

# The 4T9er

LIFE IN THE OLD DOG YET!

**The 49 Squadron Association Magazine  
November 2011 Issue 23**



**Fiskerton Airfield Memorial on Remembrance Sunday.**



### **The future of 49 Squadron Association?**

**New Associate Member Arthur Burns sent the above photograph. “I have attached a photograph of my son, Sean, taken a few months ago when we visited the Imperial War Museum. On hearing that his gran’s uncle flew in this type of aircraft he wanted to be photographed beside it.”**

## **IN MEMORIAM**

**R. Gould   D.C. Irving   W.J. Dodkins**

**WE WILL REMEMBER THEM**

## **WELCOME TO:**

### **NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

**Vanessa Burden   Ivor Ford   Colin Beesley**

## **EDITORIAL**

Thank you all the kind well wishers who sent get well cards and messages. I'm pleased to say that all is progressing well at the time of writing. Thank you also to those who sent donations and postage stamps to assist with the running costs of the Association. Where would we be without you?

Sadly I must record the passing of three WWII 4T9ers. Roy Gould died on August 17th, a few days short of his 95th birthday. As navigator Roy flew operations with 83 Squadron before qualifying as a pilot. After his posting to 49 Squadron he flew four Hampden ops in April 1942 followed by 24 in Lancasters between August 15th and October 24th 1942. Donald 'Jock' Irving died in the summer. He flew 32 ops in the rear turret of P/O J.J. Lett's aircraft from 20th December 1943 to 16th June 1944. Donald's photograph appeared on page 31, issue 16 of The 4T9er. John Dodkins, 'Dod' to his friends, died on November 6th. John was a keen regular at reunions whose presence at future events will be greatly missed. He was the wireless operator in the crew of F/O L.M. Pedersen and flew his tour between 11th May and 29th August 1944, a very quick tour! He retired with the rank of Squadron Leader. Following John's death Ivor Ford and Colin Beesley move from 'Friend' to Associate.

New Associate Vanessa Burden is the niece of Sgt S.C. Holmes who was killed during the raid on Etampes on June 9/10 1944. He was flight engineer in the crew of F/O B.E. Bell which was on its 9th operation. The only survivor of the crash was the bomb aimer F/O P.D. Hemmens who died in Buchenwald Concentration Camp on September 27th 1944. One can only speculate on the horrors he had to bear. See page 29 for further comment.

In the August issue I welcomed John Turner and now have the pleasure of publishing a few of his details. John joined the RAF on June 28th 1940 and was discharged with the rank of Warrant Officer on July 11th 1945. In between times, among other things, he flew 22 operations as mid upper gunner and after

being shot down on the Mannheim raid of August 9/10th 1943 became a reluctant guest of the Germans from August 12th 1943 to April 25th 1945.

Also in the August issue I welcomed seven new Associate Members but a lack of time and space prevented me from giving their details. I have pleasure in now putting the record straight. Arthur Burns' great-uncle was P/O William Matheson, bomb aimer in the crew of F/S B. Kirton. The crew were on their 14th op when they were shot down by a night fighter during a raid on Mannheim, September 5/6th 1943. A detailed summary of events appears in 'Beware of the Dog'. Myrtle Lawson was the partner of the late Ken Read who was remembered in Issue 21 of The 4T9er. Ian Bramley's father was Sgt W.J. Bramley, flight engineer. His tour with 49 Squadron ran from August 1942 until February 1943. His pilots were Sgts R. Gould and W.M. Stables. Coincidentally, Roy Gould is remembered on the previous page of this issue. Barbara Hope is the widow of Frank Hope who was remembered in Issue 22. Paul Henley is the great nephew of flight engineer Sgt Leslie Henley who was killed when Lancaster JA691 was shot down over Denmark on the return from Peenemunde. Having previously served in the army Les was far above average age for aircrew being 43 years old when he died. Joan Jarrett is the widow of armourer (bombs) 'Reg' Jarrett who was also remembered in Issue 22. Paul Bennett's grandfather was Sgt A.F. Long who was the navigator in the crew of Sgt L Coxhill between July 3rd and August 14th 1943.

We were all deeply saddened by the tragic deaths of F/Lt Jon Egging and F/L Sean Cunningham. Cards of condolence were sent by the Association to the Red Arrows and Jon's and Sean's families .

William Farr School, Welton, is built on the former Dunholme Lodge airfield and 4T9ers have been made welcome at the school on a number of occasions. Head Teacher Paul Strong, an Honorary Friend, retired in the summer. On behalf of 49 Squadron Association I wish Paul a very long and happy retirement and thank him for his hospitality during our visits. I hope that our cordial relationship with the school will continue.

Barbara and I were pleased to play host for a day to visiting Australian Associate Graham Bairnsfather and his charming wife Carol. Graham's uncle, Ralph Bairnsfather, was killed during a raid on Harburg, 7/8th March 1945 and he is collaborating with our Hon President John Ward in the writing of a book on the three fighting Bairnsfather brothers, Graham's father and his two uncles Ralph and Bruce. Watch The 4T9er for further news.

As this is written, on the 1st October, we are in a heat wave in the UK following the coldest summer for many a year. The unusual weather is being blamed on global warming but are you old enough to remember that in the fifties the bad

weather was blamed on ‘all those atom bombs’? John Conning’s piece in this issue on his return to Christmas Island reminds us that little did we know it then but it was all 49 Squadron’s fault!

In this issue Malcolm Brooke, our Webmaster, writes of his visit to York Minster where he met Liam O’Connor the architect responsible for the superb Armed Forces Memorial at Alrewas and also The Bomber Command Memorial. Liam told him that the new memorial will now be dedicated in June next year, 28th according to the papers. At the time of going to press there are no arrangements for booking places at the dedication ceremony.

Eric Clarke, our oldest member now in his 99th year, is becoming quite a celebrity in the Doncaster area. On October 27th he spoke “They shall not grow old...” at the dedication of a Lakeside Memorial on the site of the former Doncaster Aerodrome. The occasion was attended by civic dignitaries and senior RAF officers. See also ‘Reader’s Letters’.

A report on the Queen’s visit to The Australian War Memorial in Canberra both moved and amused me. I was moved by the picture of the Royal Party looking at the poppy covered bronze wall bearing the names of 100,000 who have died serving the country since the First World War. This was particularly poignant as I had placed a poppy on that wall in 2004 in remembrance of my uncle’s mid upper gunner, Sgt. Norman Buchanan. I was amused by the report that children had waited for hours in the rain and after speaking with the Queen a seven year old girl said, “The Queen was very kind but she has got a bit of an accent.”

I am grateful to 49er John Fray who called to tell me that the November issue of ‘Aeroplane’ magazine features the Lancaster on the 70th anniversary of it entering squadron service. It also includes a piece on the Le Creusot raid which was led by 49 Squadron C.O. W/C Leonard Slee.

Dom Howard e-mailed to tell me that fourteen back copies of The 4T9er have been put up for sale on eBay. Our fame is spreading! By the way, most back copies are available from me for a donation of £1 each plus postage.

Our Webmaster, Malcolm Brooke, tells me that we now have a presence in Facebook. Our address is ‘49Squadron Association’. Yes, spaced like that!

A Yorkshire preacher at our chapel last year claimed that the three Kings were Yorkshiremen and proved it by quoting, “And behold, three Wise Men came from the East Riding on camels.” No comment from this adopted Lancastrian!

On behalf of Barbara, ‘The Crew’ and myself I wish all 4T9ers and their loved ones a very happy Christmas and New Year.

‘Til the next time.

# CHRISTMAS ISLAND VISIT-2011

**By John Conning**

Recently I had the opportunity to visit Christmas Island. I was last there in 1958 for Grapple Zulu. [*British Nuclear Test. ED*]

The reason arose when near neighbour, Mrs Barbara Penney, a fellow member of the East Anglian Branch of BNTVA [British Nuclear Test Veterans Association], planned to visit the Island and distribute donated monies to the island schools. We were accompanied by my wife, Marlene, my fellow navigator John Muston and Barbara's daughter and son-in-law.

The weekly Air Pacific flight from Honolulu descends and as you crane to see the island again the coastline appears. Turning left over London, crossing the multicoloured lagoon, getting closer to the coconut palms, and then you're down on the old runway, taxiing to the reception area-you've arrived.

Accommodated at the old Officers Mess site, our party stayed in the bungalows overlooking the beach. With the sound of the waves pounding the reef and a constant cooling breeze, we settled in for a week of glorious weather, great food and trips round the island visiting the schools.

Changes? The main camp has reverted back to nature, though we did find the remains of a church just off the beach.

The crabs are smaller, the beer weaker-Tennants to Bud Lite and Miller Lite-all the equipment left to rust among the vegetation has been cleared away, and we didn't get sprayed with DDT whilst we were there.

The biggest change was the population increase. In 1958 there was a small number of Gilbertese down at the port area who were brought to the island to harvest the copra. Now the place has a population of about 4,000, living in villages near London, with one (Banana) close to the airport and Poland remotely situated on the south side of the lagoon.

Christmas Island is part of the Republic of Kiribati, and the capital and trade centre is some 2,000 miles distant to the west. As such Kiritimati-the native name-is at the end of a long supply line and that brings problems. (We were asked to bring out cement.)

Schools have computers but if they go u/s there are no spares to fix them; on a different level, the toilets don't flush-a bucket of water suffices.

The people and especially the children, are lovely-bright eyed and bushy tailed-with a cheerful disposition and very outgoing and friendly.

Though the main tourist attraction is sport fishing, the Captain Cook Hotel had only three dedicated fishermen (American). The rest were a diverse lot. Apart from our party of six, there was a trio of Australian scientists checking out the



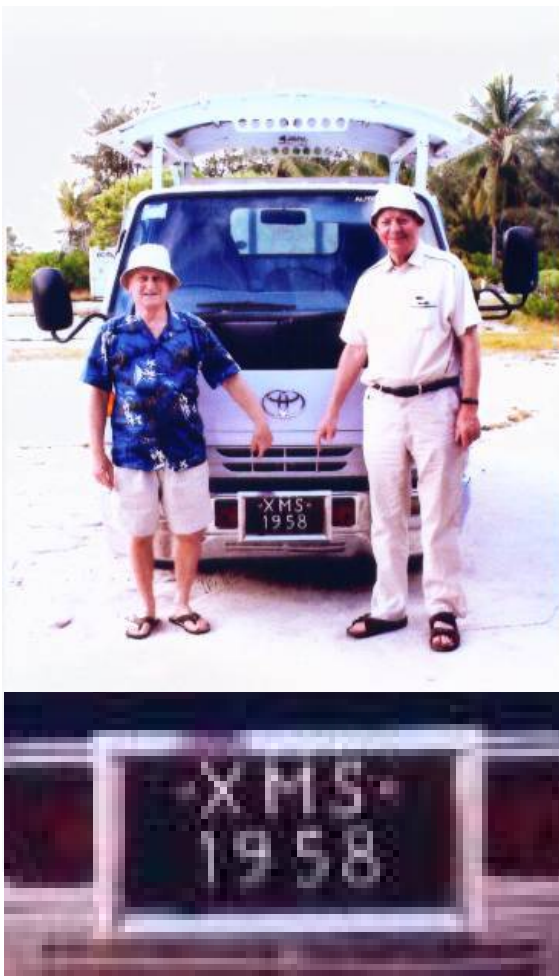
coral and water levels, a Spanish foursome-marine conservation and fish stocks-a young Australian family on their way to Ireland and a three-man film crew from England who were making a tourist film, with a mainly fishing emphasis.

The latter, once they recognised our nuclear test background, arranged a question and answer film interview with myself and John, which will be included in the forthcoming DVD.

For those of you interested go to [www.castingshadows.com](http://www.castingshadows.com) and buy the DVD.

Our return took 53 years to find the money and the impetus to go back, but it was worth it. It's the largest coral atoll in the world, in the middle of the Pacific, undeveloped, bearable tropical climate, people great...and the memories.

As you can see from the photo John and I found one relic from our era.



Photo; Courtesy John Conning

The two Johns, Conning left and Muston right.

## LAST CHANCE FOR HEROES RETURN

THE HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND INITIATIVE AS DETAILED ON PAGE 30 OF FEBRUARY'S ISSUE OF THE 4T9ER HAS BEEN EXTENDED ONCE AGAIN. GRANTS ARE NOW AVAILABLE UP TO THE END OF 2012 BUT APPLICATIONS MUST BE PLACED BEFORE THE END OF JANUARY 2012.

## MY STORY

### By Warrant Officer James Arnold –RAF- No. 1331734

On January 4<sup>th</sup> 1941, my 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, I received instructions by letter from the Air Ministry, enclosing a railway warrant ordering me to report to R.A.F. Uxbridge (the same R.A.F. Station where Lawrence of Arabia had enrolled in the service as Aircraftsman Shaw). The farthest I had ever travelled was to Victoria, London. Beyond that was foreign to me.

On arrival at Uxbridge I was taken to the Adjutant and sworn in as an aircrew trainee. "Flight Sergeant," said the Adjutant, "take this airman to the Mess Hall," which he did. He must have been over 6' 2"- a Drill Instructor. "Eat it up lad," he said. It was some kind of stew followed by a lump of yellow cake covered by yellow custard. That night I was given the luxury of a corporal's single room – a privilege I was told. Next day I reported to the Station Warrant Officer (regarded by all Airmen as God) who marched me to Station Headquarters, a maze of offices staffed by WAAFs and Airmen. I remember being given a few smiles of encouragement as I must have looked quite bewildered, as I certainly was. However, I was taken to the Accounts Dept., a really uninspiring office. Here they gave me my new service number 1331734 A/C2 (Aircraftman 2) Arnold J. F. plus the sum of five shillings (now 25p) and a railway warrant to Blackpool. Then it was Liverpool Street Station for the North.

What an adventure! The train had a Pullman Dining Car and I think the five shillings must have covered the cost of dinner, which I thought was great. On presenting the Dinner Bill to the Accounts Dept at Blackpool they were highly amused. "Think you are on your Daddy's Yacht? That five shillings was your pay for two weeks." Blackpool was full of foreign accents – Birmingham, Geordie, Welsh, Irish and Scottish. However, I managed to converse with the natives and found them friendly. I recollect that I was only there for a week when I was informed that I was now posted to R.A.F. Evanton, Air Gunnery School. What a journey that was! Evanton is about twenty miles North of Inverness on the Cromarty Firth - lovely people, wonderful scenery. I could scarcely credit it when told on arrival that my posting was in error. This was expressed somewhat more robustly. It was explained that I had to complete my wireless training first. After about four weeks in May/June 1941 waiting, doing odd jobs such as the telephone exchange, demolition work on the airfield, knocking down pill boxes, soaking up the sun and dining on duck eggs fried in butter, I contracted jaundice. My visit to the Station Sick Quarters resulted in a fat free diet and a pint of Epsom salts every morning. To my utter surprise I was given seven days sick leave- not bad after only three months in the Service.



After leave it was back to Blackpool, drill instruction and intense Morse Code training. We had to be proficient in Plain Language at 18 wpm (words per minute) and in Morse Code 22 wpm. Some could not cope and had breakdowns which was called 'Morse happy'. As aircrew trainees we were now given the treasured white flash to wear in our service caps, much to the chagrin of our much hated drill instructors.

After passing out as proficient in Morse Code, I had to await a posting to the Wireless Training School at R.A.F. Yatesbury in Wiltshire. This didn't happen until September 1941, some nine months after I joined. During this period of waiting I was posted to Horsham St. Faith (now Norwich Airport) which was an operational station with Westland Whirlwinds, Lockheed Hudsons and Mosquitoes. I had several flights in the Lockheed Hudson. It had a belly gun turret fitted and one lowered the gun to a firing position aft of the main spar. These Hudsons were being prepared for onward routing to Gibraltar. Pop (father) was serving in the Royal Engineers working there on extending the runway. I tried to get a flight to Gib. but without avail, but at least I did manage to get a flight.

In April 1942 I reported to the Signals Officer at RAF Horsham St. Faith and was placed on W/T (wireless) watch with my own Morse and Radio room. I felt I was on a throne. One duty I enjoyed, was Duty Pilot in a caravan sited in the airfield equipped with seven days rations and a Thompson sub-machine gun. The caravan towed and illuminated TEE, which indicated the runway in use. The approaching aircraft would flash the colours of the day and I would switch on the illuminated TEE. This activity attracted the attention of the Land Girls, who popped in for the odd brew and bacon sarnie and tidied up the caravan. A really delightful week.

On the night of the 27<sup>th</sup> April 1942, I had just finished my evening watch at about 1900 hours and went to the Mess for supper. What a shock when I left the Mess for the billet. It was like daytime. A twin engine Dornier was straffing the airfield at about 300ft. Panic ensued and I hit the deck fast. At that moment the PACs (Parachute Attached Cables) were released by Air Traffic Ground Control. What a racket- it was quite unbelievable.

### **June 15<sup>th</sup> 1943**

Our aircraft's call-sign was 'N' for NAN, the target was Oberhausen. The trip out to the Ruhr was the usual run-in, quite a lot of flak as was to be expected.

Once the target was reached, we commenced our run-in to the aiming point. The first run up was not successful, so we did an orbit and started another run-in. By this time the flak was very intense and very severe turbulence was experienced.

We had just dropped the 'Cookie' (4,000lb bomb) when there was a violent

explosion. This was a direct hit on the starboard side, putting the two starboard engines out of action and setting them on fire. The forward fuselage, next to my position at the radio on the port side facing forward, was riddled and torn open. The shrapnel killed F/Sgt. Biggin (Extra Navigator) who was sitting next to me on my right.

The Bomb Aimer 'Dickie' (F/Sgt. Deacon) was injured, also 'Barney' (Sgt C.A. Barnett) the Navigator. The Pilot (Sgt G.S. Cole) and Engineer (Sgt J.P. Harper), I believe, were unhurt at that time. Our height for the bombing was 27,000 ft, but after the explosion we lost height and the pilot managed to pull out at 10,000 ft. We were flying quite well on two port engines. I went back along the fuselage to the rear to check on injuries to the Mid-Upper Gunner (Johnny Bryan) and the Rear Gunner, 'Dusty' Rhodes. The Mid-Upper Gunner was un-injured, but I could not elicit any response from the rear-turret.

We were, I remember, losing height at this time and with the Mid-Upper Gunner we jettisoned all we could to lighten the load of the Lancaster.

I believe a fighter was on our tail, and it was for this reason that we went down to deck level. I had previously released the rear roof hatch off the astro-dome when throwing out all that was possible. I clearly recall hearing a swishing sound, and I stuck my head out of the hatch and saw we were skimming the tops of the trees.

We then crashed and I found myself out of the aircraft and tried to get back in, but I could not reach the hatch. I had difficulty in walking, my back being injured. I remember coming to a river which I now believe to be the Rhine, and meeting two Dutchmen. One had a bicycle and sat me on the crossbar to support me and put me in a barn. He also gave me some apples.

I was taken to a convent either before I was hidden or after, but this part is hazy. Possibly I was in shock at this time. I was under the impression that having been hidden, I was now with the Dutch Resistance and would get back to England. The persons who hid me had no English and I could not speak any Dutch.

After a passage of time (I can't recall how long I was in the barn), I was taken along a narrow road. At the foot of the road was a car with uniformed Germans. The officer saluted and said, " For you the war is over "!!! Then I saw that Johnny, the Mid-Upper Gunner, was also in the car.

Things after this point are a trifle hazy. I was separated from Johnny Bryan and was taken to a Fighter Station, where the Commanding Officer requested the crew member's names quote, "To give them a Christian burial". That night was spent in the cells of the Luftwaffe base guardroom. From the way I received treatment for my back injury by a Dutch nurse who spoke English, it may have been Arnhem Hospital.

After leaving the Luftwaffe base, I went by train to Amsterdam Military Barracks escorted by a German flak battery Commander. In the barracks at Amsterdam I met up again with Johnny. We were the only two occupants of a ward.

After being caught trying to escape via a fire-escape ladder, which ran down from the third floor, I was once again put in the cells. These I believe were in the basement of the building. I did not meet up with Johnny until I reached Dulag Luft 111 Interrogation Centre at Frankfurt, where we stayed for about one week before being transported to Stalag Luft 6 at Heydekrug, Lithuania. After about 6 months I was transferred to Stalag Luft 3 at Barth, Vogolsand, near Stralsund on the Baltic coast. Here I remained until we were liberated by the Russians, and I returned to England after V.E. Day.

In 1947, after a spell in the Foreign Office Code and Cypher Division I re-joined the Royal Air Force flying in Transport Command, Airborne Support Squadrons, Coastal Command and various other duties.



Photo; Eric Van der Meiden

*The crew were on their eighth operation. James Arnold and John Bryan were the only survivors. The six who died were buried in Oosterbeek Cemetery to be joined in September 1944 by many casualties of the Battle of Arnhem. The graves of the 49ers were tended for many years by Truus Oosterhaar who, as a young girl, remembers the Lancaster crashing. She was awarded the MBE in 1976 and continued to tend the graves until fairly recently when the labour of love was continued to the present day by Eric and Anne van der Meiden. We are pleased to have all three as Honorary Members of the Association.*

*Following James Arnold's death in 2009 his ashes were scattered at Oosterbeek. John Bryan died in 2006.*

# **Further developments in the search by Dominic and Rosemary Howard for the remains of P/O Cyril Anderson's Lancaster.**

## **49 SQUADRON LANCASTER ED702, EA-D**

**By Dominic Howard**

### **Part 3**

Since I last wrote to the 4T9er with Alan kindly publishing over two editions, issue 20 and 21, the research into finding ED702 continued.

Although the search last year was unsuccessful, the information we gleaned from this has proved invaluable, with all the people we met who witnessed the crash being able to provide us with a verbal description of what they saw in 1943.

Peter Schreiber in Germany proceeded to get some aerial photographs of the area in the hope that they may give some more information, I decided to take a trip to TARA, Scotland's record office for photographs, which holds the National Collection of Aerial Photographs. Spending the day there going through all the photographs from late 1942 to early 1945 from all of this I selected two that seemed to give a little more information to the search. Peter and I also decided to send out to all the witnesses a questionnaire with a small map of the area asking if they would be kind enough to fill it in in the hope that it may trigger a memory of something they may have forgotten. From this we were contacted by Ernst Fuchs who was 13 at the time ED702 came down, he with the other witnesses have stated the aircraft was in two big parts, Ernst saying in a statement sent to Peter that:-

*" I also want to help with my memories about the plane crash in 1943, It was in the evening between 21.00 and 22.00 hrs when I heard far away a strange noise, thinking to myself it could be a plane with a broken motor. Suddenly I heard this loud bang a detonation and in the sky I saw a fireball coming down to earth in such a high speed similar to a jet.*

*Then it crashed between Offenbach and Insheim. As a boy in the age of 13, I went to the crash place the following day. I must say it wasn't nice to look at, because these young soldiers were seriously injured and lay there scattered on the fields.*

*Only one of them was in the wreck, jammed! Parts of the plane were scattered in a wide range on the fields. Two days later, when I came home from school, Mr Pfluger a neighbour of mine said to me: 'Come on boy, come with me to help getting the dead body of the British airmen from the crashed bomber.' Mr Pfluger was exempted from the militair to do that. With a cart, loaded with*

*oxygen bottles and Karbit (chemical substance) we started our way to the crash site.*

*In the past, we were not able to weld, as we do today. Mr Pfluger explained to me: 'Wait until the needle is here on the armature, then you have to detach the metal here, here and here...' We continued doing this until the body of the soldier fell to the earth.*

*Today I am 81 years old but these pictures will escort me until I die.*

*The dead soldiers were loaded onto a cart, to bring them to the cemetery, where they were covered in a blanket to bury them. "*

*Ernst Fuchs.*

Peter and I continued to go over the maps and the statements that the witnesses kindly filled in for us and from all this we were able to mark several possible sites where we believed ED702 had crashed. We (Mother and I) decided to return to Germany this time for 2 weeks! Remembering how much we put into 7 days I thought, 'A little longer this time so we will have time to enjoy the area!'

Talking with Peter and Uwe we decide that August would be the best time also this was a quieter time for Peter as September he would be busy harvesting the grapes for the winery he runs with his father. Also Uwe was hoping to commence with the recovery of another 49 Squadron aircraft, being ED427 flown by F/O Bone and his crew who were lost on the 16/17<sup>th</sup> April 1943. Unfortunately the weather at the beginning of the year put the farm crops behind by about a month so we were unable to proceed here. Uwe is planning on proceeding with the recovery as soon as is reasonably possible.

I decided this year to drive to Germany after working out all the expenses I would save over £450!! And it would mean I would be able to bring a few bottles of wine back!! Once again another story for another day... Arriving early in the afternoon at the Metzgers in Walsheim once again the family made us most welcome, over the two weeks we were in Germany we dined with the Metzgers on many occasions sampling many of Helmut's wines! The family have become very good friends, and hope to visit us once again next year.

The following day we proceeded to one of the places where it was believed ED702 may have come down, this site was going to be difficult as it was in the middle of a vineyard.

As the harvest for this year's grapes was due to start in a few weeks searching here was going to be difficult. It was therefore decided we would go to another area, We were joined by three farmers who Christian Schwein brought to the site as they thought they could provide some more information, Peter and I started to search the field finding many items but mostly from the wrong time period, including lead musket balls, and pieces for farm machinery.

One of the farmers that Christian brought along took him to another site a few

hundred metres from where Peter and I were, saying “20 metres in that way and 150 metres from the road the tail section was in there.”

We marked the area with a bucket! And we proceeded to search, with the metal detector sounding off within a few minutes. About six inches below the surface the first find... We had finally found her...



Over the next three hours we found nearly 40 items some still with paint on.



The largest piece we located was some 15 inches deep in the ground. After digging for quite a while we finally recovered the piece.



But from all the items found the most moving and personal was this small item found just a few inches below the surface. The remains of a RAF button. Who this belonged to is impossible to say, but we can say it did belong to a member of 49 Squadron.



Looking at all the statements and where ED702 finally came down it now looks like they may have been trying to land, after having the fuel tanks punctured by Lt Heinz Grimm. The French border is approximately 40km from where we were with a possible chance to get back to England or become PoW's. Sadly this was not to be, while it looks like they were banking round to come in to land the aircraft exploded, coming down in two large parts with all the crew being killed.

The front section of the aircraft we were unable to locate on this occasion, as the area that we believe it came down in is in the middle of a maize crop. I have been discussing the search for the rest of ED702 with Peter and I am looking at going back in October next year to complete the search.



We once again visited Rheinberg Cemetery placing a cross and a rose on each of the crew also placing a Poppy Wreath on behalf of the Association in Remembrance of all 49er's.

A final part to our journey in locating the crash site was also to find what became of the priest Father Jakob Storck, who gave the crew a Christian burial. We called at the Church in Offenbach on Sunday waiting for the service to finish when we asked if anyone knew what had become of him. We were told he had gone back home to Weselberg, looking at the maps we found this was just over 65Km away. We decided to go on Monday. Arriving in Weselberg the Church is the first building on the right as

you drive in, There we met a lady and asked if she knew where Pfr Storck was, she took us straight into the church yard to where he is now buried. He passed away in 1960 aged 75.

*To be continued.*

# **St DUNSTAN'S.**

**By Ted Cachart**

For the third year running I had been invited to the St Dunstan's London office to be assessed and on this occasion my eyesight was so close to their standard I was accepted as a St Dunstaner. A few weeks later a charming young lady named Alice visited me as my welfare officer and made copious notes and details for the record. She advised me that I would receive an invitation to attend an induction course at their main centre at Ovingdean near Brighton,

On 25th September a minibus containing other St Dunstaners collected me and some four hours later we arrived at our destination. Our luggage was taken to our rooms as we were lead to the dining room. Although closed, a three course meal, soup, salad and sweet together with fruit juice, tea or coffee was provided.



**The main entrance**

Next morning we, a group of twelve, met in the Blue Room after breakfast where we met Martin an ex marine and policemen who walked with such confidence without any aid completely surprised us when we discovered he was totally blind. He explained the induction course to us and we were provided with a timetable of the events they had planned. These included sessions with rehabilitation officers covering daily life, cooking, safety in the home, etc. There were also sessions in the sports hall where we were able to have a taster of indoor bowls, rifle shooting and archery. (I can't bowl a ball but did get a bull with the rifle and longbow).

The entire building had air conditioning, the rooms were all en suite, had radio, television and telephone facilities, and the bed was very comfortable. The dining room provided three meals a day plus morning and afternoon tea or coffee with biscuits or cake. Sandwiches and a hot drink were available in the evening on request. Not the place to go to reduce your waistline.

An interesting, enjoyable and informative week with items such as talking watches, magnifying torches, computer software and hardware that may be



**A view from the balcony**

required were supplied free of charge. I'll be attending an IT course at Sheffield in November where I hope to learn and swap tips and tricks of computing with impaired vision. This text has been dictated using Dragon software and although I am still in the learning stage it is far more accurate than my typing. The only problem is some words although spelt correctly have a different meaning



to that intended and although checked can be easily missed.

I would certainly recommend any ex-service member with sight difficulties to make contact with St Dunstan's. They now accept veterans whose sight is below a certain level regardless of the cause.

**All photos via the author**

Regrettably my sight was worse than I thought, in the garden I chatted up the female for over ten minutes before I found it was a stone statue. ***Come, come Ted! Surely you got suspicious when a female remained silent for that long.***





All photos; Via John Ward

# **RIDE TO THE WALL**

**By John Ward**

Saturday 1st October 2011 saw the fourth annual 'Ride to the Wall' (RTTW). In the past, motor cyclists have gathered at Drayton Manor Park and then made the journey to The National Memorial Arboretum. There, in front of the fantastically beautiful Armed Forces Memorial, erected to remember all those service personnel who have lost their lives whilst serving their country, a service of remembrance is carried out.

The event has now become so popular with bikers, that this year, six different starting points were used. I started from the Leicester Service area with 2,000 other bikes and with police escort, made the pilgrimage to the NMA. In total it has been estimated that 12 to 15,000 bikes gathered at the Arboretum.

Each biker pays to go on the ride, and last year RTTW were able to give the National Arboretum £52,000. The event was started by ex-servicemen and women with a high percentage of the bikers being ex-service, many travelling great distances to attend.

On this warm, clear blue October day the assembled throng listened to a service of remembrance given by a Naval Padre which was preceded by a parachute descent by the Silver Stars, the Royal Logistics Regiment display team. Prayers and the Last Post were followed by the wreaths layers who climbed the white steps as the Piper played 'Amazing Grace'. Then anyone who wished ascended the steps to pay their own respects to the 16,500 plus names engraved on the white walls.

This tremendously moving experience saw the biggest ever attendance on one day to the National Memorial Arboretum. I sought out several 49 Squadron names and also those from my son John's Regiment who were killed during his Afghan tour in 2006..... but the hardest thing to look at, was the blank wall, waiting to receive next year's names!

If you've never been to the Arboretum, then go.... if you've been before, then I know you will always be drawn back.

**'WE WILL REMEMBER THEM'**

## **SQUADRON BADGES**

**Lapel badges are available from the Association Secretary.**

**Large-25mm high @ £5.50 and small-19mm high @ £4.00.**

**Both plus postage.**

# YORK MINSTER MEMORIAL

By Malcolm Brooke

On Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October I, accompanied by my wife May, was privileged to represent the Association and be part of a very large congregation that packed York Minster for the dedication of a Memorial to the squadrons of the French Air Force who served within Bomber Command.

346 Guyenne and 347 Tunisie Squadrons, who flew Halifax bombers, were



based at Elvington (just outside York) and were operational from June 1944 until October 1945. During this period they flew 2834 sorties, losing 41 aircraft and 216 airmen.

The service was attended by a number of civic and military dignitaries including the Lord Mayor and Sheriff of York, Air Chief Marshall Sir Stephen Dalton and His Excellency the

French Ambassador. The setting was spectacular and the atmosphere was enhanced by the music of “The Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment” and the Minster’s magnificent organ.

Music filled the entire Minster and bright autumn sunshine flooded through the stained glass windows as the Colours were paraded. Readings and prayers



**Liam O'Connor**

in both English and French were interspersed throughout the ceremony and before the Memorial was dedicated the Book of Remembrance was carried forward to the playing of the ‘Spitfire Prelude’ by William Walton.

The actual Memorial stone is quite small and I suspect will be mounted at a later date in a prominent location.....the first ever French Memorial in an English church.

After the Memorial was received by the Dean of York a lone trumpeter positioned high above the congregation sounded the Last Post. The clear, crisp



sounds of the trumpet echoing from the beautiful vaulted ceiling had many searching for a tissue. Following the National Anthem and La Marseillaise the dignitaries left the Minster to a lively rendition of 'The RAF March Past' .....a very stirring conclusion to the service.

Outside the Minster we gathered to watch and cheer the march past which was followed by a flyover of two Typhoon jets and a 'diamond nine' formation of Tucanos from RAF Linton on Ouse. However, the greatest cheer was for the BBMF Lancaster which made two passes. The proximity of the bomber to the Minster naturally made a 4T9er think of Fiskerton and Lincoln Cathedral.

In the crowd outside we were delighted to meet Liam O'Connor, the architect for the Bomber Command Memorial in London...he had spotted my 49 Squadron Badge. I was most impressed by his knowledge of Bomber Command; he had read extensively on the subject and travelled throughout the country speaking with veterans in order to gain a better understanding of the campaign. When asked for his view on criticism of the Memorial's size he instantly replied that the Memorial was for over 55,500 airmen so how could that possibly be the case. He described a feature of the memorial that was unknown to me; display panels would surround the site carrying details of the 21 Bomber Command airmen who won the Victoria Cross during WW2. *[The first of these was awarded to Rod Learoyd of 49 Squadron. ED]*

The day was brought to a close by a splendid reception where an abundant supply of excellent food and wine was served in the historic York Assembly Room.

All photos; Malcolm Brooke





## REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

There were a number of acts of remembrance enacted by members of the Association. Most took place in Lincolnshire mainly at Scampton, Fulbeck, Bransby and Fiskerton although there was at least one in Denmark and no doubt many more elsewhere.

As usual the main focus was at Fiskerton, the Association's spiritual home, where those present included eleven 4T9ers and their spouses or partners some of whom had travelled from as far afield as Guildford, Southampton and Carlisle. Two of the eleven were WWII veterans, Ted Cachart and Bill Cooke.

The service commenced at 1030hrs conducted by Fiskerton's vicar, Rev. Penny Green. The first hymn saw the parading of the flags of The Fiskerton Scout Group and during the service two red candles were lit in remembrance of Red Arrows pilots Jon Egging and Sean Cunningham both of whom were killed recently. The two minutes silence at 1100hrs was preceded by a recording of a lone trumpeter playing The Last Post.

Wreaths were laid on the Church Memorial on behalf of 49 and 576 Squadrons and The Royal Observer Corps. An excellent address reflecting the theme of sacrifice and remembrance was delivered by Rev. Penny.

Following the church service we went up to the Airfield Memorial where we were joined by the Stuffins family to whom we are most grateful for their

continued wonderful work in maintaining our memorial plot. Thanks to them the RAF Ensign once again flew over the proceedings.

Thankfully it was a warm, dry morning possibly due to the presence of a brace of 'Sky Pilots', Rev. Penny and our Padre, Rev. Tony Buckler. Sadly Tony has informed me that due to failing health he will no longer be able to officiate at our functions. We thank him for his past 'services' most sincerely. Happily Penny has indicated that she will be pleased to continue from Tony for which we are most grateful.



Through a Scout Guard of Honour wreaths were again laid by 49 and 576 Squadrons together with a wreath by the scouts and various personal wreaths and crosses.

Following the airfield service we returned to the church for coffee prior to some of us taking an excellent lunch at The Carpenters Arms.

It must be remembered that although the airfield service is specifically for 49 and 576 Squadrons the church service is the act of remembrance by Fiskerton village and we, as an Association, are honoured and grateful to be their guests.

### **'INTO THE WIND'**

**This is a DVD about Bomber Command and it will be released on November 30th. The main feature 'Into The Wind' is due to be screened by Yesterday Channel sometime in 2012. The DVD, which is available in the U.K., Australia and New Zealand, contains various other features as well as 72 minutes of directors cuts.**

**A discount of £2 applies to members resulting in a price in the U.K. including package and postage of £12.99. For Australia and New Zealand the price will be £16.99 including p & p. State that you are a member when ordering to qualify for the discount.**

**Order online from ; [www.intothewind.co.uk](http://www.intothewind.co.uk) or by post from;**

**Electric Egg Ltd, Into the Wind DVD, Rope Walk, Lincoln LN6 7DQ, U.K.**

**Cheques should be made payable to; Electric Egg Ltd.**

## READER'S LETTERS

***Our Researcher, Colin Cripps, has been exchanging e-mails with a Belgian correspondent concerning the loss of Manchester R5794;***

“...My name is Gil Geerings and a year ago I contacted your website in search of Greg Nolan, son of Sgt. Nolan.

“I’m doing an investigation about the crash in Arendonk near my place. I retrieved some items of the plane of his dad which I want to give to Greg.

“We are planning to create a monument at the crashsite...”

***A further e-mail contained the following;***

“...Summary of events.

“On Monday 1 June, 1942, 956 planes left on a bombing mission to Essen. 31 planes would not return from this mission. 8 planes crashed on Belgium soil.

“One of them was Manchester R5794, 1 of 8 Manchesters from 49 Squadron.

“Manchester R5794 was used by the Conversion Training Section which had just been formed. The aircraft had completed 137 hours prior to its last flight. The crew was posted on 26th April 1942 to the squadron except for Sergeant Nolan, who was posted in on 1st November 1941 and who by that time had flown 15 operations on Hampdens. When they left that evening in 1942 the crew was as follows:

Pilot	P/O	William C Shackleton	21 years
F/E (second pilot)	F/S	Reginald H H Garratt	21 years
Nav.	Sgt	Frank W M Wilson	20 years
B/A (front gunner)	Sgt	C D Nolan	
W/op	Sgt	R C Shannon RAAF	
M/Gnr	Sgt	George J A	21 years
R/Gnr	Sgt	Ernest A Patey	

“The bombing of Essen proved to be very scattered. Mainly due to the ground haze and layers of low cloud crews had difficulty in finding the target. At 0219 hours, a transmission was received at Scampton. It was an SOS distress signal from the returning Manchester R5794. Wireless operator Shannon had sent a message that they were under attack by a night fighter. The starboard engine was hit. It had caught fire and was no longer serviceable. A fix was given and nothing further was received.

“They were probably under attack by night fighter of Fw Heinz Pahler (5./NJG2) since he claimed a hit at 02.08h in that area.

“The plane came through the clouds and followed the canal Dessel – Turnhout. They quickly saw a wide open space suitable for their crash landing. They flew right towards the farm of family Smets located in the Polderstraat in

Arendonk Belgium. The plane hit the tops of some oak trees, plunged into the field and slide towards the farm. The nose of the plane came to a stop at the water reservoir which was standing behind the farmhouse. The fuselage was laying against the back of the house and its right wing lay on top of the roof. Some of the smaller buildings were damaged but it was a wonder that the house wasn't touched by the Manchester.

"Four crew members died on impact. Sgt Nolan and Sgt Shannon survived and got out of the plane...

"The daughter of the family Smets: *'We were of course all awake and we were getting downstairs to get out, but someone knocked on the front door even before we reached it. It was two airman which were standing there in front of us. One was wounded, blood was on his face, and he was leaning on his friend's shoulder. The wounded man was laid down on the straw and I had the opportunity to dress his wounds. We washed the blood off his face, which was covered with cuts and bruises. He came from Australia, so he told us.'*

"The plane was on fire and ammunition was exploding. From everywhere people came to see the aircraft including some Germans who were stationed nearby. Arendonk is close to an important canal and near the border with The Netherlands so many Germans saw the plane in trouble.

"Some local people initially tried to hide them from the oncoming Germans, but finally the airmen declined. They knew the Germans wouldn't let them get away that easily and would not risk their lives and those of the local people.

"Sergeant Nolan was brought away as prisoner of war, and Sergeant Shannon was put on a stretcher. He offered the Germans a cigarette but none of them responded. A doctor, Jan Op De Beeck, came to see Shannon and applied first aid. Shannon was then taken away. Mr. Smets, the farmer, was ordered by the Germans to take away the five airmen who had died with his horse and cart. He also had to pick up the dead Polish airmen of Wellington R1615 of No 301 Sqn, which had crashed a night earlier in the neighbourhood. They were all buried on the 4th June at the military cemetery at Voorheide next to the French soldiers who had been killed in 1940. The British men were reburied at Heverlee War Cemetery after the war, and the Polish men where brought to Lommel.

"After the war, the farm was rebuilt and the site has changed a lot since then. Nothing remains of what once happened there, but up until five years ago there was still some oil floating in the brook which runs along side the field.

"Sources used:

'Lancaster verliezen in België' by Govaerts Wim

Webiste 49 Squadron

Mr. Hendrickx, eyewitness"

*This correspondence is on going.*

*Associate Member, Jo Cockburn, great-niece of F/Sgt George Silvester DFM who was killed on the Peenemunde raid, August 18th 1943, sent the following;*



“This flypast took place over White Waltham Airfield, Berkshire on 18th August in memory of a very close friend of mine Jim Beagley who was tragically killed in an aircrash at Coventry Airport in 2008 age 35.

“Jim was an exceptional pilot, and very much a BBMF enthusiast, he always got me airborne whenever he could. I only found out this year by sheer chance that he'd been killed, and I'm absolutely devastated.

“White Waltham is approx 3 miles from Binfield (home to Uncle George ) and this flypast did ironically fly over Binfield which was rather fitting considering it was the date that George's crew were lost.



*Former wireless operator, Jim Bridger, sent the following amusing story which concerns his pilot, the late Jim 'Robbie' Robson. Jim's opening comment is very pleasing to me as it confirms positive comments that I have received from lady readers;*

"Many thanks for the latest issue of The 4T9er which I haven't read yet as my wife always grabs it first...

"...He [Robbie] was known for his very low run - ins to the runway - no doubt it aided his incredibly smooth landings, if you weren't looking you never knew when you were down.

"If I remember Syerston correctly, it was built on a shelf - at one third of its circumference there was a drop of about ten feet and one runway lead directly to this drop.

"One searingly hot afternoon in the summer of 1945 we were approaching the runway from the lower level. I was idly watching our shadow shimmering across the fields when we hit some sort of air pocket and sank! 'Through the gate', yelled Jimmy though I would guess that the engineer, Bill Claydon, would already have his hand on the bar that controlled all four throttles! A deep roar of four Merlins and up like a lift we climbed and then sank on to the runway.

"Phew that was close, ha-ha, but we didn't know that our Flight Commander was standing watching our approach and he lost sight of us when we dropped and feared that we had piled into the bank "He was so agitated that he didn't wait to dress Jimmy down in the office but yelled at him as soon as we got back to the Flight Hut, 'You bloody fool Robson. You're supposed to descend to the runway not climb up to it.'

"We six waited nearby, not letting the C.O. see us laughing at Jimmy's discomfort. Just another memory."

*Sadly Robbie died in July 2010 in South Africa after being knocked over by unruly teenagers in a supermarket. A sad end for a gallant gentleman.*

***Regular correspondent Ron Eeles wrote;***

"Reference page 30 of The 4T9er issue 22, could you kindly supply me with the address of our New Friend, Peter de Vries.

"Although I do not remember Stanley Hawes, his crew and my own (P.O. Ball) occupied the same Nissen hut at Fiskerton.

"P.O. Bert Shinn lost his original wop/ag (F/Sgt Mervyn Herd) due to fatal flak injuries over Essen 26/27 March 1944 and Stanley Hawes would have been his replacement until Wesseling on June 21st. *[P.O. Shinn DFC and crew were all lost. ED.]*

"P.O. Shinn was a Birmingham man. *[Like Ron. ED.]*

I thought that I would like to write to Pieter de Vries as a little background might prove informative...."

***Our Archivist, Ed Norman, received the following e-mail from non-member Alexander Brzeski who has obviously a deep feeling for the Squadron;***

“Being a man of 43 with Polish heritage I grew up hearing stories of life during the war in places such as Poland where my father grew up and London which is where I spent all my years until recently. I also believe that my grandfather was involved with the resistance here in France. Although it is sad to think of the millions who lost their lives for me it is fascinating to see things that remind us of both wars. It makes me realise just how lucky we are to live in relatively peaceful times.

“The forest surrounding the village in which I live in 'Lyons la Foret' is littered with memorial stones marking the spots where several other planes from 49 Squadron were shot down.

“...Not only are there memorial stones around the place, there are also bomb craters scattered about and what look like the remains of trenches. There are also rectangular ditches by the road side which I am told was where the Nazis hid their trucks loaded with ammunition.

“I have also recently learnt that not far from here there are V1 and V2 launch sites.

“Please feel free to contact me if you think I could be of any assistance. I will also carry on sending any photos of other memorials I come across in connection to 49 Squadron.”

***Alexander enclosed the following story of one of those courageous resistance members who risked their lives 24 hours a day, every day, for the cause of freedom;***

### **The Memoir of Huguette Verhague**

“...Huguette Verhague lived near the abbey of Mortemar. Apart from the two airmen involved in the operation on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, she hid numerous soldiers or allied airmen up to five at a time!

“Ron Leverington was a gunner in an RAF Halifax when his aircraft was shot down in Goupilleres on 29<sup>th</sup> June, 1944.

“He would be hidden for six weeks at Huguette Verhague’s place before being put on the road to Paris. There, a double agent delivered him straight into the hands of the Gestapo. He would survive till the Liberation in the camp at Buchenwald.

“Having returned to these places in 1997, Ron Leverington describes these six weeks spent in Huguette Verhague’s home in his war diary very well.

“He writes in detail...

“On 2<sup>nd</sup> July, Huguette welcomed us into her small house in Mortemer, which was safe and where we were certainly more comfortable. She put us in an attic above the hen-house. Across the roof we could see the road. She already had an

escapee there, Philip Hemmens.

Huguette had a special way of retrieving the airmen. If a plane came down during the day, it was most likely the Americans, so she went for a walk singing 'Yankie Doodle Dandy'. If the crash happened at night, it was probably the English; she changed the song to 'It's a Long Way to Tipperary'.

She spent hours in the surrounding villages searching for food for us, Reg, Philip and myself. During the night we would go out with Huguette to reconnoitre the field which might be suitable for the landing of Lysanders and Hudsons, to drop weapons and agents. We had a number of adventures on the way.

The members of the local Resistance were very helpful in bringing us food. The chemist from Lyons brought medical help, caring for Reg who had been slightly burned. Mr Nicolas Coulouriotis of the Greek Resistance came regularly every Sunday from Paris and brought us luxury items like tobacco and pipes as well as food.

The Germans came one more time, searching for allied airmen but Huguette gave them eggs and spoke to them in German. She spoke English as fluently as German.

In case of a thorough search I had got ready an alarm system by tying a tin to the end of the rope that Huguette used for hanging her washing; in this way Huguette could tinkle by raising or lowering her washing. This was necessary, especially at night. There was an emergency exit in our attic from where we could dive straight into the forest.

We stayed there about six weeks. On 7<sup>th</sup> August the Resistance transferred us: we were going to return home! Unfortunately Huguette had just gone out"

At the Liberation, Huguette Verhague was still taking care of others. Among others she was to help the widow of Gilbert Ouvry to formalise the administrative procedures by which her son Henri, two years old would be recognised as a 'Pupille de la Nation' (a Ward of the State)

After the harshest of trials and overwhelmed by tribulation and material difficulties, Mme Huguette Verhague was to meet the most distressing of ends on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1961, blind and in poverty.'

"Ron Leverington returned to Mortemar in 1997 to say thank you. 'I will never be able to express my admiration for the French Resistance, for their bravery, their generosity and their care. But Connie and I paid homage to them by calling our daughter Anne Huguette.' "

*It is most interesting that Philip Hemmens appears in Ron's narrative as he is already mentioned on page 3 of this issue and was a 49er. Would be evaders often had no proof of RAF identity and were treated as spies. Philip went to Buchenwald as did Ron who featured recently in a tv programme, 'Bomber Boys', which focussed on that camp. Sadly F/O Philip D. Hemmens died there.*

***Evergreen 4T9er, Eric Clarke, wrote;***

“As you will see from the enclosed leaflet, our fellow 4T9er, Bob Hayward is President of Doncaster Branch RAF Association (a branch I formed 66 years ago!!) and had been very busy.

“I attended a function as his special guest, along with our Doncaster Civic Mayor and Group Captain Alan Tolhurst, (last OC Finningley) who is also Deputy Lord Lieutenant of South Yorkshire, and 500 guests in No1 Hangar at Robin Hood Airport, formerly RAF Finningley.

“The occasion was the Anniversary of the Battle of Britain, the RAF Association Wings Appeal and the now famous Vulcan XH558.

“Bob, as President and joint organiser, made a welcome speech which included a special welcome to Bomber Command 98 year old veteran of Doncaster etc...Eric Clarke!!! The Civic Mayor, Deputy Lord Lieutenant and the 500 guests all stood up and gave me a standing ovation, after which I was presented with a framed photo of the Finningley Hampden of August 1940.

“I was stunned. Alan Tolhurst then came and sat with me and we enjoyed very interesting reminiscences, interrupted by a very attractive young blonde who said, ‘BBC Look North-may I talk to you?’

“I was stunned –again! She and the cameraman got busy on me saying she would ask me questions which would go out live!! In a matter of seconds it all happened– I was bewildered, What an experience!

“All this was followed by a service and the Sunset Ceremony but I could not stay as my driver had to return, however, my neighbour had recorded my ‘bit’ and on Friday morning gave me a disc which I played instantly with complete astonishment, I looked like a scared rabbit! I played the disc at my History Group on Friday afternoon and they kindly said, ‘It was brilliant.’ I might have been if I had been prepared.

“However, a very short report of an amazing experience.

“I have sent a ‘thank you’ to Bob, The Civic Mayor and the Group Captain; who incidentally, promised to meet me at the Mansion House in the near future. By the way, I was photographed with the Vulcan Crew and promised a copy by e-mail.”

***Bob Hayward later e-mailed’***

“Eric was our honoured guest at our Brew for the Few held on 15th September 2011 at the Vulcan Hangar at Finningley. He tells me he is sending you his account of the day but I thought you would like this photograph of him with our Civic Mayor Eva Hughes. I noticed when arranging this event a print of a Hamden which is part of a picture gallery they are posting on the wall of the Hangar. I happened to mention to the i/c hangar that attending our do was an old wartime veteran who at 98 was probable the oldest surviving member of



Bomber Command and who had started his service flying in Hamdens. Result, unbeknown to me was their presenting him with this picture at the event. He has become a great friend of mine over the past three years since meeting him for the first time on Armed Forces Day three years ago. A truly great gentleman beloved by all.”

*Clive Cox e-mailed the following;*

“Perhaps everybody would like to know that Airfix have produced a 1:72 scale Valiant B Mk1 that can be XD823 in

black markings or XD857 in nuclear trials markings cost about £35-00. on sale now.”

## CAN YOU HELP?

*Associate Member, Graham Boyd, asked about the following;*

“Amongst my father’s papers I found this aluminium “star” (about 1¼” across),

“There is nothing on the back. I sent a picture of it to Andy [Anderson, crew mate. ED.] who called to say that it was not RAF issue. He remembered that there were shops at the time that sold souvenirs. He wondered if my father wanted a memento of qualifying as a Flight Engineer, and had this disc stamped with his name and service number. That was all he could think of. (Perhaps he may have wanted it for his girlfriend – and wife to be.)”

