

The 4T9er

LIFE IN THE OLD DOG YET!

The 49 Squadron Association Magazine
November 2013 Issue 31



Photo; 49 Squadron Collection

Our Hon. President, John Ward, has brought an added poignancy to our cover photograph by adding colour with the aid of Adobe PhotoShop software. 21 year old W/O Ron Brunt and his crew are debriefed on November 23rd 1943, following a raid on Berlin, 70 years ago this month. Less than three days later they failed to return from Berlin and all the crew members except the bomb aimer, Sgt. John Burrows, were killed. The navigator, Sgt Fred Ashman was just 19 years old, the crew's average age was 21.



TED CACHART

1925-2013



During the early hours of Monday 9th September 2013 our dear friend and 49 Squadron Association Chairman Ted Cachart sadly passed away, aged 88, holding the hand of his devoted daughter Jackie.

Ted had moved to Heage, Derbyshire to be near his children Tony and Jackie, following the death of his wife Betty, 22 years ago.

He was born on June 15th 1925 in Gorleston-on-Sea in Norfolk, one of five children to Benjamin and Dorothy Cachart. Benjamin, a former RSM and WW1 veteran studied to be a Chartered Accountant, and newly qualified the Cachart family moved to Wealdstone and eventually Pinner.

After leaving school, Ted attended The City of Westminster Catering College in Vincent Square. But there was a war on, and his older brothers were already in the army and his sister was joining the WAAF. Dissuaded from joining the army by his brothers, Ted's wartime experiences are covered in his own words on the following pages.

After post war service in the RAF, Ted moved into light industry, first with Hoover Ltd and then his own domestic appliance business. It was during this period that he married Betty and raised two children, Tony and Jackie.

A career change from selling to training happened when appointed by Derbyshire County Council to manage their Youth Training Scheme workshop. It was here that Ted developed his passion for computers, a subject that became a very important aspect of his life.

Hugely proud of his military career, Ted joined the 49 Squadron Association and soon became a very proactive member eventually becoming the Chairman. He was persuaded to write a book about his miraculous escape from a doomed bomber and subsequent life as a POW. The title for the book was 'Ted the Lad', a name that was to stick with him for the rest of his life. It epitomises Ted so well. He was a man who lived a full and active life, despite his deteriorating health in recent years. In fact, as he had throughout his life, he relished challenge and refused to be beaten by adversity.

Ted became an excellent ambassador for 49 Squadron, appearing on television, giving interviews on radio and making new friends at various airshows and other public events. He was a proficient raconteur who loved an audience and stories of his wartime experiences have been shared with a wide audience including younger generations for whom Ted brought to life, experiences that previously had only been words on pages.

Ted the Lad, a man who valued the past, lived in the present and always looked forward to the future.

John Ward

TED 'THE LAD' CACHART RELIVES HIS BOMBER COMMAND DAYS

**From an interview with Catherine Goodier, editor of Blind Veterans
UK magazine reproduced here with her kind permission.**

At around 2.30am on 3rd January 1944, Ted Cachart was alone in a forest in Northern Germany – cold, soaked to the skin and with severe cramp in his left leg from a knee injury. A member of Bomber Command he had parachuted from the remains of his Lancaster during a bombing mission to Berlin.

Ted Cachart said: "I wanted to join the RAF, rather than be conscripted into the Army or Navy, as it seemed the best option to me. It also appealed as the RAF were known as the Brylcreem boys in those days and believed to be more attractive to the young ladies. There was a poster, which the MOD denies existed, that showed a young woman kissing an Airman and a queue of young women waiting to kiss him. The slogan read: 'The girls will queue for the boys in blue.' And I wanted to be a boy in blue!"

In 1941, although only 15 years of age, to ensure he became one of the boys in blue Ted went to his local Recruiting Office where he was told he couldn't volunteer until he was 17¼, with his parents' consent. He took the forms home and asked his father and a priest to sign them, telling them: "It's just to make sure I get into the RAF". No lies passed his young lips! Ted sent the signed forms off having entered his birth year as 1923 rather than 1925.

In April he attended a medical examination board at Edgware Hospital and was passed as A1. In May he was told to report to Oxford University, where, with others, he took a written exam, followed by an interview with the Air Crew Selection Board. Only too aware of his young age Ted declined to train as a pilot and trained as a Wireless Operator/Air Gunner. He was then sworn in and on 13th May 1941, a month before his 16th birthday, he became a member of the RAF.

Ted continued: "I turned 16 in June and received my call up papers in October. My father was quite annoyed, but when I told him I knew he had joined the Army underage in the First World War, he accepted and said, 'O.K. but I'll bet you will want me to get you out before Christmas comes'.

"After completion of training in Wireless and Gunnery I was promoted to Sergeant and proudly sewed on an Air Gunners Brevet and three stripes. I am sure I swaggered home for 10 days leave. Further training followed when I joined with four others to be a crew. They were Flying Officer Johnny Young, Pilot. Pilot Officer Jack Scott, Navigator, both Canadians in the RCAF. Pilot Officer Les Orchard, Bomb Aimer. Sergeant Len Crossman, Rear Gunner. Like myself, all three in the RAF. Two months later we added Flight Sergeant Allen Vidow, Flight Engineer, RAF and Australian Sergeant 'Spud' Mahony, Mid

Upper Gunner in the RAAF. As a group we would sleep, eat and play together. We were no longer individuals, we were a unit. It was quite natural to go to the cinema together where we would sit all seven in a row. It made us confident that each person would do their job to the best of their ability.”

On 13th October 1943 they were posted to 49 Squadron at RAF Fiskerton near Lincoln City, as part of Base 52 in 5 Group, Bomber Command.

With excitement in his voice Ted continued: “I can only speak for myself when I say what it was like to go on an operation with Bomber Command, and I can honestly say that it was something very special. It was never ‘Oh we’re on ops’ said in a gloomy tone, it was always ‘Hey we’re on ops tonight!’ It started with our regular WAAF driver, Dot Everett, who drove us to our Lancaster, EA-N (NAN), or Nancy Pants as Dot renamed her. The adrenaline kicked in as you thought about the target, the number of night fighters, and if there would be heavy flak and searchlights. It was incredibly exciting.

“During an operation I would stand with my head in the Astrodome as I listened to the radio on a long lead, while also acting as an extra pair of eyes. I can only say it was like watching an exciting film, as everything was going on outside, not in our Lancaster. At least not until our final op! The most critical time in any bombing operation is the last few minutes as the pilot flies the aircraft straight and level at a fixed speed to allow the Bomb Aimer to adjust his bombsight and give instructions for alignment. I am sure we all held our breath until the magic words ‘bombs gone’. Targets were bombed on a number of occasions when approaches were made from different directions to ensure that the entire target was attacked. Our approach to the target was via a turning point some 60 miles north of Berlin. As we dropped our starboard wing to turn onto the new course, another aircraft, which had already turned, flew straight into our starboard wing, which snapped off close to the inboard engine. As I looked from the Astrodome I saw part of our aircraft disappear.

“In the collision I lost my helmet and oxygen mask and at that height, if you’re lucky, you have about two minutes before you pass out through lack of oxygen. I worked my way along the darkened fuselage and saw both gunners standing at the open door. I couldn’t talk to them and don’t remember if they gave me the thumbs up to bail out. I do know I sat on the steps and rolled out. I don’t remember pulling the rip cord; I just remember descending in the chute. I could have been court marshalled for having abandoned the aircraft without permission. At that moment I was more concerned to see the aircraft fly away into the clouds, perhaps back home, than what lay ahead of me in Germany below.

“Then my thought was ‘how do I keep warm?’ as I was frozen. The temperature was probably around 30 below that night. It was a snowy, windy

night with 75mph winds. I wished desperately that I'd chosen another role as the other crew members had thick jackets, sweaters and gloves. I just wore battledress and boots as mine was the hottest seat in the aircraft. As I looked down I saw a black area among the clouds and thought I was coming into clear air. But my feet crashed through the branches of a tree and I hung there from the parachute straps in the darkness and pouring rain as I tried to work out how far I was from the ground. Eventually I managed to swing over and grab the tree trunk with my legs; I then released the parachute harness and slid about three feet to the ground."

The impact of the landing injured Ted's knee and made it difficult to walk. He has no memory of how long he struggled through the forest, but he eventually found a remote farmhouse.

Ted continued: "I sat on the doorstep and banged on the door. Someone shouted at me to go away. I kept on banging using the handle of my sheath knife. Eventually a woman opened the door. I held the knife up to her, holding it by the blade to show I meant her no harm. She took it from me, helped me up and inside and into a downstairs bedroom where her husband was in bed. He didn't want to know I was there. She sat me in a chair and gave me a towel to dry myself with; she put a blanket round my shoulders and took a piece of wood from the tree out of my hand and bathed and bandaged it. The bandage on my knee was now too tight and as I struggled to loosen it she took over, removed it and re-bandaged my knee. She gave me a cup of cold coffee and although we didn't speak each other's language we made ourselves understood. I learnt that her son had been killed onboard a U-boat. There was a photograph of him on the mantelshelf with a piece of black ribbon round it. I believe she treated me the way she would have wanted her son to be treated had he been captured."

A car arrived and Ted was taken to the local Burgermeister's house where he was briefly interviewed, before he was taken to a nearby Luftwaffe base.

Clearly remembering the time, Ted said: "The German Sergeant in the Guard Room let me sit by a fire and shared his rations with me in the early hours of the morning before he locked me in a cell when he went off duty. Later five officers entered and one tapped me on the shoulder and said 'Liverpool fünf times' and another said, 'London acht times'. Another, who spoke good English, put his hand on my shoulder and said 'You're a very lucky young man as your war is over. We have to fight on'. Looking back there was no animosity. They were no different to us; they were just doing the job they were told to do. There was great respect between the RAF and the Luftwaffe.

"I was eventually taken to Trollenhagen Airbase where I was interrogated by the Commanding Officer who asked why I carried a sheath knife. When I told him it was to puncture the tins of orange juice that we drank on operations he

said ‘You took drink on operations?’ He was even more incredulous when I told him it was to wash down the sandwiches and cakes we ate on ops. Needless to say they confiscated the knife. All our crew were brought in one at a time until we were all seven together.”

The Commissioned Officers, the Pilot, Navigator and Bomb Aimer were sent to Stalag Luft III, which was the camp of the great escape, where 50 PoWs were executed. Ted and the other NCOs went to Stalag IV-B near Mühlberg, to the south of Berlin. After two months Ted was sent to Dulag Luft for further interrogation when some new radio equipment was discovered in the wreckage of the Lancaster. He was then sent to Stalag Luft VI, Heydekrug, on the borders of Lithuania and later moved to Toruń in Poland and then to Fallingbomel in Western Germany. Ted was repatriated in 1945 and continued to Serve in the Royal Air Force until 1949, and for a further six years as a reserve. On his tie below an embroidered Lancaster, he wears the pin badge of a prisoner of war and the small gold caterpillar clasp of the Caterpillar Club that is given to those whose life has been saved by an Irving Parachute. Now he has his Bomber Command clasp, which he wears on his 1939 to 1945 Star.

Asked about the Bomber Command Memorial, Ted said: “It’s finally politically acceptable to recognise Bomber Command. Winston Churchill turned his back on Bomber Command at the end of the war when he made no mention of us in his post war speech. From then onwards Bomber Command was a political hot potato. No-one wanted to be seen to do anything to recognise it. It took more than 60 years to get the Memorial. The Bomber Command Association, along with Robin Gibb of the BeeGees and others started a campaign, which was supported very strongly by the Daily Telegraph and Daily Express, and with their help £5 million was raised in two years. The memorial was unveiled by Her Majesty The Queen in 2012 and I had the honour to be there.

“I have feelings of both sadness and pleasure when I visit the Bomber Command Memorial as I remember the comrades who failed to return and those I Served with who did. I think of the 55,573 who made the ultimate sacrifice, 25,000 of whom flew from Lincolnshire. I hope the Memorial will make people appreciate the sacrifices they made. At long last we have been given the Bomber Command Clasp and I wear mine with a great deal of pride, but I just wish it had been given many years ago.”

When asked how Blind Veterans UK has helped him Ted said: “I have really benefited meeting and becoming friends with people with similar difficulties. The care and attention from the staff, who are extremely helpful is wonderful, especially my Welfare Officer, Alison Molloy. In the near future I plan to go to the Sheffield centre for further computer training.”

IN MEMORIAM

M. W. Maxwell E. B. Cachart

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Alison Jessup Anthony Cachart Neil Watson

NEW HONORARY FRIENDS

Andrew Panton Louise Bush

EDITORIAL

I start by just adding a few words of my own about our dear friend Ted. My first direct contact with 49 Squadron Association was in 1999 when I attended a Remembrance Sunday service at Fiskerton. There were three WWII veterans there, all proudly wearing their medals. I chatted to all in turn. Norman Alty DFC surprised me when he said, "I quite liked the Stirling." He had piloted one, or more, at his H.C.U.. Within 6 months Norman died. I also talked with Lou Crabbe, former flight engineer. Somehow the conversation got round to pilots operating 'Village Inn' rear turrets. Lou's theory was that anybody mad enough to volunteer as a rear gunner couldn't possibly be sufficiently sane to operate Village Inn so they had to use pilots, quite a few of whom were surplus at that late stage of the war. It was only after some time when our friendship grew, which was to last nearly 14 years, that I came to understand Lou's delightful cynicism. Sadly we lost Lou last May. Then there was Ted. It was Ted who told me that as a close relative of a deceased 49er I was eligible to join as an Associate Member. Little did I realise what wonderful experiences I would enjoy. At reunions I met numerous former squadron members, my heroes. I would attend a Royal Tattoo at Windsor and a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. Then there was the unveiling of the Bomber Command Memorial by H.M. The Queen, I would meet the Red Arrows, go behind the scenes of the BBMF and much more that I could not have anticipated in my wildest dreams. All thanks to Ted, not only for introducing me to 49 SA but also for arranging for me to do most of the above. Ted was a computer wizard and whenever I had a query, which was often, he would sort it out, usually in minutes. It was Ted who taught John Ward and myself the intricacies of the

Microsoft Publisher software which is indispensable for the production of this magazine. It was only a month ago that Ted said, "I have taught you and John so well that now I am redundant." "Never", I replied. Shortly after I became secretary of the association our chairman, Leslie 'Uncle Will' Hay died. By this time we were putting in place the 'crew' who I suppose in any other organisation would be known as the committee. Ted was an automatic and unanimous choice to succeed Uncle as chairman and filled the position for seven years. Like his predecessor his contribution to the association is immeasurable.

As Ted's funeral was to be a quiet family affair he had expressed a wish, and partly organised, his 'Posting Out Party'. I should explain that when someone went missing or was posted to another squadron he was entered as 'Posted Out' in squadron records. We in the crew have adopted this terminology when announcing the death of a member. The party was held at Wirksworth Cricket Club in Derbyshire on September 15th. Ted had asked that it be held on Battle of Britain Day as there was a better chance of receiving a flyover by the BBMF Lancaster. This in fact was agreed but due to low cloud, high winds and driving rain it never materialised. The party was a light hearted affair, as decreed by Ted, and included his family, relations and friends, including thirteen 4T9ers and wives. It was a marvellous way to celebrate his life and a privilege to be there.

Hours before he died Ted said, "I need to speak to Alan to resign and tell him that he needs to find a new chairman." Whilst this was not uppermost in my mind at that time I did eventually address the matter. We needed someone who has served with the squadron, someone who attends reunions, ideally someone who visits Fiskerton on Remembrance Day, someone who fits in with the crew and most importantly has the interests of the association strongly in his heart. After due consideration I proposed Stuart Keay to the crew and received unanimous approval. It may have seemed a bit like 'The King is dead. Long live the King' but I approached Stuart at Ted's 'Posting Out Party' and I am delighted to announce that Stuart graciously accepted to fill the huge space that Ted has left. I'm sure that you join me in wishing Stuart a long, happy and successful tenure. Stuart's short inaugural message appears on page 29.

Moving on, I thank all of you who have sent donations of money or postage stamps. Without our members generosity the association would grind to a halt. All good things must come to an end and the posting of the printed copies of this issue sees the end of the stock of stamps that we bought more than a year ago before the cost rose considerably. Therefore we must now buy stamps at the hugely inflated rate so if you are still taking The 4T9er by post when you have a computer which is capable of receiving it by e-mail I appeal to you to make the

change. You would also receive the E-Supplement which is only available to those who take the e-mailed copy of the magazine.

I am sad to announce the passing in Australia of Malcolm William Maxwell who died on August 2nd, aged 93. He flew 35 ops as navigator in the crews of F/L, later S/L, R.B.Walker, F/O R.Williams and F/O R.B.Carlyle between 1st August 1944 and 4th May 1945.

Welcome to new Associates Alison Jessup, Tony Cachart and Neil Watson. Alison is the daughter of the late Malcolm Maxwell whose passing is remembered above. Tony Cachart, as you have probably guessed, is the son of our late lamented chairman Ted whilst Neil Watson is the son of Sgt W Watson, who was the mid upper gunner in Lancaster NE128, taken POW on the infamous Wesseling raid in June 1944.

Andrew Panton and his sister Louise Bush are welcomed as Honorary Friends. Fred and Harold Panton, founders of the Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre at East Kirkby, have been Honorary Friends for some years but following Fred's death and being aware of the effort that Andrew and Louise put into the centre I invited them to join us. I was delighted when they accepted. In addition to his other duties Andrew is now passed out to 'drive' Just Jane during the taxiing events that Louise organises.

As promised in the August issue I have included herewith more comprehensive details of the 49 Squadron Association Gathering 2014. As we are using a new hotel I have given fuller details so that you can see the treat that is in store for those attending. If you wish to view the hotel website visit www.bestwestern.co.uk/hotels/bentley_hotel

I have booked 20 double/twin and 8 single rooms at present but quite frankly I have no idea how many I will need. It is imperative that those of you who are interested in attending advise me accordingly otherwise you may be disappointed. This will put you under no obligation to confirm following February's issue when booking forms will be sent out.

If you have applied for the Bomber Command Clasp as Next of Kin you will probably have received a letter advising that the vast majority of veterans and widows have received their clasps and that assessment of Next of Kin claims is about to start. However, the process will most probably take some time as each claim must be individually verified.

August this year saw the 45th anniversary of the end of steam hauled trains in regular service in Britain. In the September issue of Heritage Railway magazine there appeared an article headed, *'Friends Reunited...45 years later!'* It commenced:

“Within what other organisation would former employees resolve to keep in touch - and even go so far as to arrange frequent reunions with each other - all of 45 years after their place of work had closed down its business forever?

“Surely this could only have happened on British Railways?

“A couple of recently occurring events in Lancashire went a considerable way towards drawing attention to that undeniably unique fact. Indeed it can only be described as a mutual demonstration of avid determination to celebrate what transpired to be the most memorable period of their lives. A large number of long retired railwaymen - from a whole host of steam depots around the country - turned out in force in late July and early August to perpetuate a pledge never to forget those once so-valuable friendships forged during their careers on the railway...” What rubbish! Obviously the author has never heard of 49 Squadron Association and all the other ex-service organisations. I e-mailed the magazine suggesting that he gets his facts right but needless to say it was not printed!

There are two developments in the pipeline at Fiskerton Airfield. The first is a planning application to locate a site cabin on the runway in the vicinity of our memorial. I understand that following pressure from Carl Stuffins and the Parish Council, it will be placed some distance away and will not detract from the memorial in any way and activity will be minimised when services are taking place. The second application is for a 160 acre solar farm. I am grateful to John Ward and Gill Walkinton who have reported back that the farm will be of low profile and in any case be at the eastern end of the airfield. Ironically the farm, whose projected life is twenty-five years, will protect our heritage as it will be placed above the concrete and existing walk and drive ways will be retained.

There is exciting news coming out of Canada where a Lancaster has run up all four engines simultaneously for the first time in 54 years at the Bomber Museum of Canada, Nanton, Alberta and at North Saanich, British Columbia, the world's airworthy Mosquito population is about to double. FlyPast magazine reported that Avro Lancaster B.X LM159 ran up all four of its engines on August 24th but that no date has been announced for the first post restoration flight of de Havilland Mosquito B.35 VR796.

You may be surprised to receive this issue earlier than is normally the case. I usually prepare the majority of the draft leaving a page for Remembrance Sunday reports but as I am displaying the model railway layout at the National Exhibition at the NEC on November 23rd and 24th I want to issue the magazine in time to enable me to fine tune the layout for what is to be our final exhibition. If you are there come and see us on Stand B46.

‘Til the next time...

WE DO REMEMBER THEM

AABENRAA, DENMARK

On August 17th 1943 twelve Lancasters took off from Fiskerton to take part in a raid on the rocket research establishment at Peenemunde. Four did not return. Early in the morning of August 18th two of those, JA851 and JA691, were shot down over Denmark whilst on the homeward leg. The crew of JA691 and the pilot of JA851 have marked graves in Aabenraa cemetery. The rear gunner of JA851 is also believed to lie there but has no marked grave.



Photo; Gwyn Nissen

In light rain on the morning of August 18th 2013, the 70th anniversary of the raid, crosses were placed on the eight graves and a 49 Squadron Association wreath was laid at the Cross of Sacrifice in the cemetery by Honorary Friends Marilyn and Hans Nissen.

Some years ago memorial stones were dedicated by the local populace to the crews of both aircraft adjacent to where they crashed. A service of remembrance, attended by local dignitaries and about thirty local people, was held at the memorial to JA691 in the afternoon of the 18th. A wreath was laid on behalf of the Association by Marilyn Nissen, whilst a further wreath was laid on behalf of local church representatives by Mr Erling Lebel Madsen.

In the afternoon there was a reception at the Village Hall of Lojt Kirkeby. Unfortunately non of the relatives of those who died were able to attend



Photo; Gwyn Nissen

Marilyn Nissen plants a cross.



Photo; Hans Nissen

WE DO REMEMBER THEM

LINCOLNSHIRE, ENGLAND



August 17th and 18th are important dates in the Parr calendar as on 17th, 1943, Barbara's father was killed in Tunisia whilst serving with the Lincolnshire Regiment and the following day my uncle was killed whilst returning from Peenemunde in Lancaster JA691 EA-L. When on a Mediterranean cruise in 2002 which called at Tunis, we took a taxi some twenty kilometres to the cemetery



where Barbara was able at last to pay her respects. I have visited my Uncle Bob's grave in Denmark on two occasions, the last time being the 60th anniversary but as you have already read we were unable to travel on this the 70th. Instead we attended the morning service at Fiskerton church where we were both included in the prayers. Once again it was a pleasure to meet some of our Fiskerton friends. Following the service we laid crosses, in remembrance of our relatives, on the Airfield Memorial.

A few months ago, Honorary Friend, F/Lt Gary Mennell had offered to fly us over the airfields in Lincolnshire which have 49 Squadron connections. As we were in Fiskerton it was agreed that the Sunday would be suitable, subject to weather, and following a very wet and windy Saturday, Sunday dawned with blue skies but with a fairly brisk wind. Gary deemed it acceptable however and what a wonderful way for us to pay our respects to 49 Squadron in general and Uncle Bob and Barbara's dad in particular.

Following the aforementioned service and a short but pleasant visit to Mary Stuffs, we made our way to RAF Waddington where we met Gary.

He drove us across that famous main runway to the club house. During the war there were three runways but for modern high speed aircraft they are no longer necessary. I say 'famous' as it was from here that Vulcan XM607 took off on its epic attack, code named 'Black Buck', on the runway at Port Stanley during the Falklands War. Near the club house there were a number of light aircraft parked including G-BZBF, the Cessna 172M that Gary had booked for our flight.



Following the short mandatory safety talk by our pilot we climbed aboard. It was a strange feeling taxiing out on to that runway and taking off thinking of the many famous airmen and aircraft that, over the years, had preceded us.

Climbing to 1,500 feet we headed first for Fiskerton with Lincoln and its famous cathedral to our left. Coming in just to the north of B Flight's

dispersals we turned 180 degrees into the funnel at the east end of the airfield and over flew the line of the main runway where, 70 years before, so many had taken off for the last time. Fiskerton Village Hall passed beneath our port wing and directly ahead of us the cathedral stood out just as it did all those years ago.

Banking right before the end of the runway we saw the airfield memorial beneath us as we set course for Dunholm Lodge following which we headed for Scampton. It was then that I realised just how crowded the sky must have been during the war as it took only a few minutes to fly from one airfield to another. After circling Scampton, from where in the past Hampdens and Lancasters of 49 Squadron flew, also the Dambusters, then much later Vulcans and the present day Red Arrows, we headed south west.



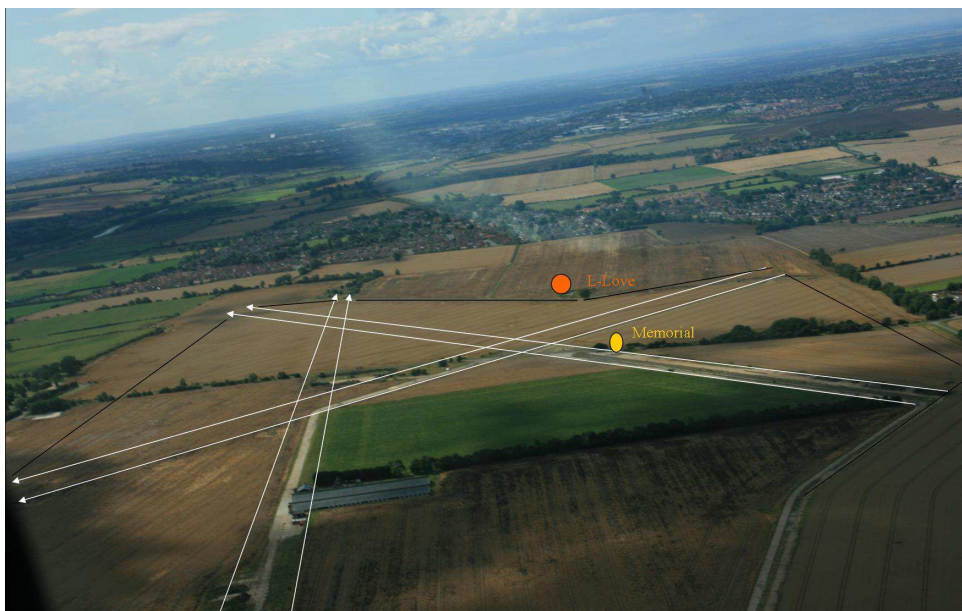
Fiskerton Village Hall can be clearly seen.

The next airfield, although not one used by 49', was Wigsley. I had asked Gary if we could visit as it was there that my uncle, and no doubt many other 49ers, converted from Wellington's to Lancasters. I was surprised at how much of the runways were still clearly visible.

Passing Swinderby to our left and Winthorpe to the right, both airfields at which some 49ers trained, we arrived at Fulbeck but here we had to keep the airfield to our left in order to avoid encroaching into Cranwell airspace.

Part of the runway, peri track and dispersals are still visible here and Gary also pointed out the site of the April 1945 tragedy.

It was now time to head back to Waddington but, as if the past half hour or so had not been thrilling enough, Gary said, "Pass your camera to Barbara and get hold of the controls."..."Right it's yours." "I have control", I replied excitedly whilst thinking, "Up to a point I hope!" From her seat behind us



John Ward has marked on the lines of the three Fiskerton runways together with the memorial and the location of L-Love's dispersal. In the distance, just above the row of light coloured buildings, can be seen Lincoln Cathedral. The Fiskerton-Reepham road, flanked by hedges, crosses the airfield and on the left, beside the road, the light patch indicates the position of E-Easy's dispersal.



RAF Scampton



The former RAF Fulbeck.

Barbara hadn't seen what was going on and when after a few minutes, probably after ascertaining that I wasn't doing anything silly, Gary turned to her and held his hands above his head. Her short response betrayed her lack of confidence in my flying skills. In my mind I did a slow roll!

As it was still a bit gusty I realised that I was much too tense as my shoulders soon started to ache so far too soon it was time to hand control back to the man who really knows what he is doing. Climbing to 5,000 feet we were just skimming the light clouds as we returned to RAF Waddington.

At the beginning of this narrative I mentioned the single runway which, although no problem for a large aircraft is a bit more testing for a small one but our skipper was well up to the challenge. After making a steep descent to the runway the Cessna seemed reluctant to touch down, floating just above the tarmac, but on my querying the fact Gary said that he had come in fairly fast because of the gusty conditions and held her off whilst our speed dropped to one more conducive with keeping rubber on the tyres.

Well that was it, I had had the most wonderful forty minutes. Barbara was slightly less enthusiastic mainly due, I believe, to the gusty conditions.

Finally, our most sincere thanks to Gary for making it possible for us to mark a very special anniversary in such a memorable way.

49 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION GATHERING 2014

As announced in the August issue of The 4T9er, we will be holding our first get together of the new era between Sunday June 1st and Tuesday June 3rd 2014 at the Bentley Hotel, South Hykeham, Lincoln. This is a prime location which is ideally located only 8 minutes from the A1 at Newark, and being on the end of the Lincoln by-pass it is only 5 minutes away from the city centre, perfect for visiting Lincoln's beautiful and historic Cathedral and Castle.

The hotel has 80 en suite bedrooms with free Internet WiFi access. Free car parking for 180 is available, 8 of which are for disabled guests. There is a wheel chair for your use if required.

Whilst we will be enjoying our own private dinner on the Monday evening the Grand Restaurant is available on other days. It seats 70 and is renowned locally for its lunch time Carvery, served from 12.00noon until 2.00pm Monday - Saturday and 12.00noon until 3.00pm on Sundays. A la Carte and Table d'Hôte Menus are available for dinner which is served from 7.00pm - 9.30pm Monday - Saturday and Sundays 7.00pm - 9.00pm should you wish it.

For those of you preferring only a snack then The Martini Bar serves a wide range of food and drink from coffee to champagne, sandwiches, crisp salads and other dishes, together with a range of traditional ales, including draught Bass!

Bentley Hotel & Spa sports a superb indoor swimming pool, complete with a hydraulic hoist on the pool side for people who require help climbing in and out of the pool. For your relaxation a Steam Room, Sauna & Jacuzzi are available. However for those of you with energy to spare, the Gym is fully equipped with all the latest equipment and fully qualified staff can show you how to use the equipment, ensuring you are safe at all times. These facilities are free to guests.

The Beauty Spa includes: Aromatherapy Steam Room, Salt Vapour Room, Foot Spas' Monsoon Aroma Steam Shower and Monsoon Rain-forest Shower. Adjacent to the Thermal Suite is The Rasul - (Ancient Arabic cleansing bathing ritual, using mineral rich mud, heat & steam.) The Jouvence (Dry floatation Bed) is the most relaxing treatment of all, let your mind drift away as if you are floating on water, wrapped in soft warm towels you will find it hard to stay awake. A rejuvenating, incredible experience. The new deluxe treatment rooms and relaxation zone offer facials, massages, pedicures or hair styling plus many more. To ensure you are not disappointed upon arrival it is advisable to book your treatments with the Beauty Spa on 01522 823222. These are charged extra.

We will meet on Sunday June 1st and at present Sunday evening is free time to chat with old and new friends or take advantage of the hotel's facilities.

On Monday morning we will make our own way to Fiskerton St. Clements Church for our annual Remembrance Service which will be followed by a wreath laying ceremony at the Fiskerton Airfield Memorial. It is hoped that

guests will arrange car sharing to ease parking at Fiskerton. We will then make our way to the village hall to partake of a buffet lunch. Returning to the hotel, the afternoon will be free time prior to our dinner at 7-00 for 7-30 pm. This will be an informal affair, dress being smart casual.

To minimise delay guests will be requested to choose their menu on the Sunday from :

Chefs Choice of Soup

Fantail of Melon served with Woodland Berries and a Mango Coulis

Ardennes pate served with Onion Chutney and wholemeal Slice

Flash Fried Breaded Wholetail Scampi with Tartare Sauce

Oven Baked Cod with a Creamy Parsley Sauce

Grilled Gammon Steak with Pineapple

Roast Beef with Yorkshire Pudding and Pot Roast Gravy

Chicken Breast served with a Mushroom, Shallots & Madeira Sauce

Brie, Spinach & Mushroom Roulade served with a Creamy White Wine Sauce

All served with Chefs Selection of Potatoes & Vegetables

Lemon Meringue Roulade with Cream

Sherry Trifle

Luxury Chocolate Gateau with Clotted Cream

Fresh Fruit Salad with Ice Cream

Coffee served with After Dinner Mints

Tuesday will be free time to optionally visit places of interest, details of which will be agreed nearer the event.

During the weekend it is hoped to arrange a fly over by the BBMF.

At the time of writing costs are expected to be:

Double/Twin Room (2 persons)...1 night-£178. 2 nights-£295. 3 nights-£413

Single Room...1 night-£98. 2-nights-£160 3 nights-£234

The foregoing include bed and breakfast with buffet and dinner on the Monday.

All other items e.g. other meals, drinks, newspapers etc. must be paid for on checking out of the hotel. Beauty Spa facilities must be paid separately.

As this is a new venue and format I would appreciate it if those interested in attending let me know, even if they have indicated previously, so that I have a rough idea of how many rooms to book. This is solely to give an approximation of numbers and carries no obligation at this stage. Final booking forms will be sent out with the February issue of The 4T9er.

GRAND TOUR & THE FINAL CHAPTER IN THE RECOVERY OF ED702

By Dom Howard

Part 1 The Tour

When I started on the search for what happened to my great uncle Cyril Anderson and his crew, I also came up with the idea of 'The Tour' to visit each of the cities that they had done while serving with 49 Squadron, and also their one operation with 617 Squadron, the Diemal & Sorpe Dams. Cyril's primary target was the Diemal Dam but he was redirected to the Sorpe.

In May Mother and I joined Jim Shortland at the Petwood Hotel, along with many others including Fred & Harold Panton, for Jim's final Dams Tour. We decided to go on this tour for two reasons - the 70th anniversary of the Dams Raid and because it was Jim's last tour (Or so he says!). Unfortunately this meant we missed the ceremonies at RAF Scampton!

Part of the tour was to visit W/Cdr Guy Gibson and S/Ldr Jim Warwick's graves in Steenberghe, where I placed a wreath on behalf of the Association on former 49er Jim Warwick's grave.



S/Ldr James Warwick



**Harold & Fred Panton with
the silver Lancaster**

This was a very interesting tour visiting the three dams: Mohne, Eder and the Sorpe and many other stops which I won't go into here. Being on the Sorpe I then realised how difficult this target was. I knew Cyril and the crew could not see the church which was used to line up for the dam wall due to fog but I hadn't realised how far up the valley wall the church was. I can now fully understand why they decided to return to base - there was nothing they could have done to make the target clear enough to attack.



Sorpe Dam looking towards the village of Langsheid and a close up of the Church

This had now taken one of the places to visit off my list, but the rest, how to do it cheaply? Just over a year ago I invested in a campervan, and before some of you think I'm the one who took on Ted's camper, no that was not me. Route planning now took some sorting, how to visit all the cities and keep the mileage down to a minimum. Fortunately there are a few "route planning" programs about on line, so it was time to work out how much the fuel bill would be. At the start of all of this I had approximated the fuel cost to be around £600, which I thought wasn't too bad, but over the years the fuel costs went up to a whopping £1.350. Fuel in Germany had rocketed to €1.70 - €1.80 (£1.45 - 1.50) per litre; I had no choice but to redo the route and sadly drop from the tour Berlin and Hamburg. This reduced the distance by 500 miles and the fuel cost to around £900. By August fuel prices had dropped to €1.55 - €1.65 so it meant that I just had to return. The route was now 3,150 miles long. To complete it in just over two weeks the stops would include two visits to Rheinberg War Cemetery and would consist of:- Cologne, Krefeld, Duisberg, Rheinberg War Cemetery, Gelsenkirchen, Essen, Wuppertal, Diemal Dam, Eisleben (where Lt Heinz Grimm is buried), Colditz Castle (this was one I just had to see), Mannheim and Weselburg (to visit the grave of Father Storck the Priest who buried the crew). There would be other stops for friends and also Laumersheim to visit the crash site of ED427, F/O Bone and crew's crash site - more on this one later.

Plans never run smoothly do they? Setting off with full fuel tank, the camper had been serviced and all was ok, or so I thought. Everything ran beautifully until The Blackwall Tunnel in London. The expansion tank blew a tiny hole, the trip was already "off". Even with a temporary repair it wouldn't get me 3,000 miles, but, with the help of the RAC we found a garage in Dover who not only had an expansion tank but were willing to stay open until I got there. The repair just lasted! I now had 6 hours to replace the tank, get some sleep and get the ferry to Dunkirk. I managed 2 hours sleep but the tour was back on.



magnificent; I even spotted a hotel named after me-Hotel Dom!

After spending two nights at a camp site just 1.5 miles from the centre I headed for Krefeld and to a POW site just a few miles from the centre. Malcolm Brooke had requested that if I was near would I mind calling round. The POW camp was deserted with many of the buildings boarded up it being Sunday. Malcolm has uploaded many of the pictures that I took onto the 49 SA web-site so go to the update section for a quick way to find them. I had forgotten that most of Germany stops as it's a day of rest for many. Rain then stopped play! As I headed into Krefeld the rain came down harder, thus stopping me from really getting a good look at the city. The only choice I had was to head on to the next stop in the hope that the rain would ease off. Sadly Duisberg was the same very heavy rain so I headed on for the next stop, Rheinberg. Here I was hoping to get some pictures of sunset and sunrise. The rain did ease off, stopping for a short while, but I knew I wasn't going to be lucky for the photographs so moved on to my next stop with the rain starting again. This Sunday was not going to be my day. I headed for Gelsenkirchen, then on to Essen. Arriving in the centre I found great difficulty in finding somewhere to park even on Sunday. I stopped and had

The crossing was a smooth one, coffee and a bacon buttie helped with the loss of sleep, arriving at Dunkirk with the usual reminders of drive on the wrong side of the road not on the left! I headed for Cologne. I knew this was a beautiful city and I did want to visit the Cathedral there. I had heard many things from friends on line and I can say it did not disappoint! The Cathedral was



First view of the Diemel Dam

a coffee in the hope the rain would ease, it didn't, so after waiting an hour I decided to move on to Wuppertal. If the rain was still heavy for the next point, which was the Diemel Dam, I had decided to stay for a couple of nights. Arriving early evening the rain finally gave way to sunshine!

I was fortunate to find a camp site just a few yards from the water's edge, and spent the first hour walking round the Dam and the village of Heringhausen.



The Diemal Dam was Cyril's primary target on operation Chastise but he was redirected to the Sorpe. The Diemal Dam wall was small compared to the rest! The following day I decided to take a small boat out onto the lake. I will admit that as I approached the face of the dam wall a certain tune came into my head and thoughts of skimming a stone but I refrained from the skimming part at least. Previously I had visited the Dam Buster Museum which is located near the Eder Dam. This is quite small at the moment but they are hoping to raise 1.3 million euro to build a much larger museum.



Left; Above, Heading towards the dam wall – Below, 7am the following day, the early morning mist still clearing from the water

My next stop was to locate the final resting place of Lt Heinz Grimm, the pilot who shot down Cyril and the crew. He himself was shot down by his own 88's just a few weeks after claiming ED702 as one of his 24 victories. He died a few weeks later. With new buildings in Eisleben, finding the cemetery proved to be interesting but with the help from Peter, just before dark I managed to locate it but by the time I found the area where Heinz is buried it was getting too dark. Many of the headstones have been moved so the only choice I had was to leave the flowers on a cross in the middle of the cemetery.

I, like many of you, watched the TV series



Colditz in my youth and again when it was repeated on one of the many channels that we have these days. A good friend decided, as this was the mid



way point, why not meet there and stay! Now that's one stop I couldn't refuse. I know many airmen would not agree with me on that one though.

The Castle is in the middle of a major refurbishment. The Chapel is closed at the moment with ongoing renovations but we took the tour which was fascinating. We also saw where, long after the war, the glider was flown from and where it landed. They hope to have all renovations completed by 2015.



We escaped from Colditz at 3.30am both having long distances to travel, Paul back to Italy and me 650 Km (403 miles) to Mannheim, the crew's last target. Then on to Weselberg where Father Storck was laid to rest. He was the priest who officiated at the funeral service in Offenbach for the crew. It was then on to the final stop in the first week, Walsheim, to stay at the Family Metzger's B&B and also to meet up with Peter Schreiber, Katja Bauer, Marco Heinrich, Steffi Weber, & Christian Schwein. All would be helping to complete the search for ED702.



All photos by the author.

MEMORIES OF MY LIFE IN THE RAF

By Roy Gould

Part 8

About that period it became time for my Flight Sergeant rank to go up to Warrant Officer. When the Flight Commander realised this he said to me, "Why don't you apply for a commission? I will put you up for it and get the Camp Commander to endorse it". So I did and in a short while it came through and I was made a lowly Pilot Officer. On leave, I went to get all the new uniform and greatcoat.

Shortly afterwards there was another great event in my life. Betty produced our first little daughter in the hospital at Woking in Surrey right in the middle of a 'flu epidemic! Our little Paula only weighed 6lbs 9oz at birth and quickly went down with pneumonia. A very anxious time and it was a long way between Woking and Lincolnshire. Telephones in those days were nothing like they are today. You had to book all long distance calls, as they would have been in those days, and then wait for them to come through. We kept in touch as well as we could but I was not allowed to go to see her in that poorly state, but the oxygen tent proved its worth and she pulled out of it. To keep myself happy I drew about a dozen cards to send to family and friends announcing Paula's birth (no photocopiers in those days) and sent them to Betty to send out.

I think it must have been on 22nd December that fate smiled on me. A Lt/Col. Harrison wanted to get down to Odiham in Surrey in a hurry. I volunteered at once to take him down in a Martinet and down we went. Odiham was not far from Woking, but it was after visiting hours when I arrived at the hospital. Fortunately I did not have to exert my charm too greatly, for the Charge Nurse took pity on me and I saw Paula for the first time with her proud mother.

I don't know whether it was my personality or my uniform showing my 'wings' that did the trick but I was allowed to stop at Betty's bedside in that large ward until late into the evening, which was something usually unheard of. I think the nurses were in fear of the Matron coming in and Matrons were feared in those days. Somehow I think the bush telegraph that Matrons have had kept her informed and she did not visit that ward at that time on that evening.

Also at this time they decided to take away our Manchesters and re-equip us with old Wellingtons. These were Vickers Wellingtons not the boots! They were aircraft on a par with the old Hampdens I used to fly but had a much bigger fuselage. They had two air-cooled engines like the Hampdens and were very nice to fly. So we used these for taking up the batches of gunners in our

‘Flight Affiliation’ as it was technically called.

At about the same time as this we were also given a couple of Boulton Paul Defiants. These were two-seater fighters. They looked rather like overgrown Hurricanes but with a machine gun turret behind the pilot’s cockpit. Another new aircraft to fly, but they were not a success and we reverted to our Martinets to simulate fighter attacks.

Time went on and I was promoted from Pilot Officer to Flying Officer with a wider band of light blue round my sleeves and on my shoulders. One evening one of the pilots on our flights said to me all of a sudden, “Roy, would you like to buy my car?”. I was taken aback and said, “Why do you want to sell your car in such a hurry?” “Well”, he said, “I have just bought a sports car and they are after me to pay my mess bill”. “Why do you think I would want to buy your old car and how much do you want for it?” I retorted. “It is a good little car and would be an investment for you. I only want £100 for it.” “I can’t afford £100”, I said, “but I will give you £60.” “Done”, he said, “shake on it”. So I had bought my first car somewhat unexpectedly. The next breakfast time I gave him my cheque and he passed over the keys and the log book.

As soon as I could I went out to see what I had bought. It was a Ford 10 with quite a modern streamlined shape for its day. It wanted a jolly good clean both inside and out. I sat in quite a comfy driver’s seat, pulled out ‘the choke’, put in the key, switched on, and pressed the starter button. Away she went, as sweet as a bird. I had bought my first car and it served me very well for many years. He was right; it was an investment for £60. I had to leave it outside all the time on those cold Lincolnshire nights but I found that, as long as I did not put in oil any thicker than ‘Castrolite’, it would start right away even if there was snow eighteen inches deep over and round it. I always kept a towrope in the car to tow start the other cars in the Flight. One particularly cold day I started it and after a few minutes great masses of steam rose from the bonnet. The rubber water hose to the radiator had split so I got some glycol from the maintenance department and bound up the hose with insulation tape. That is how it stayed. Another time the radiator leaked so I put some mustard in the water, which plugged up the hole and thus it remained. I think its secret was its simplicity. In comparison with cars of today, there was practically nothing under the bonnet – only the very essentials.

In those days, if you had a car, you could get petrol coupons instead of a railway warrant to augment the meagre ration you had for the car for general use. So on my first leave as a proud owner of a car, I set out down the A1 on my way to Surrey. I was not able to get off early so by the time I struck London it was getting late. I found my way through London and, as I was passing

through Henley-on-Thames, a dreadful, very loud screeching noise came up from the back of the underneath of the car. It was now about midnight and I thought, 'What a time and place for this to happen!'. Luckily, however, I spotted a garage. So I pushed the car down the road and up onto its forecourt, waking the dead in the process.

I then searched the town for somewhere to lay my head. Hopefully, I rang the night bell at a hotel but there was no reply. The Police Station was my next call to see whether they knew anywhere for me for the rest of the night. "No I don't know where you will find a bed at this time," he said but continued jokingly, "However, I can offer you a very comfortable cell, if you like". And that is how I spent the night in a police cell. He did not lock the door and early in the morning he woke me up with a steaming hot mug of tea. You got very good service in Police Stations in those days for, after I had had a wash in their toilets, I was taken to the canteen and given a 'full English' breakfast to set me on my way.

I was waiting for the garage to open at eight o'clock. The mechanic lifted the rear of the car with his big jack and quickly said, "Here's your trouble, the filler nut on your differential has come loose and you have lost all the thick oil". Having filled it up again and secured the offending nut, he tried running the car and all went sweetly. That was how I arrived at Milford one morning unexpectedly to see Betty and Paula once again. Actually I don't think that Betty was all that surprised for previously I used to arrive at all sorts of times, especially if I had missed the last train from Godalming to Milford and had to walk the final 3 or 4 miles in the dark. During the daytime people used to pick up others very willingly, especially Servicemen. It was very different at night because all cars had to have 'hoods' over their headlights, which allowed the light only to come out of a few narrow hooded slots directing a faint shine onto the road just in front. You had to get out of the way when wearing a big dark blue great coat on a dark night!

I think it would now be appropriate for me to explain more fully what went on when we had to do the exercises we put into our log book as 'Fighter Affiliation'. This we had to do continuously day in and day out interspersed occasionally with visits to other aerodromes taking 'high ups' to places in a hurry.

Yes, the Wellingtons were being well used because we were having course after course of new gunners coming in. Our fighter affiliation was not just a joy ride for them; they had to work hard and so did we. The gunnery instructor collected 5 or 6 of his recruits and took them to the Wellington. After the pilot had taken off and settled down at 5 or 6,000 feet, the instructor would settle one of the gunners in the rear turret. He would have to check that the turret and

camera guns were working properly and tell the pilot that all was ready to start. The pilot then advised the fighter pilot by radiotelephone.

The fighter pilot's job was to attack the Wimpy from its left, its right, from aft, all at high level or from below, fast or slowly. He would then have been attacked from every angle.

Meanwhile in the Wimpy, as soon as the gunner saw the fighter making his attack he had to call into his intercom, "Fighter, Fighter, Dive, Dive". As soon as the pilot heard this he immediately went into what was known as 'The Five Group Corkscrew' by diving to port. Now, this manoeuvre was designed to confuse the fighter because the bomber was constantly moving in all directions but the gunner would know precisely what was happening. The exercise was to make the aircraft take a path through the sky in the shape of a corkscrew, one of the wiggly twisted types when held horizontally. I suppose it would dive and climb 1,000 feet but still maintain its original direction. Having first dived to port the pilot would tell the gunner, "Changing, diving to starboard," then "Changing climbing to starboard," and again, "Changing climbing to port," and lastly, "Changing, diving to port". Then if the attack were continuing, he would start all over again. You can well imagine after doing this exercise, either as the pilot to the fighter or the bomber, we were quite pleased to make our way back to base for a rest.

It may have been because Bomber Command was experiencing such heavy losses in their night raids or something else, I do not know, but 5 Group decided to let the 'high ups' experience the task of the lonely rear gunner. Accordingly, when a course of gunners had finished, a bevy of 'brass hats' arrived at Syerston on 14th March 1944 to have their experience in the rear turret and a calamity struck 1485 Flight.

On that day, in the morning I flew Wellington 'O Orange' with several Wing Commanders, Group Captains and above. I did not see them all and we went through the usual exercise with a fighter. I think they enjoyed it. In the afternoon I was to fly a fighter and F/O Orange, always known as 'Pip', came to me and asked how the Wellington was flying in the morning. I said, "Quite OK," and he retorted that he would give his lot a jolly good time for their money and 'pull a tight corkscrew'.

When I returned from my exercise with another Wellington, one of the mechanics at the aircraft dispersal asked, "Have you heard about Orange? It folded one wing and spun into the ground. All aboard have been killed!" You can imagine how I felt for I had flown this aircraft that morning. All our Wellingtons were grounded until further notice and our Flight grieved. 1485 was disbanded and a new 1690 Bomber Defence Training Flight was started at R.A.F. Wigsley to whence we took all our Martinets.

1690 Bomber Defence Training Flight, R.A.F. Wigsley, Scampton & Metherringham

To be honest, I can't remember much about this first period on 1690 except that we co-operated with 'fighters' only with the various Squadrons all around us in 5 Group. Then on 20th August we moved to R.A.F. Scampton and on 27th August we were given some Hurricanes, the real single-seat fighters, and were told to get used to flying them quickly. Then on 16th October some Spitfires arrived and we had great pleasure in putting them through their paces.

Meanwhile, seeing I now had my own locomotion, I brought Betty and Paula up to Lincolnshire after having found some digs for we three. To do this I took off the undercarriage from our utility pram. (Yes everything manufactured was utility in those days.) We packed the bottom of the pram with all Paula's things so that she would sit up higher and put the pram and her across the back seat so that she could look out of the back window. She was strapped into her pram but there were no seat belts or baby carriers in those days. There she stopped for the 170-mile journey, smiling and waving to any car that came up behind us.



This was my first taste, only a small taste, of anything like normal life, whatever normal life was in those days. Occasionally I had some time off and we went into Lincoln and looked round the shops. That was when I first realised how ladies love looking round shops even though they do not buy anything in them!

As the Flight was moved about we had to change our digs. They varied considerably but the last one was wonderful. It was in a farm not far from Scampton. I wish I could remember their names because both Mr. & Mrs. were most kind to us. They made us feel like part of the family – especially Paula. Mrs. doted on her and fed her up. They kept a cow especially for their own use. If you have never eaten a rice pudding made with full cream, cooked in the bottom part of an Aga oven very slowly for about a day, then you have not had a proper rice pudding!

Eventually we lost our Martinets and thereby our 'taxi service' for the Group when they were in a hurry, which was a pity for we enjoyed doing that. We were given some more Hurricanes and concentrated even more fully with the squadrons round about. We pilots were each allocated one of our own and mine most fittingly was 'R. Roger'.

It was at the end of November '44 that we started doing fighter affiliation with the Squadrons at night. This was quite an experience at first for we had to

carry out all the manoeuvres that we did by day. I was most surprised how close you could get to some rear gunners before they saw you. We had to make a report on this and also upon the efficiency of the Lancaster pilot's corkscrew. I remember once reporting that I 'shook hands' with one Lanc's rear gunner!

Although the Lancaster pilot was supposed to take a triangular trip so that when he was finished we would be back over our base, they often left us miles from home in the middle of nowhere. That was not so bad on a clear night for we knew the whole area very well. If we had been over cloud all the time, it was a different matter. So, on a dark dirty night we used to call up a certain direction finding station on our R.T., tell them who we were and they would ask us to transmit for 30 seconds or so. They and two other stations would then tune into my transmission and where the three bearings crossed, there I was, within a little. I remember I used to sing 'Show me the way to go home, I'm tired and I want to go to bed' etc. Whether they appreciated my vocal efforts or not, I never knew because all that happened was that a nice little W.A.A.F. would calmly say, "R Roger, steer 087, 23 miles," or the like. I always found this to be most comforting when you were up there all on your own above ten tenths cloud.

One thing that was always dreaded when flying, especially in single seat aircraft, was fire. So one night when I had taken off in R Roger to meet a Lancaster waiting for me at 5,000 feet, I had a fright, which took quite a time to get over.

I was climbing with full power and had got to about 4,000 feet when suddenly great white flames swept past the cockpit on both sides from the engine. All I could see were these white flames, which I then realised were coming from the stub exhausts from the engine. Then I knew what had happened because I had heard of it but not experienced it. The trouble was that a gasket between the cooling system and the cylinders had broken and the glycol coolant was flowing into the cylinders producing the flames.

I found by closing the throttle completely and sideslipping the plane to port all the time, the flames were much reduced and only came past the starboard side of the cockpit. I was then descending in a glide and would not be able to stay up for long. I was not far from the aerodrome so I called it up on my R.T., told them what had happened, and asked for permission to land immediately, which was given. Luckily I had often practiced by daylight landing on one continuous glide. I used to go in high and sideslip off any surplus height at the last moment. Now I had to sideslip all the time to be able to see. But all went well and I landed without any trouble.

We continued to do this affiliation with the Squadrons, some by day and some by night, week in and week out. Thank goodness I had Betty and Paula with me, even if I did not arrive home sometimes until the middle of the night.

To be continued.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Hello 4T9ers,

I have been given the great honour of taking on the mantle of Chairman of 49 Squadron Association, now that Ted Cachart has been "posted out". Ted has left a big hole and I will do my utmost to fill as much of it as I can to continue his work.

Already I can appreciate the work carried out in the background by the 'Crew', who work tirelessly gathering information that enables families to find where loved-ones are resting.

For those of you who don't know me, Malcolm has cobbled together some information on the web under Post WW2 Aircrew. I have been a member of the Association since the mid 1980s and have spent many happy hours in the company of our members.

Enough for now and I hope that I will meet many of you at our next Gathering at the Bentley Hotel on the first weekend in June, 2014.

Wishing you all health and happiness for the future.

Stuart Keay

READER'S LETTERS

Following our donation to Fiskerton church appeal I received the following acknowledgement:

"At our PCC meeting held yesterday 12 August the Treasurer told us he had received a cheque from yourselves for £300 towards our present building project to install a toilet in church and to relocate the kitchenette servery. We are very grateful to you for your generosity. We continue to fund raise as this is a major project but hope to commence the first stage, installing the toilet and drains, shortly."

Following the death of Ted I received many tributes which I have sent on to his family. Here are a few of them:

"What incredibly sad news I have heard from Dom.

I am so sorry for what this means to the association and for Ted's family as I know he was much loved.

In my few short years of knowing Ted I have found him to be an absolute delight, a lovely gentleman with a caring heart and a twinkle in his eye. I am so glad that I read his book and was able to discuss with him the fact that we both grew up in the same area and went to the same school. Something that I will always treasure.

How sad to think of future gatherings at Fiskerton without him.

Best wishes to you and all the crew who will miss him most." C & J.B.

“I heard the very sad news of Ted’s passing today from his daughter Jackie. As you can imagine there are many sad people at Blind Veterans UK.
...I am very sorry for your loss Alan. Ted is a big loss to us all.” C.G.

“It is very sad. I hardly had time to get to know him, but the short experience was very rewarding.” M.V.

“That is very sad news, Ted was always a gentleman and a great man to talk to. He will be sadly missed by all at the Centre.” A.P.

“I am saddened by your email. What a shock it is to all of us, as I am sure we did not think he was that ill. Please pass our sympathy to his family.... It is a very sad loss to us all.” R.H.

“...I was so sad when she rang me this morning with the news.... Such a great loss so quickly - I thought Ted would go on for ever in spite of his health problems.” D.V.

“Awful news Alan. I have fond memories of Ted and have read his book a number of times now. In fact, I have used some lines from it during various motivational speeches I have given.” M.L.

“We are very sad to hear of the passing of Ted today. I am thankful to have had the opportunity to talk at great length with Ted about the 49ers at our last reunion and indeed asked him to dedicate a copy of his book to my family.

I have just returned from Ireland visiting my cousin John who is unfortunately not very well and we discussed the 49ers and he showed me a copy of correspondence he had with Ted over ten years ago helping with information about our Uncle.

We will remain indebted to him for his service to our country and will keep his family in our thoughts at this difficult time.” R.M.

“Sorry to hear the sad news of Ted's death. I will treasure the signed copy of his book - Quite a lad!” J.R.

“Thank you for letting me know the sad news that Ted Cachart is no longer with us, such a lovely man, fondly remembered and forever admired by all who met him, a true hero.

I shall always remember his lovely smile and that cheeky twinkle in his eyes, his book is a cherished possession.” V.S.

“We wish you all the strengths you need for this great loss of that good man. We still remember the moment he visited our farm in Berkhout, Holland to remember the crew of the P1206.

It was a honour to have him here.....(and you all).

He still was one of our ‘liberators’.” D & A.S.



‘Anthems in the Park’ was held at RAF Cranwell in July and the star guests were seven former Bomber Command aircrew. Of the seven, three were ex 49 Squadron, third from left: Bill ‘Titch’ Cooke, Second right: Eric Clarke and extreme right: Ted Cachart. When they entered the stage they were given a long standing ovation which was repeated as each briefly told their story. Ted was going to give me an account of the evening but as that is no longer possible Titch sent the following;

**It started with a call from Ted.
Was I free on Saturday night,
Something laid on at Cranwell
Needs some veterans to make
it right.
“Did I hear you say at Cranwell
Where royalty were taught?”
You need to have been to college
To even get through the gates
I thought.
“Are they going to let some ranker
Inside those holy gates?
Come off it I won’t fall for that
You must be joking mate.”**

**But later I’m at table with an Air
Vice Marshal friend.
I don’t think I can cope anymore
I’m going round the bend.
Later on the stage we gave our age
And how many ops we’d done,
As we maybe gave a thought to
mates we’d had,
Most of them now gone.
The 49ers were well numbered.
I think we made our mark
For there among the veterans
Were Ted and I and our stalwart,
Eric Clarke.**

ERRATA

Slipping this in at the end in the hope that you all will have lost concentration by now, the last issue carried a few unfortunate errors for which I apologise:

Page 2; Ted Cachart ‘went down’ on January 2nd 1944.

Page 14; The serial number of the Lincoln that Stuart Keay pranged was RF349.

Page 15; The Monday of the June ‘Gathering’ is the 2nd.

Page 22; Roy Gould refers to W/C Leonard Slee as ‘Slasher’ when he was actually known as ‘Slosher’. Does any one know how he got this nickname?

If you spotted any more I don’t want to know!



The 4T9er

E-Supplement

November
2013



When I sent a selection of photos from the East Kirkby re-enactment to our late chairman he replied, “Strange as it may seem, the photo of the NAAFI wagon was more emotive to me than those of the Lancaster, probably because I bought numerous mugs of char and slices of yellow peril from one in my time. Thanks for the memory, Ted.”

I hope that many more of you find it equally evocative.

The 4T9er E-Supplement is compiled and edited by Alan Parr and published with The 4T9er magazine by 49 Squadron Association.

All photographs are by Alan Parr unless credited otherwise.

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THE EAST KIRKBY PHOTOSHOOT. AUGUST 10th 2013

Organised by Neil Cave



Photos on this page: Collin Beesley





Above: 'Skipper' Andrew Panton gives the all clear to start engines.

Below: Andrew went on to perform a high speed run followed by a number of rather more sedate figures of eight whilst the setting sun dodged in and out of the clouds.





Creature of the night.





**Fiskerton airfield looking west, see the cathedral in the background. Look carefully at the above photo at the feint shading caused in the crops by the runways. Read this picture in conjunction with page 14 of The 4T9er.
Photos taken during the editor's flight on August 18th.**



A shot from 1,500 feet showing the east end of Fiskerton village. The airfield was in the foreground whilst accommodation blocks were located between the road and the river. The ferry was situated where the river exits left. The railway line ran along the far bank of the river with 5 Mile House Station being adjacent to the ferry.



**Above: The former RAF Wigsley. Note the remains of a runway in the green field.
Below: RAF Swinderby, the wartime dispersals can still be clearly seen.**





Above: Lincoln is more built up than it was during the war and the Cathedral is not quite so dominant as it was but it can still be clearly seen in this view looking south/south west across the city.

Below: It was indeed fortunate that the east side of the country is so flat as it provided the perfect conditions for building and operating a huge number of bomber airfields.



A FINE TRIBUTE TO SIR KEITH PARK

Born in New Zealand in 1892, Keith Rodney Park served with ANZAC forces in Gallipoli between 1915/6 before joining the RFC where he had a distinguished career on the western front. After commanding a number of RAF stations he was appointed to the staff of Air Marshal Hugh Dowding in 1938. In 1940, during the Battle of Britain Air Vice-Marshal Park commanded 11 Group which bore the brunt of the battle.

In January 1942 Park went to Egypt as AOC, where he built up the air defence of the Nile Delta. In July 1942 he returned to action commanding the vital air defence of Malta. From there his squadrons participated in the North African and Sicilian campaigns. In January 1944 he was made Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Middle East Command. In February 1945 Park was appointed Allied Air Commander, South-East Asia, where he served until the end of the war. He left the RAF in 1946 and returned to Auckland, New Zealand. He died on February 6th 1975.

In 1947 he unveiled the nameplate of a Southern Railway Battle of Britain class locomotive which was named after him. This locomotive was finally withdrawn in 1966 and went to a scrap yard in Barry, South Wales, from where it was rescued, in a deplorable condition, finally leaving the yard in 1984. Restoration was finally completed in 2012 at a total cost of £773,000 and the engine took up residence on the Severn Valley Railway.

On August 31st the engine's nameplates were officially rededicated by New Zealand High Commissioner Sir Lockwood Smith. Battle of Britain veterans were present at Kidderminster together with members of the Park family. A Spitfire and Hurricane flew over the ceremony.





THE LARGE MODEL DISPLAY AT RAF COSFORD. JULY 20-21st 2013





The advance in air liner design over a period of thirty years is illustrated by the Handley Page HP42 and the Vickers VC10, both of which incidentally looked even better in the air.





Now that's what I call modelling!





**EVEN THE SMALL
AIRCRAFT WERE
QUITE LARGE...
IF YOU GET MY DRIFT!**

