see Barbara looking all alone and forlorn with a pile of luggage apparently stranded and about to doss down with the Brummy wino's. Welcome to England!

I was looking through the Page & Moy holiday brochure and was amazed to see that the name of the ship providing an Italian cruise is named 'Costa Fortuna'. Mama Mia! What a mistakea to makea!

On behalf of Barbara, myself and the 'Crew' I wish you and yours a very happy Christmas and New Year.

'Til the next Time.

CALLING ALL EX 49 SQDN WWII AIRCREW

Aces High Gallery propose to run a series of 'signings' at their Wendover Gallery featuring prominent WWII RAF squadrons. We have been invited to participate, probably in March next year. A fee plus expenses will be paid. If you would like to participate let the Secretary know as soon as possible.

IN SEARCH OF RALPH

By Graham Bairnsfather

In September 2008 I had the privilege of doing a taxi ride in the Lancaster 'Just Jane' at East Kirkby. My journey from Australia to East Kirkby started several years ago when I was doing research on my uncle, W/O Ralph Bairnsfather, who died on 7th March 1945, aged 23, whilst on a bombing raid over Germany.

Ralph was the bomb aimer on Lancaster EA-X, B Flight, 49 Squadron RAF, piloted by F/O Roussel Stark RAAF, Sgt Fred Brennan RAAF Flight Engineer, W/O Johnny Yeoman RAAF Navigator, Sgt Gus Lovett RAAF Wireless Operator, Sgt Paddy Gilbert Mid Upper Gunner and Sgt Joe Dixon Rear Gunner. They took off from Fulbeck just before 6pm along with 17 other Lancasters, making up 234 Lancasters and 7 Mosquitoes of 5 Group to bomb the oil refinery at Harburg, just south of Hamburg.



Left to right	RWG (Roussel) Stark RAAF	Pilot	KIA
	JR (Joe) Dixon	Rear Gunner	POW
	JF (Fred) Brennan RAAF	Flight Engineer	POW
	RMc (Ralph) Bairnsfather RAAF	Bomb Aimer	KIA
	ATJ (Gus) Lovett RAAF	Wireless Operator	KIA
	RC (Paddy) Gilbert	Mid Upper Gunner	KIA
	JC (Johnny) Yeoman RAAF	Navigator	POW

The crew on its 13th mission, had dropped its bomb load and was returning to base when they were attacked by a Ju88G-6 night fighter of IV./NJG3 over Sandbostal. Piloted by Oberfeldwebel (Flight Sergeant) Heinz Misch the Ju88 was equipped with two 20mm cannon 'Schrage Musik' upward firing guns. Misch's 'kill' was his 10th and last claim before the end of the war and he was classified as an 'Ace'.

The main escape hatch on a Lancaster is directly under the bomb aimer's prone position, so by rights, Ralph should have been the first crewman out of the plane. The tail gunner, Joe Dixon, was trapped in his turret so Ralph made his way to the rear of the crashing plane to help him. Unknown to Ralph, Joe managed to free himself and exited via the rear door. Ralph was last seen mid aircraft fixing on his parachute. Joe, Fred and Johnny were captured and spent the remaining period of the war as POW's.

Ralph, Roussel, Gus and Paddy all died. They are buried in the Commonwealth War Cemetery at Becklingen in northern Germany. I visited the cemetery in December 2007 and placed poppies that I had brought over from the Australian War Memorial in Canberra on their graves. I was the first family member to visit Ralph's grave and it was a very moving experience. I phoned my dad, Hugh, in Australia from the grave side and told him I was standing beside his brother. I think tears were shed at both ends of the phone.

Ralph and Roussel were both Adelaide (South Australia) lads and their parents were devastated by the loss. After the war, Joe Dixon wrote to Roussel's parents telling of that fateful night and it was then printed in the Glenelg Guardian newspaper on 22 Nov 1945. He says in the letter *"On the night of March 7 last we bombed an oil refinery of Harburg. We watched our bombs drop right in the middle of the fire. We were laughing and joking when Rouss spotted an FW190. There were a few planes in front of us, going down in flames. We ran into a lane of flares which were lighting the sky and Rouss and Paddy noticed a Ju88 pass under us. When I spotted it I opened fire and got it. We did some manoeuvres then flew level. Rouss and Paddy watched the Ju88 going down in flames. I was temporarily blinded by my own gun-fire when something hit my turret and set it on fire. I told Rouss and started getting ready in case we had to get out. A few seconds later Rouss gave orders to jump immediately. I had a fight to do it as my turret was well alight. Rouss kept control of the plane to give us all a chance...I believe Paddy and Gus were killed outright...When I finally got out and was floating down, I saw our plane hit the ground in flames. Rouss and Ralph must have died at once. After I got down I found somewhere to stay the night, and the following morning, early, started walking. After going twenty five miles Fred caught up with me. He had slept in the same woods, but neither of us had known it. Fred told me the last*

he saw was Ralph fastening his straps ready to go. He must have lost his life by only a second or two."

Upon Joe, Fred and Johnny's release they each completed a questionnaire for British/American ex-prisoners of war relating to their capture and subsequent time in the POW camps. Some comments made make interesting reading; 'Threats to hand over to Gestapo.' – Fred Brennan on his interrogation after capture.

'Interrogator knew Squadron Group target. Names of all Squadron officers etc' – Johnny Yeoman on his interrogation after capture.

'Was told all about equipment 49 Squadron was using. Interrogator drew plan of equip. and wanted confirmation of his information' – Joe Dixon on his interrogation after capture.

'German refusal to allow POW's on march to display white flags etc in case of attack. Column of about 1500 men were attacked by P47's on Saturday 14th April 1945, about 10am. 12 killed, 43 wounded, many amputations. Camp not marked POW until after strafing.' – Joe Dixon commenting on a particular event.

Armed with all this information I was determined that Ralph's short life should not be forgotten. His two brothers survived the war and went on to have families but this was not to be for Ralph.

I could not even begin to imagine what it would have felt like to be in a crashing aircraft, trying to make your way from the nose of the plane, climbing over the main spar, in a vain attempt to save another human being. I approached the Australian War Memorial where they have Lancaster 'G for George' from 460 Squadron RAAF on display to see if I could get inside and see what the conditions would have been like. This was not possible. So began my quest to experience the inside of a Lancaster.

Each edition of the '4T9er' magazine advertises taxi runs in 'Just Jane'. This was what I was looking for! Several emails later I was booked in for the 24th September. More emails between Secretary, Alan Parr and President, John Ward ensured that I could envelop myself in 4T9er history.

Leaving my family behind, I flew to London early September on what my wife called a late mid life crisis (without the Harley Davidson or mistress). I was a man on a mission. I visited the Imperial War Museum, a lot of London, then headed to Woodhall Spa where I caught up with John Ward who treated me to a most welcoming stay in the area. I went to RAF Coningsby and inspected the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (BBMF) and sat at the end of the runway to see two Typhoons take off in formation - a very impressive noise display.

I spent time at the Petwood Hotel, the watering hole of Guy Gibson and the ‘Dam Busters’ 617 Squadron.

The big day at East Kirkby arrived. Alan Parr had phoned the Pantons telling them of my reason for being there. John Ward also turned up and introduced me to Fred Panton, co-owner of ‘Just Jane’.

Climbing aboard the Lancaster I was doing what Ralph and his younger brother, Bruce, had done. (Bruce, was a pilot of a Lancaster with 460 Squadron RAAF based at Binbrook). I made my way forward and climbed over the large main spar, passing the radio operator’s position, then the navigator’s before climbing into the pilot’s seat. By now I was perspiring due to the physical effort of moving about the plane and also from sheer excitement. I tried to imagine what it would have been like for the crew decked out in full kit, in a spiralling burning aircraft, moving about in the dark. I could not think of anything but the terror that they must have experienced.

Moving from the cockpit, I made my way down the steps into the bomb aimer’s position. This was the world of Ralph and I intently studied his “office”. What would have been in Ralph’s mind as he looked through the nose blister as the aircraft approached its target? The probing searchlights, the stream of arcing deadly flak, the hidden night fighters, aircraft in difficulty, the red, green, yellow target indicators slowly floating down, the city ahead in flames – the crew flying into the jaws of hell while still trying to focus on their particular tasks.

One by one the impressive Merlin engines fired up and the whole aircraft shook as the power increased. Looking over my shoulder I could see the pilot’s feet on the rudder pedals manoeuvring the aircraft along the tarmac accompanied by the hissing noises as the brakes were applied for steering. This was all ‘Boys Own Manual’ stuff to me, the excitement was overwhelming. I could imagine the adrenaline rush mixed with a very large dose of fear that crews must have experienced on their nightly raids.

We proceeded out onto the grass and taxied around for a good five minutes then back to the dispersal area where the engines were revved up two at a time. The noise was incredible, to think the crew had to endure a much louder noise, sometimes up to ten hours in very uncomfortable conditions. I closed my eyes and suddenly I was no longer at East Kirkby but somewhere around 15,000 feet flying to Duren, Heilbronn, Giessen, Heimbach, Merseburg, Brux, Dresden, Rositz, Bohlen, Gravenhorst and Harburg. (all targets the crew flew). Opening my eyes I looked down at the escape hatch directly under where I had been lying. What a difference this means of escape would have made to our family.

Upon engine shut down it was then possible to explore the plane more closely, front turret, mid upper turret, rear turret (mind your head getting into this position). I left the aircraft with joy that I had achieved my wish but also with a feeling of sadness with an insight into the 55,000 bomber aircrew that perished during the war.

I later had the honour of spending a morning with bomb aimer, John Aldridge at his home in Stalham, Norfolk, a most gracious man who flew at the time of Ralph. I gained a lot of information into what the crews did during a mission. I was saddened to hear of his recent passing.

Alan Parr drove from his home in the West Midlands to spend two days with me at Fiskerton, staying at the Old Tannery B&B. As well as our love for 49 Squadron we are both keen anglers so time passed very quickly and enjoyably with our common interests. Alan arranged for us to visit RAF Scampton where we met W/O John May, the Adjutant of the Red Arrows, and got to look over one of their aircraft. We also saw Guy Gibson's office from the outside and 'Nigger's grave'. The Red Arrows returned from an air show as we were leaving and we had a great view of them landing. Sadly, I said farewell to Alan and continued on my search. I visited Binbrook where my uncle Bruce was stationed, also Fiskerton, Fulbeck, Spanhoe Lodge, Duxford, Newark and Hendon seeing aircraft I had only read about or seen in photographs.

Another highlight was a 'Return to the 1940's' weekend at the Nene Valley Railway near Peterborough. The Lancaster, a Spitfire and Hurricane from the BBMF did three low fly overs. My mission was now complete; I had been inside a Lancaster and now experienced one flying overhead.

The three and a half weeks passed very quickly and I left England understanding and appreciating what this island nation and its people had endured. I was shown the utmost courtesy and friendship by everyone I met and came home with many hours of video footage and hundreds of photos.

I now have a more intimate connection with Ralph and have completed a gap in our family history. To me, Ralph was a hero. Heroes are something we create, something we need. It's a way for us to understand what is almost incomprehensible, how people could sacrifice so much for us. But for Ralph and his crew, the risks they took, and the wounds they suffered, they did that for their mates. Ralph may have fought for his country but he died for his mates.

Footnote. I would especially like to thank 49 SA's Researcher Colin Cripps for his many hours obtaining information on Ralph's last flight. My understanding has been greatly enhanced by the records he sent me.

Chance, fate or guidance by a Divine Hand has played, and still is playing, a huge part in the development of our Association. Malcolm Brooke stumbled 'by chance' on the memorial stone in Denmark to the crew of 49 Squadron's Lancaster JA691. Hans and Marilyn Nissen, whom I had befriended after my first visit to the stone, put him in touch with me. I was able to provide information for his new project, a website entitled; The loss of Lancaster JA691. Following that he produced 'The Dortmund—Emms Canal' and 'The Bielefeld Viaduct'. On retiring from his teaching career in Germany Malcolm happened to mention that he was looking for a new project. The rest as they say, 'Is history.'

THE 49 SQUADRON WEBSITE

By Malcolm Brooke

Early in 2007 I received a call from the Association Secretary, Alan Parr asking if I would consider becoming the webmaster of the 49Sqn Association website. I remember replying that I would be honoured but didn't realise the Association had a website. "We haven't yet!" was the reply.

And so it was that at the end of February 2007 the Committee met at Petwood Hotel to discuss our web presence. I had prepared an agenda where we could decide domain names, top level menus and other important structural concerns. At that moment however, I had no real idea what the content might be. It was then that a casual remark about how the Roll of Honour could be displayed developed into a major project to photograph the headstone of everybody with a known grave who was lost whilst serving with the Squadron.

The task is not yet complete but, at the time of writing, we have photographed 64 out of 66 European cemeteries and the headstones of those buried there. In the UK there are an astonishing 89 cemeteries and 87 of these with the headstones are currently displayed on the website.

The original WW2 project has been extended to include WW1 and Post WW2. Graham Glover, Alan Parr's brother-in-law, has taken an interest in WW1 losses and has visited 9 out of the 14 cemeteries where 49 Squadron members are buried. Thanks to the work of Richard Bartlett-May, the headstones of those killed in the Kenya Lincoln crash are now displayed. Other Members, Friends of the Association, local cemetery managers and members of the public have contributed to this project and their work is acknowledged on the website.

On a personal note I must thank my wife May for her support. She has endured many romantic weekends and several European summer holidays following routes that just happen to coincide with 49 Squadron cemeteries. At each and every headstone she has said a short prayer for the fallen and always requests a few minutes of quiet contemplation in each cemetery.

To provide a fuller picture of the Squadron, it was decided to include all those who served as aircrew and survived. An obvious next step was to include ground crew and these additions have enlarged the website enormously. The website is currently 4393 pages containing 3176 images and 276 other files.

Now, like a piece of coral in a vast sea of 'hyperspace' little pieces of information settle and are collected making the website grow almost organically. Family members send photographs and artifacts, attics being cleared out bring precious images to light and these are generously passed on to the Association.

The overall aim, to acknowledge everything about everybody, will obviously never be achieved. Time passes and many 49Sqn stories will never be told.

In 'Beware of The Dog at War' we publish the best operational history book of any Squadron and I would like to think that this accolade is true for the Squadron website.

Although he has no personal connections with 49 Squadron, Malcolm, with the support of his wife May, has developed a regard and passion for the Squadron as deep as any of us. As a token of our gratitude for the wonderful work that he has done on our behalf, at the 2008 Reunion I was delighted to announce that he had been invited, and had accepted, to become an Honorary Member.

FROM THE WEBSITE

The value of the website is perfectly illustrated in the following story. Having seen it Mme Dominique Gaillardin e-mailed our Researcher, Colin Cripps, in August this year;

I am the treasurer of a French cultural association in Meuse, near Bure where 5 British airmen are buried in the church cemetery (Commonwealth War Graves). I prepare a photographic exhibition about the history of the village and I want to make people remember these 5 men who crashed here on April 27th 1944. Their names are;

Stanley SMITH - RAF

Terence PARKIN - RAF

Roger James BOYCE - RAF

Robert MONTGOMERY - RAF

Robert Frazer CLUFF - RCAF

I found on your website some information but no photos. Could it be possible to have photos of these 5 men?

I knew (from an old lady of the village who was present on that night) that two men were safe; their names are;

Richard John MITCHELL - RAF – who evaded and came back to England on the 6th September 1944 via Switzerland. He died in 1968.

John Baker - RAAF - who became a prisoner of war in camp 357 Kopernikus.

For these two men, I found on your website. Do you know if John Baker is still alive and where I can find him.

I know that the target of this Lancaster was SCHWEINFURT. I know that it crashed at 0.57 hrs (German report).

Could you tell me;

1. How many Lancasters were airborne to Schweinfurt on that night and at what time?
2. Was the Lancaster flying back from Schweinfurt to England when it crashed or on the way to Schweinfurt. The old lady told me that after the crash, bombs exploded all night. Could it be right?

I suppose you have understood that I only want to put 'life' and 'light' on these war graves to permit to younger people to know exactly what happened on 27th April 1944 and always remember that very young men died for their freedom and peace.

My exhibition is on 29th August 2009. You will be welcome to Bure or anyone from the association.

I thank you very much for your help.

Colin replied;

.....We have only one photograph of the five, Sgt Stanley Smith, this I have attached.

We have not heard from F/S Baker or his family, however, I will be making enquiries with the Australian Government to obtain information about him. His service record will hold his last known address although this will be sixty years old.

On the night in question Bomber Command mounted five separate raids, against Essen, Villeneuve-St George and Schweinfurt. On the Schweinfurt raid 206 Lancasters and 11 Mosquitoes were deployed. 21 Lancasters were lost (9.3%).

All 49 Squadron aircraft were airborne at 21.40hrs. German coastal radar detected the bomber force heading out over the English coast between 22.00 and 22.50 hrs. At 22.45 the first RAF bombers of the combined bomber stream crossed the French coast near Caen.

Lancaster JB679 was flying towards Schweinfurt when it was attacked. From the combat report of the night fighter pilot, Lancaster JB679 was shot down using 'Schrage Musik', two heavy calibre (20mm) cannon firing upward from the rear fuselage of the aircraft. I have attached an explanation of Schrage Musik. I do not have a copy of the Squadron Operational Record Book for this raid however I can obtain a copy at a later date and forward it to you. This may show what bomb load JB679 was carrying. Reading from other sources it

would appear that the bomb load was a mixture of high explosive and 15lb incendiaries.

It could be possible for the bombs to explode in the aircraft during the night. However, I am waiting for a copy of a letter that had been sent from the village after the war that describes how the Germans would not allow the villagers to remove the bodies from the burning aircraft until later that morning. Four of the five bodies were identified by their identification discs. The body of Cluff was identified by a label on what was left of his uniform.

Associates Claire Britton and Alan Mitchell were both going to attend this exhibition, but in the end only Alan and his wife could make it. Claire Britton is the niece of F/S S. Smith, and Alan is the son of Sgt R. J. Mitchell.

From Mme Gaillardin to Colin;

I wish to give you some pictures of the exhibition in Bure with Mr Alan Mitchell and his wife Gillian. They met Mrs Gervaisot and Mr Levet who saw the crash when they were young and they saw the fields where Lancaster JB679 crashed. They were very touched. I suppose that they will tell you in details. Many people went to see the photos and to listen to the story of the plane and his crew.



Mrs Gervaisot has refound the daughter of the man who met John Mitchell just after the crash but she was too young to know what his father did at that time. I continue the researches to find the doctor who treated John Mitchell before he went to Cluves at Mrs Descharmes' house.

This women is very well known: She belonged to the Résistance and she hid about 400 persons in her house (mainly British aviators and resistants). Alan Mitchell said that there would be another plane not very far from Lancaster JB679. I just found three other crashes on that day in the same area but they fell on the morning.

I thank you very much for your help: without you I could not have done this exhibition.

With my best wishes.

Dominique GAILLARDIN.

**FORMER 49 SQUADRON WWII
AIRCREW LAUNCH
'BEWARE OF THE DOG AT WAR'
2ND EDITION**



Above, left to right; John Ward, 49 Squadron Association Hon. President and Historian, Author of *Beware of the Dog at War*. W/O Andy Anderson, wireless operator/air gunner, shot down on the Peenemunde raid, August 18th 1943, becoming a PoW. F/Lt Geoff Easterling, air gunner, was initially with 44 Sqdn. before flying 24 ops with 49 Squadron until being posted to 463 Squadron.

On Sunday October 11th the 2nd Edition of the 49 Squadron Operational Diary was successfully launched on the Derek Vanstone Aviation Books stand. Eight 49 Squadron WWII veterans plus author John Ward signed copies.

There was a steady flow of purchasers plus signature collectors eager to add those of the 49ers to their prints and books. During the day the stand was visited by a number of 4T9ers.

Once again the veterans who were signing commented on the respect shown them by the public of all ages.

John, Ted and 49 Squadron Association wish to thank; Derek Vanstone Aviation Books for hosting the event, Vector Fineart Prints for providing refreshments and Aces High for serving a buffet lunch.

Apart from a few light showers the weather was good and a most enjoyable day was had by all.



Above left to right; W/O Geoff Brunton, flight engineer flew 27 ops. F/Lt Eric Clarke, wireless operator/air gunner flew 26 ops in Hampdens, Manchesters and Lancasters. W/O Lou Crabbe, flight engineer flew 30 ops. S/Ldr Tom Bennett DFM, navigator, flew 32 ops with 49 Squadron before being posted to 617 Squadron where he flew a further tour on target marking Mosquitoes. S/Ldr John Dodkins, wireless operator/air gunner flew 29 ops. Inset; Ted Cachart, alias 'Ted the Lad', wireless operator/air gunner. He flew 7 ops before his Lancaster collided with another and at the age of 18 he parachuted to earth and capture.

49 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION

This was formed in the immediate post war years and has expanded steadily during the subsequent years to include all members of the squadron in 1945. In 2007 there were approximately 275 members comprised of Veterans, Associates and Friends.

In 2008 it launched a website that has expanded enormously in the short time and now includes the W/O's logbooks full of photos and photographs of aircraft at the operations in Europe.

A dedicated research team is providing an invaluable resource of data from various sources throughout the world so that one history is presented in plenty for those interested.

Any individual made a book, who served with 49 Squadron at any time is eligible to join as a Member. Some members of the Association have made the book as a book or as a book.

Apply to the Secretary:
The Club House
25 Avenue Road
West Wycombe
Bucks HP12 3JF
Tel: 0494 412114
Email: 49sq@49sq.org.uk

Visit the 49 Squadron Association website:
www.49sq.org.uk

"Well, that's it - looking back one wonders if it really ever happened, but there are times when I look at the horizon and know what they looked like when all Europe was blacked out - or when I see the full moon and clear sky, my mind goes back to similar night's over the Rhineland, and I can see fighters, the flak, searchlights and everything around, and I know - 'Yes! It really did happen."

F/Lt Lander Hay DFC 'Uncle Wot'

ISBN: 8 853212 4 8
EAN: 9 78 8 853212 4 8

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John Publications, 1 College Close, Hodge Ridge, Darby, DE16 2HS
Telephone: 01773 833161 or Email: kathleen@johnpubs.com

BEWARE OF THE DOG AT WAR

John Ward

SECOND EDITION

49 SQUADRON RAF BOMBERS COMMAND

JOHN WARD

JOHN PUBLICATIONS

SECOND EDITION

An Operational Diary (revised) of
49 Squadron
Spanning 49 years of Service
1916 - 1965

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REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2009



Photo; Margaret Boughton

Above; 49 SA Chairman, Ted Cachart invites Marion Gatfield to unveil the plaque to her late husband Tom and the late Leslie 'Uncle Will' Hay.

Left; The 49 Squadron Association Memorial.

The upper plaque, unveiled in June 2009 reads;

**DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
GEOFF STUFFINS**

1936 – 2009

**WHOSE GENEROSITY IN DONATING THIS
PLOT INSPIRED THE CREATION OF
THE FISKERTON AIRFIELD MEMORIAL**

The lower plaque reads;

**DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
TOM GATFIELD 1922—2006**

SECRETARY

AND

LESLIE 'UNCLE WILL' HAY 1917—2006

CHAIRMAN

**AFTER FLYING WITH 49 SQUADRON
DURING WORD WAR II THEY EACH
SERVED 49 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION
FOR MORE THAN 40 YEARS**

Lower left; Former Flight Engineer, Lou Crabbe, thanks the Guard of Honour formed by the 5th Lincoln Scout Troop.



Photo; John Fletcher



Photo; Margaret Boughton

Prior to the ceremonies at Fiskerton Airfield a Service of Remembrance took place in Fiskerton Parish Church. At least eleven 4T9ers plus their guests helped fill the church for the service which was led by Rev. Peter Collins. Wreaths were laid in memory of the fallen of 49 and 576 Squadrons.

Meanwhile at Doncaster Eric Clarke laid the Bomber Command Association wreath at the town's War Memorial after which he was Guest of Honour of the Mayor of Doncaster, and stood with her on The Mansion House steps for the March Past.

At 49's Bransby Memorial our wreath was laid by Stan Smith. Peter Hare did the honours at Fulbeck whilst Alan Walker did likewise at Scampton Church.

In Denmark Marilyn Nissen placed poppy crosses on the graves of eight 49 Squadron members in Aabenraa Cemetery and on the memorial at the crash site of 49's Lancaster JA691.

Further acts of remembrance would have taken place in England, Holland and France.

THE REASON WHY

Adapted by Norman Wilkins

Why do you march old man with medals on your chest?
Why do you grieve old man, for those friends you laid to rest?
Why do your eyes gleam old man, when you hear the bugles blow?
Tell me, why do you cry old man, for those days so long ago?

I'll tell you why I march young man, with medals on my chest.
I'll tell you why I cry young man, for those I laid to rest.
Through eyes that are misting over come visions of distant times
When all those fresh faced youngsters marched forth to the battle lines.

I think of comrades I have known Jack, Charlie, Bill and Fred.
How we laughed and joked together, next day they all were dead.
Along with others they fought and died killed by the blast of an enemy shell.
We buried them all in blanket shrouds in the earth near where they fell.

Others went to a watery grave no cross marks where they lie
Within the mighty ocean deep beneath the pale blue sky.
They joined up in their thousands in answer to the call
Most of them barely in their teens some barely out of school.

I march lad to remind you of the price they had to pay
So you can live in freedom that you enjoy today.

The Cold War was a time of tension and stress for those of us who lived through it. Apart from films, mostly American such as 'Strategic Air Command' we were in complete ignorance of what was going on behind the scenes. Here Brian Taylor spills some of the beans.

MY COLD WAR

By Brian Taylor



Pilot Officer Brian Taylor during training at RAF Lichfield in 1953.

The Vickers Valiant was the first V Bomber to enter service with the RAF. Its squadron service began on 6th July 1955 when four aircraft were flown by their crews from the O.C.U. at Gaydon to 138 Squadron at Wittering.

The Valiant had a performance in some ways similar to the Boeing 737. Its normal cruising speed was 435 kts. (501 mph) but its service ceiling was much higher, normally cruising at 43,000 ft but could fly much higher and faster. Its endurance was 7 hours plus with underwing tanks. (Which were permanently fitted whilst I was on them.)

The crew, as with all the V Bombers, was five - two pilots, two navigators and one AEO (Air Electronics Officer). Of the two navigators one was designated Plotter whilst the other, Nav. (Radar), had done an additional nine month course training on the Navigation and Bombing System (N.B.S.) which was the heart of the radar bombing and navigation capability.

I joined 49 Squadron in March 1961 at Wittering, my first flight being on 29th March in XD823. At that time 49' was a frontline bomber squadron operating in a high level attack role. However my stay at Wittering was short as we moved to Marham on June 27th.

At Marham 49' was one of three bomber squadrons along with 207' and 148', then there was 214', a tanker squadron. The bomber squadrons were assigned to SACEUR i.e. NATO.

Our time was spent in routine training, Group and Command exercises, occasional overseas flights, War Target Study and Q.R.A. (Quick Reaction Alert.)

A typical training flight would consist of a Cross Country Navigational Exercise, high level at first but from 1962 onward mainly at low level. (After CIA pilot Gary Powers was shot down at 60,000 plus ft. in a U2 it was decided that it might be better to go in under the radar.) This would be followed by two or three Simulated Radar Bombing attacks either from high level or after a rapid zig-zag climb from low level, the results being measured by a Radar Bomb Score unit. (R.B.S.). There were about five of these units which moved from time to time but were at such places as Hendon (London Area), Church Lawford (Midlands), Haydock (Manchester), Yeadon (Leeds Area), Lindholme (South Yorkshire), Ouston (Newcastle) and Bearsden (Glasgow). For bombing competitions one would move to a secret location and the target would only be disclosed at the last minute, thus no advantage would be gained by radar reconnaissance. These units worked with an Artillery radar and plotting table. The aircraft transmitted a tone on VHF/UHF which stopped at bomb release. The Americans used a similar system using NIKE radar. At the end of the flight the pilots would do some circuits and bumps.



On some of the Group and Command exercises and certainly on the Bombing Competitions the radar could not be used for navigation and we had to use Astro-Navigation. We used a periscope bubble sextant and used a three star sandwich fix system. The Nav. (Radar) took the shots and the Plotter did the calculations. Because of the high speed, acceleration errors were magnified so the A.E.O. tried to measure changes of heading during the shot to one tenth of a degree and the co-pilot any change in speed and these were applied as corrections. The accuracy of the navigation was measured by an R.B.S. Unit or as a radar photograph at E.T.A.

We were also given overseas exercises known as Lone Rangers. These were, in theory, to give the aircrew experience in front line servicing, but we carried an extra man, a crew chief, on these flights. Many were to somewhat uninteresting places such as El Adem (Libya), Idris (Tripoli, Libya), Bahrain and Wildenrath (Germany). But the two prized ones were Western Ranger via Goose Bay then simulated attacks on U.S. targets, landing at Offut A.F.B., Omaha (SAC Headquarters), one day off then the reverse on the way back. The other trip was Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia. (Now Harare, Zimbabwe!) via El Adem, Nairobi. I did not do this one but every crew that did brought back pineapples for all the squadron. Also about once a year, or more often, each crew would fly to Malta, usually on a Monday, where we would take on 1,000lb bombs and practice visual bombing at El Adem range in Libya, although if the Plotter, who did the visual bombing, could not see the target from 40,000ft plus we dropped them using the N.B.S. system.

We would have a day off on the Thursday and return home on Friday. On one occasion, on return the U.K. was blanketed in Advection Fog. The only place open was Lossiemouth in Northern Scotland, then a RNAS station. When asked if we would need to uptake fuel we replied, “No thanks”, which astounded the sailors. One up to the RAF.

While we were fighting the Cold War there was a bit of trouble from what we regarded as ‘the enemy within’, the ban the bombers. The first time they came to Marham they were expected – miles of barbed wire, 5,000 civilian policemen, a squadron of Argosy transports ready to move the police to Honington where they had threatened to move onto, and a Magistrates Court set up in Marham Village School. Our ground crews also manned the fences with many RAF Police with dogs. Whilst the protesters were supposed to be non violent they did practice vandalism outside the wire mainly in the married quarters gardens.

The main danger was that the protestors might approach the Q.R.A. aircraft or the special storage areas where the nuclear weapons were stored. One of these was American and was guarded by Americans and the RAF. It was thought that the Americans would not hesitate to shoot anyone endangering their weapons. However, this did not happen, and some of the protesters were taken to the temporary Court House and dealt with. This was repeated on a further two weekends before the Station Commander told us, “It is time to tell them that they are no longer welcome at Marham”.

A couple of incidents did lighten the days. I and my family were living in a caravan just inside the barbed wire which did not prove a problem to my five year old son when the ice cream van was on the other side!

The protesters did throw themselves over some of the fences, our men then threw them back. One of these, a young woman, was being thrown back and

revealed that she was wearing no underwear. Our lads shouted, “Throw her back again”.

The most serious business was the Q.R.A. and target study. The three bomber squadrons provided four aircraft at immediate readiness. These were bombed up with two megaton bombs, the aircraft were preflight checked and ready to start with a system that allowed all four engines to start at once.

The compound was adjacent to the threshold of the main runway which would be used regardless of wind direction. Next to it was the accommodation for air and ground crews complete with its own canteen. Each squadron had its own two Q.R.A. targets with a common two targets for the fourth aircraft. On average each crew did 24 hours every six days.

Target study was an essential to our role. This was carried out behind locked doors in the Ops. Block. The bulk of this fell on the navigators, in particular the Nav. (Radar) to predict the radar image of the target area. Each crew had to study two Q.R.A. sorties, an individual War Target sortie and a UK National Plan sortie. All these plans were stored in nav. bags in top secret storage. Also in each bag were three sealed envelopes containing code words to be opened only on a scramble order. The first was given to a U.S. G.I who was in the



cabin with a .45 revolver and was supposed to stop us until he got the codeword. The other two were for the 1st Pilot and the Nav. (Radar) to authorize crossing the stop line to activate the weapons. They had separate switches, both of which had to be on.

Would we have activated those switches and carried out the bombing attacks? Yes. If we received those code words it would be certain that the U.K. was under a nuclear attack and the prime targets would be the nuclear bomber bases where our families lived. This also meant that we would have nowhere to return to. Some of the sorties were due to land at overseas bases such as Turkey which would also be out, that is if we got that far after attacking our targets.

At Marham in the event of an alert Tannoy broadcast, which included married quarters, Land Rovers with loudspeakers would tour the station. However, one Saturday morning in October 1962 I was visited by the Flight Commander and told not to tell my wife, presumably to avoid panic in the public, and remain on the station as we were on alert. All aircraft were bombed up with much activity on the airfield. We remained on stand by for some time. It was called ‘The Cuban Missile Crisis.’

The photographs of the Valiants are taken from the 49 Squadron Association website.

THE BLUE BLAZERS



In the August issue we introduced the Blue Blazers Incontinental Display Team and we are simply wetting ourselves to tell you about their season of displays.

There has been a flood of bookings especially from Fire Brigades who have recognised that should a conflagration break out during a display they would be greatly assisted by the team's input, or better still, output.

The 'Highest up the Wall' altitude record was broken at The Pishill Carnival (Oxfordshire) when Blue 1, having taken on shandy too quickly, developed hiccups during a demonstration of 'No Hands' and assisted by whiplash raised the mark to five bricks. It was later raised to six and a quarter when Blue 2, who had over-fuelled on single malt, fell over backwards thus elevating his trajectory. This had to be ratified very quickly as a passing greyhound avoided the security, leaped over the prostrate Blue 2 and obliterated the mark, attaining eight bricks in the process. Cave Canem!

Unfortunately for the record holder, he was preparing to display at Over Peover Annual Fete (Cheshire) and sneezed so hard that he experienced a little spillage. There being no time to refuel, during the display he could only raise a puff of steam.

The team has applied to the Royal College of Heralds for permission to adopt a revised version of the Dambusters motto i.e. 'Apres Moi le Tache Humide'. Unfortunately the badge submitted at the same time described as, '.... Rampant on Ground Azure' was deemed to be somewhat fanciful in view of the average age of the team members and is now depicted in a more dormant posture.

During a routine drugs test one of the team, who shall remain nameless, tested positive for Co-amilozide and has received a wee ban.

Disaster struck during the Autumn Fete at Piddleshinton (Dorset), it was very cold and none of the team could find their equipment. There was great dismay when the Catering Manageress saw them searching as it reminded her that she had not prepared the cocktail sausages.

The constant stress of trying to perform at 'the highest level' has taken its toll on the team. Trials were arranged to appoint reserves and replacements but none of the applicants achieved the qualifying mark of two bricks. It has therefore been decided to disband the team and its members have been given their discharge. (All two pints!)



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and their escape lines, Western Europe, 1940-1945.**

By Oliver Clutton-Brock

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Publisher; Grub Street.

ISBN: 9781906502171.

READER'S LETTERS

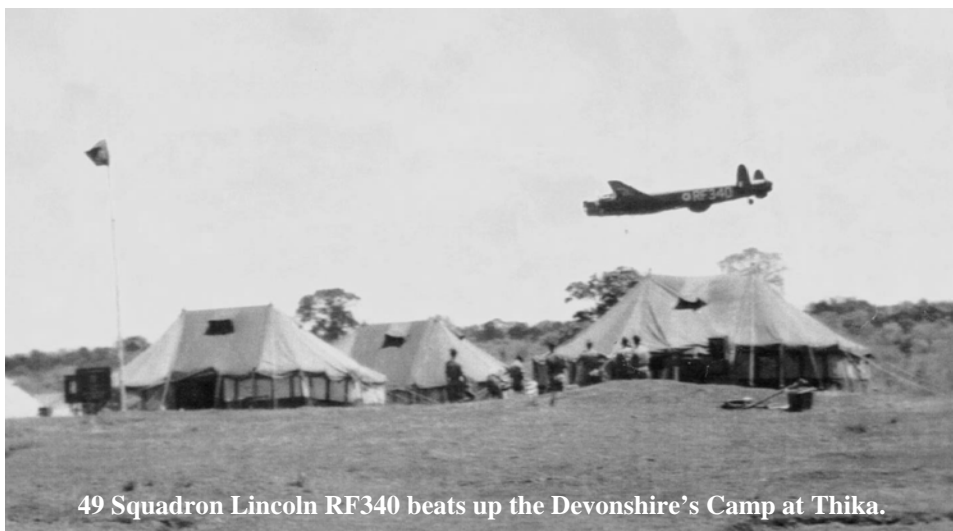
Our Post War Archivist, David Boughton, forwarded the following letter and photographs that he had received from Gordon Tremlett ex 1st Battalion Devonshire Regt.;

“The 1st Battalion Devonshire Regiment concentrated at Thika prior to departure to the UK, this was the first such gathering since their deployment to Kenya in April 1953.

“The ‘Dirty Devons’ woke to clear blue skies on their last Sunday in Kenya, the 30th January 1955. RAF Eastleigh had been beaten at football the previous week, also an unconfirmed rumour was circulating that we had acquired their ‘Mascot’ so the mood in the camp was good as we lined up for lunch.

“The drone of Lincoln bombers could be heard heading towards Mount Kenya on a bombing run, the noise of their engines became louder and they could be seen quite clearly as they flew very low over the camp. Suddenly it began to snow Mau Mau surrender leaflets, Lincoln RF340 from 49 Squadron was the culprit.

“The rest of our day was completely ruined as the RSM had the Battalion picking up the leaflets.



“Devon Officers, Major Guy Young and John Bahin and Lt. Edward Tremlett remained in Kenya doing staff jobs. These officers and an RAF contingent from 49 Squadron and 1340 Flight came down to the Port of Mombassa on Tuesday, 1st Feb 1955 to see the Battalion off.

“At about 1800hrs that day, one Lincoln bomber of 49 Squadron with our ‘left behind officers’ on board and two Harvards piloted by W/C Jefferies and

F/Lt Largeson reached the ship (HMT Dunera). The Lincoln was flying below the level of the boat deck and the Harvards did some hair - raising low flying round the ship before all three aircraft flew past in a final salute.

“The Battalion had a very close liaison with both 49 Lincoln Bomber Squadron commanded by S/L Alan Newitt DFC, and the Harvards.

“Hope you find this of some interest.”

We certainly do Gordon. Do any ex 49ers remember these escapades and have they the courage to own up if they actually took part? Ed.



A Harvard of 1340 Flight also gives a dazzling display.

After seeing a report of a replica Dambuster Lancaster in New Zealand I asked ‘Friend’, Ralph Gray, if he would investigate. This is part of his reply;

“.....It was a beautiful day in Masterton, an absolute corker. I was at the aerodrome at 9am. I couldn’t see any Lancs around. There was a hangar there which had a display of WW1 planes, some replicas, some original, all flying condition (and do fly). I asked the lady in charge, who runs it, what the story was. It appears that there are 12 of the repro Lancs in containers in Wellington. One was unpacked, shipped to Masterton and over 4 days assembled. Then 2 days was spent filming a short film for a new museum in Darwin (she thinks), then the model was disassembled and trucked back to Wellington. The filming was nothing to do with the Dambusters film, which she believes is on hold at the moment. She is a Masterton resident and works at the field, so unless she was telling a line, I think this is the best we are going to get. She said that

reports say the short film is terrific and has already been shown in public. Sorry about the lack of Lanc photos, but it was fun trying. Regards to our mates there in England.”
Many thanks Ralph for trying. Ed.



Desmond Harris emailed to say that he had been informed by Andrew MacDonald in Australia that the medals of his skipper Bob Munro were up for sale on E Bay.

“.....A few developments on the Bob Munro story. The advertisement seems to have gone from the E Bay site, probably because the sale is over, However, Andrew Macdonald and I have got most of the details and the attached may be useful if you decide to use the story in the mag.”

“.....some surprising news that Bob was living quite near here when I was trying to trace him in NZ. If only I had tried years ago or better still kept in touch when we parted. He finished his second tour well before I finished my first. It seems that I shall never discover the details of why he settled in UK.”

“.....Further to my previous emails on this subject I have since used the link given by Andrew MacDonald and it opened up a real treasure trove -- life history of Bob and pics of his including one of me with five others of the crew. Try it yourself some time.”

“.....It seems that in 2007 Bob's step daughter sold the medals together with a number of photos and this E Bay sale is a second sale. Much to my surprise, the first pic I saw was of myself with five others of the crew--- the pic at page 241 of the Dog.”

“.....Another item of interest. It was in March 1944 that Rita and I met. It was at the Assembly Rooms in Lincoln. She asked me if I could recruit some bods on the Squadron for her Birthday Party in few days time at her digs in Lincoln. This I did and Dusty Miller was one of them. It was a good party and I remember that Dusty got on well with Rita's landlady.”

Dusty Miller's Obituary appeared in the August issue. Ed.

Former Valiant AEO Tom Morris e-mailed;

“I can't remember whether or not John [Cheesborough] was a member of the association but he was a Flight Commander on 49 in the Valiant days and I flew with him for a couple of years. Anyway, he passed away last night [18th October] and will be fondly remembered by those who knew and flew with him. He was the captain of the crew on the photograph I submitted to you.

The photograph appears in the new edition of The Dog, page 635, the Association website and was on page 19 of The 4T9er, May 2007, Issue 6. Ed.

Associate, Josephine Williams is the daughter of late 49er Owen Williams. She ended her letter;

“..In April we had a tree planted and a memorial plaque made in memory of my late father in the memorial glade outside The Hurricane and Spitfire Museum at Manston in Kent where the Air Crew Association meetings are held. At the base of the plaque is engraved ‘49 Bomber Squadron, Cave Canem.’ “

Personal friend of 4T9er Donald Irving, Timothy McCracken, e-mailed the following;

“I have known Donald for a number of years, and visit him from time to time to talk to him about his reminiscences etc. I recently brought back from Normandy a 65th Anniversary Badge for him, as he took part in several support operations over Normandy including D-Day itself. I attach details as they appeared in the local newspaper, the Annandale Observer, and also a couple of photos.

“I hope that a photo may appear in a future Squadron Association Magazine, which Donald always passes to me when he has read it.” *[See page 31. Ed]*

The Annandale Observer report reads;

“WAR VETERAN HONOURED WITH CAMPAIGN MEDAL”

“Popular Annan senior citizen, Donald Irving, a Second World War Bomber Command veteran, was recently presented with a special 65th Anniversary Badge commemorating his service in the Normandy Campaign.

“Whilst serving with 49 Squadron, as a Lancaster rear gunner, he took part in many operations, several in support of the Normandy campaign, including D-Day itself.

“Donald had previously received the 60th Anniversary Commemorative Badge. Whilst attending the 65th Anniversary events in Normandy, Timothy McCracken was given the badge to present to Donald, by Yves Le Cuziat, MBE. Yves was awarded the MBE for his services to British veterans.

“The Veteran Badges were produced by the Regional Council of Normandy, and were presented to veterans at many ceremonies across Normandy during the 65th Anniversary Commemorations.”

How wonderful to hear of this young man taking such an interest. Ed.

CAN YOU HELP?

Dominic Howard is building a large flying model of 49's Lancaster ED702 and asks if anyone has a photograph of her.

With his application to join, new Member Derek Jones wrote;

"....At that time S/L Bailey and S/L Steel were there. I would also like to know if they are still here or are members."

Whilst I know that Arthur Steel is still around, but not a Member, I have no knowledge of S/L Bailey. Ed.

Malcolm Brooke, asks if anyone can identify or confirm the following;

N/ORD, RIB/M, RCD/M, MP/MA

IN/R2 Possibly Instrument Repairer Grade 2 ?

INS/R1 Possibly Instrument Repairer Grade 1?

M/AST Possibly Maintenance Assistant or Mechanical Assistant ?

I/RS Possibly Instrument Repairer Grade 1 ?

FM Possibly Flight Mechanic ?

The possible solutions have been suggested by The Air Historical Branch (RAF).

In the previous two issues the Editor asked how pilots knew that it was their turn to leave the dispersal and join the queue on the peritrack. In a telephone conversation former flight engineer, W.O. Lou Crabbe, gave the simple answer, "The aircraft nearest the take off point moved out first followed in turn by the next nearest and so on." Presumably when A and B Flights met, coming in opposite directions, at the end on the runway they alternated or is that too simplistic?

In issue 13, February 2009, we quoted an appeal through the Sunday Express for relatives of the crew of Wellington R1397, which crashed in Holland killing all on board, to come forward. Whilst this was not a 49 Squadron aircraft we carried the appeal as Honorary Friend Douwe Drijver is leading a mission to erect a memorial to the crew. Before that could be achieved it is necessary to obtain the relative's permission for a dig to take place in order that the aircraft can be positively identified. I am pleased to say that in September we received an e-mail from Joy Allan who is the niece of Sgt John James Cox. Douwe has advised that Captain Paul Petersen of the Royal Netherlands Air Force is supporting this quest.

For more information on Stichting Missing Airmen Memorial Foundation visit their website at; www.luchtoorlogfriesland.nl

Click on Actueel then De S.M.A.M.F. then Video

49ers AND FRIENDS



Timothy McCracken presents his friend Donald Irving with the Normandy 65th Anniversary Badge. See page 29 for the story.

**Photo Courtesy;
Timothy McCracken**

Bruce Forsythe met former M.T. driver Vi Winters, left, at Buckingham Palace. Vi was spending a fortnight at The Princess Marina House, Russington, when she was asked, "Would you like to go to The Armed Forces Day Garden Party?" Hosted by The Earl & Countess of Wessex, Vi had a wonderful time..... Love the hat Vi!

Photo courtesy; Vi Winters



Our Chairman lived up to his alias, 'Ted the Lad', when the late Bill Boyd's lovely granddaughters visited the stand during the launch of the second edition of 'The Dog' at Duxford. Bill Boyd was shot down during the Peenemunde raid, August 17/18 1943, becoming a PoW.

Photo; Graham Boyd