

The 4T9er

LIFE IN THE OLD DOG YET!

**The 49 Squadron Association Magazine
2021 Issue 58**



Annette McEneaney together with Barbara Parr and daughters Helen and Carol at the 4T9ers memorial, National Memorial Arboretum.

IN MEMORIAM

**Wing Commander COOKE D.PAYNE J.W TURNER
Dr. W.H ANSELL DFM W.R. GOWLAND
D. PALMER—Ass.Member**

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Helen Crowson and Carol Bonfield

Alan Bennett, Andrea Clover, Dr. P Boyce

EDITORIAL

I would like to open by thanking all those who have recently made donations to the Association. We couldn't continue without you. I am also grateful to those who have sent reports on their various overseas pilgrimages. I hope that more of you will be inspired by their accounts which appear in The 4T9er.

We have three new Associated Members to welcome. Helen Crowson and Carol Bonfield daughters of our late lamented secretary Alan Parr. Helen and Carol are both knowledgeable on matters relating to the 4T9ers and we welcome them both on board.

Alan Bennett son of William J Bennett RCAF made contact with the Association and following an exchange of information with our Researcher Colin Cripps. Alan has asked to join as an Associate Member and we also welcome him on board.

Alan mentioned in an exchange of correspondence with Colin "my father was a very quiet man and when it came to recounting his war time experiences (like most) and although I was interested to learn of his service time, regretfully I did not pursue this with him. He passed away in 2013 aged 91 years old the last of his original crew". Thankfully Colin is now in contact with Alan to assist with the research into his father's time with the Squadron.

ENQUIRES

Lancaster ED426—8th October 1943

Through our researcher Colin Cripps we received an enquiry from Bezimont in France searching for relatives of the crew of Lancaster ED426 lost on the 8th October 1943.

On the 8th October 2021, a memorial will be unveiled remembering the crew... Three of whom were killed, two made PoW and two evaded capture.

P/O D. Wares Pilot (Evader)	Sgt. J.R. Barlow W/AG (Evader)
Sgt. A.H. Brownlie (F/E (Killed))	Sgt. G.Attwood A/G (PoW)
Sgt. T. O'Leary Nav (Killed)	F/O E.J. Hepburn RCAF B/A (Killed)
	F/S W. Fitzgerald RAAF A/G (PoW)

The community in France would like to contact any relatives of the crew. If anyone has any contact with any of the families of the airmen listed above and would like to know more, then please ask them to contact the webmaster@49squadron.co.uk

As we go to press we can confirm that a relative of Sgt. T. O'Leary has contacted the Association and will be attending the Memorial Service in France.

We look forward to including a report on the unveiling ceremony in our next Newsletter.



Remembering The Crew of JA 691

by kind permission of Marilyn Nissen.

An email received from Marilyn Nissen, a close friend of our last Secretary Alan Parr and his wife Barbara, outlining the Service of Remembrance held to recall the loss of Lancaster JA 691 and also to mark the end of the German occupation of Denmark in 1945.

Marilyn shared with us her account of the annual service of remembrance when a group of 25 local people gathered on a cold and wet afternoon to recall the events that had taken place on the night of the 18th August 1943.

“On the evening of the 4th May quite a large group met at “The Stone”, as it is called locally. We were there to commemorate the end of the German occupation and to remember the seven brave young aircrew who were shot down over the coast of Loit Land on 18th August 1943. A local historian had been invited to recall that night....the German night fighter,, the full moon, the engine that caught fire....on a raid to Penne-Munde. The RAF lost 41 Bombers that night”

We stood around the stone in what must have been the wettest, windiest evening of the year and listened as we looked over to “our” stone....the names of lost loved ones, with rain and tears on our faces. We sang...then we talked a lot...at long last we can be together...an English friend came over to me and said...”During the war my father used to repair the radios used in the Lancaster’s...What? How important it is, even now, to meet and share involvements that have shaped so many lives. That August night when the Lancaster fell deeply into the sloping...just up from the Fjord...farmers and families were woken by the noise, saw flames and ran in the full moon across the fields...Whenever I have the opportunity...I remind everyone that if they had found and removed a part of the Lancaster...that I would be really happy to take it back to where it flew from...to where it belongs!

Several parts have been given to me...and Alan Parr...so I think the end of my tale now will be a photo of a farmer, then a boy...proudly bringing, a few years ago, a part of a tail wing belonging to JA 691...that was passed onto Alan Parr it was unbelievable...here in his hands was the closeness the love, the loss of a loved one.

Our sincere thanks to Marilyn Nissen for recounting the events that took place at the Memorial Service on the 4th May earlier this year.



Picture above... 'Friends of the Stone gathering for the service of remembrance to honour the crew of JA 691'

F/O H.J. Randall Pilot (Killed)

Sgt. L.F. Freeman Nav (Killed)

Sgt. N.W. Buchanan RAAF A/G (Killed)

Sgt. W.J. Stiles B/A (Killed)

Sgt. L.J. Henley F/E (Killed)

Sgt. R. Fowlston W/AG (Killed)

Sgt. R.W. Slaughter A/G (Killed)

The Crew on their 8th operation.



Above the farmer who found part of the tail wing of JA691 which was given to the late Alan Parr. Below the 'Stone' with the crew names.





Above: Guildford War Memorial where Uncle Bob is remembered.



Right: Grave at Aabenraa Cemetery, Denmark.

Below: Crew of Lancaster JA691



Further extracts from Paul Gaunt's tribute to his father, reproduced here with his kind permission.

SHADOWS OF THE PAST

**By
Paul Gaunt
Part 9**

Four aircraft failed to return from the raid and one of these came from 49 Squadron. Pilot Officer Bill Andrews, AT174 and crew were sadly all killed when brought down over Germany. The crew is buried alongside each other in the Reichswald Forest war cemetery near Kleve.

FTR AT174

P/O WHT ANDREWS: pilot (killed)

Sgt ST DREW: wireless operator & air gunner (killed)

P/O JB DUNNE: air observer (killed)

Sgt AA BOURNE: wireless operator & air gunner (killed)

BCWD: March 10th/11th, 1942 (Results of first Lancaster raid):-

126 Aircraft - 56 Wellingtons, 43 Hampdens, 13 Manchesters, 12 Stirlings, two Lancasters. This was the first participation of Lancasters in a raid on a German target. Four aircraft, two Hampdens, one Stirling and one Wellington lost. This was another disappointing raid with unexpected cloud being the main cause of poor bombing. 62 crews claimed to have bombed Essen.

35 crews bombed alternative targets. The report from Essen shows that only two bombs fell on industrial targets and railway lines near the Krupps factory, also one house destroyed and two damaged in residential areas. Five Germans were killed by a flak shell, which descended and exploded on the ground.

Aircraft & Crew Losses

March 10th/11th, 1942: Bombing Essen.

The Squadron contributed 11 Hampdens to attack on point 'B' the old town of Essen. It proved to be an evening of mixed fortunes. Having various problems, four aircraft returned to Scampton.

Sgt Freeman (AE241) made a forced landing in a field at Spratling Street, Near Manston, Sergeant Gaunt the Wireless Operator/Air Gunner was slightly hurt and spent a couple of weeks in Margate General Hospital. Sadly Pilot Officer Bill Andrews (AT174) and crew were killed when E-Eco was brought down over Germany.

March 17th, 1942

Tragedy again: Pilot Officers Derek Cook and Bob Manders were both killed when their Hampden flew into a hill in fog. The accident happened 1125 hrs at Derry Farm, near Branscombe in Devon. The crew, including Flight Sergeant Jack Gadsby and Sergeant Eric Clarke, had been detailed to ferry Hampden P1826 back to Scampton, after it had been repaired.

On the morning of the 17th, Pilot Officers Cooke and Manders had taken the Hampden up for a brief test flight alone, when the accident happened. News got back to Scampton that Gadsby and Clarke had also been killed, but this was incorrect.

The pilots seemed to have broken regulations by taking off without a wireless operator, available to broadcast should any emergency take place.

Crashed Hampden, Pizze

P/O D COOKE: pilot (killed)

P/O R MANDERS: pilot (killed)

April 5th/6th, 1942: Bombing Cologne.

11 aircraft to bomb Cologne.

The attack on Cologne was scattered and stretched back across the city. Leaflets were also dropped within the target area. A night-fighter shot P/O Kay D.F.M. (AT156) and crew down over Philippeville, Belgium. The pilot and Sergeant Ainger were able to escape from the stricken aircraft to become POW, but Sergeants Bob Brown and Jim Waddell were sadly killed. They rest side by side in Charleroi Cemetery, Belgium.

FTR AT156

P/O KAY DFM: pilot (POW)
Sgt RWB BROWN: air observer (killed)
Sgt J WADDELL: wireless operator & air gunner (killed)
Sgt S AINGER: (P.O.W)

April 6th/7th, 1942: Bombing Essen.

49 Squadron provided five aircraft for this raid. Three aircraft abandoned the raid due to icing, one reported bombing the primary target, but the fifth aircraft was reported missing. Flight Sergeant Leslie Davis (AT126) and crew are believed to have come down in the North Sea. The crew is remembered on the Runnymede Memorial. Four other aircraft were reported missing from the operation, one other Hampden, one Manchester, one Stirling and one Wellington.

FTR AT126

F/S L DAVIS: pilot (missing)
Sgt M GRIFFITHS: wireless operator & air gunner (missing)
Sgt C HARTLEY (RAAF): as above (missing)
Sgt D P WARMSLEY: air observer (missing)

Twentieth Operation: Bombing Essen, April 12th/13th 1942

HAMPDEN AD870
F/O ALCOCK: pilot

P/O WILLIAMS: navigator
SGT CLARK: wireless operator
SGT GAUNT: air gunner
Up 2135 hrs, down 0115 hrs (3 hrs 40 mins)

Details of Sortie: -

An unsuccessful sortie due to engine trouble. Bombs jettisoned in sea 10 miles west of Dunkirk in order to maintain height.

Summary of Events: -

Weather fine after early morning haze, wind light, southerly.

12 aircraft detailed for operations, 11 bombing, one gardening.

11 aircraft took off for bombing and one took off 1 hour earlier for mining. Three aircraft attacked the alternative target, two attacked the primary and five had to abandon the operation due to engine trouble. One aircraft crashed on return at Fitling, Yorkshire, due to fuel shortage, three members of the crew killed. The pilot survived. All crews on bombing report, poor visibility with much haze, few results observed. Flares were observed in the target area. Of the aircraft which had to abandon the operation, one was attacked by an enemy fighter and sustained structural damage to the port main plane and port centre section.

Results: -

Disappointing series of raids on Essen.

Night April 12th/13th, 1942 – 251 aircraft in total, of which were 171 Wellingtons, 31 Hampdens, 27 Stirlings, 13 Halifaxes and nine Manchesters.

10 aircraft lost – 7 Wellingtons, two Hampdens, one Halifax.

173 aircraft claimed to have bombed Essen, but their bombing photographs showed many localities of the Ruhr. Essen's records show a slight improvement in the bombing, five high explosive and 200 incendiaries hit the Krupps factory and a large fire was started there, 28 private dwellings were destroyed and 50 seriously damaged, 27 people were killed, 36 injured and nine missing.

This raid concluded a disappointing series of raids on this target, which was judged to be the heart of the German armaments industry. There had been eight heavy raids since the first Gee raid on March 8th/9th—these were the conclusions: -

Aircraft dispatched 1555. Crews reported bombing Essen 1006. Aircraft lost 64. Aircraft bombing photographs showing ground detail 212. Aircraft bombing photographs within five miles radius of Essen 22.

Essen's records show that industrial damage was caused only on two occasions, a fire in the Krupps factory and a few bombs on some railway lines, that 63 civilians were killed and that a modest amount of residential property had been hit.

Other minor operations 58 sorties. Total effort for the night was 327 sorties, 10 aircraft lost (3.2%).

April 12th/13th, 1942: Bombing Essen.

After successfully bombing Essen, Sergeant Pilot James (AE196) and crew arrived back over England in the early hours of Monday, April 13th, desperately short of fuel, flying at 5,300 feet the engines suddenly cut out. The pilot gave the order to bale out before leaving the aircraft himself. Tragically, the remainder of the crew failed to get out in time and all three were killed in the crash. The Hampden dived to the ground at Chamberlain Charity Farm, Fitling, near Aldbrough in Yorkshire. The remainder of 49 Squadron returned safely to Scampton.

Crashed AT196

Sgt JAMES: pilot (safe)

Sgt H TAYLOR: wireless operator & air gunner (killed)

Sgt J T SMITH: air gunner (killed)

Sgt W J MARSHALL: air observer (killed)

Unfortunately information about this was lost in Tubby's diary.

April 14th/15th, 1942: Bombing Essen.

FTR AD931

P/O H G WILLIAMS: pilot (P O W)

Sgt H S BROWN: wireless operator & air gunner (killed)

Sgt L W WEBBE: air observer (killed)

Sgt W RALPH: air gunner (P O W)

Twenty-first Operation: Bombing Dortmund, April 14th/15th, 1942

HAMPDEN AT191

Sgt FREEMAN: pilot

Sgt BUSH: navigator

Sgt GAUNT: wireless operator

Sgt AASH: air gunner

Up 2130 hrs, down 2301 hrs (2 hrs 1 min)



*Tubby, end of first
tour, April 1942.*



*Sgt Terry Freeman, end
of tour, April 1942.*

Details of Sortie: -

An unsuccessful sortie owing to engine trouble after reaching Honington.

Summary of Events: -

Weather fine, morning haze, wind S.E.

The squadron contributed seven aircraft to the main force attack on Dortmund, of these three returned early with engine failure. Three attacked alternative targets and one aircraft failed to return. The raid was very scattered, with bombs falling over a wide area of the Ruhr. Bomber command suffered the loss of five - - -

Wellingtons and four Hampdens.

Pilot Officer Williams piloted the missing 49 Squadron Hampden. It is thought that he and his crew were caught by a night-fighter, which brought their aircraft down in Germany. The pilot and Sergeant Ralph, an air gunner, survived to become POWs. Sadly, Sergeants Horace Brown and Leslie Webbe were killed. They rest alongside each other in the Reichswald Forest cemetery at Kleve in Germany.

P/O H.G. WILLIAMS: pilot (POW)

Sgt H.S. BROWN: wireless operator & air gunner (killed)

Sgt L.W. WEBBE: air observer (killed)

Sgt W. RALPH: air gunner (POW)

To be continued. Newsletter No.59

Page 88—Twenty-second operation; Bombing Dortmund
15/16th April 1942.

Ashley Hales, our 'super sleuth down-under'

Here are some details about Ashley in his own words....."I have been an Associate Member of the 49 Squadron Association for the last 11 years when I began researching a family member who served with the Squadron from 1943-44.

I previously served in the RAFVR and it was during this time that I went to Germany and Holland and visited some of the many CWGC cemeteries located there.

I visited a relative buried in the Reichswald Forest Lawn Cemetery and learnt more about the young men and women who served in the RAF during the war years. It was after returning to the UK that I decided I would like to know more about Bomber Command and 49 Squadron in particular. Since then, I have been researching the loss of Avro Lancaster ND672 and, in parallel, trying to learn more about 49ers about whom the Association know little. Having moved to Auckland in 2012, I am particularly interested in 49ers who were born or lived in New Zealand and Australia and I have been trying to piece together the story of every Kiwi who served with 49 Squadron in both world wars."

I recently stumbled across an advert for the CWGC's "War Graves Week" and, last Friday, took part in a very interesting tour of the Stonefall CWGC cemetery outside Harrogate (other locations were available). I wished I had known about this earlier and promoted the event....the first of its kind.

In Harrogate, the heroic action of 49er F/L Norman Carfoot is replicated. Canadian, F/O Lloyd Hannah stayed at the controls of his crippled bomber to allow his crew to escape. His brother Harold, also an RCAF pilot, wrote home to the family and described his bravery. Two months later Harold was killed and the two brothers now lie four rows apart in Harrogate.

A very moving experience to see the two graves so close together.

Picture opposite shows Ashley Hales.

Stonefall CWGC cemetery
outside Harrogate



Slaughter in the Sky

LLA member Michael Brunton recalls the infamous 1944 raid on Mailly-le-Camp, which achieved its objective but at a very high cost.

The following does not represent my opinion, but reports conversations I had with my father, Warrant Officer Geoffrey Brunton, a flight engineer with 49 Squadron (29 Operations) who was on the raid. Also, many other crew members, both in 49 and from other Squadrons who, over many years, ritually attended the annual Mailly-le-Camp commemoration to pay their respects. These crew members had vivid memories of the raid, mostly ones they would prefer to forget as many had lost friends that evening. The question often asked was “why” and “how could this happen?”

No soft target

Although at this stage of the war “those in power” had decided that objectives in France were “soft” targets and now only counted as a third of an operation, many crew members I had spoken to said the Mailly raid rated right “up there” with Berlin, Nuremburg and Hamburg. Witnessing Lancasters falling from the sky, knowing there was seven crew members in each was a daunting experience and one that stayed with my father forever.

A total of 42 Lancasters and other aircraft did not return home, this equates to over 11.5% of those which left for the raid – an extremely high attrition rate – and 255 souls were lost that fateful night.

Below: An Avo Lancaster B.111 of 49 Squadron is guided to its dispersal at Fiskerton after returning from a raid. (F/O Miller, IWM CH11642)





The target's close proximity to several Luftwaffe bases, combined with the unexpected holding delays prior to the bombing run, meant it was an easy night for the night fighters.

For those crew members who parachuted to safety, the local Maquis (French Resistance) came in to their own, successfully assisting more than 20 airmen to evade capture. At past Maily commemorations, with my father, I had spoken to local Maquis through interpreters. They recounted emotionally, the devastation and challenges they experienced, to say nothing of what they, and their families could expect at the hands of the Nazis if they were caught assisting RAF personnel.

A close friend of ours in Maily – the former chairperson of the Maily Association with many friends in Lincolnshire – who was in her early teens at the time of the raid was shocked to be asked by her mother if she could keep a secret, a secret that could cost her family their lives if she told anyone else. The secret was that they had two British airmen in the attic! The whole family would have been executed if they had been found to be harbouring airmen. One day, the airmen weren't there, the Maquis had moved them to another safe house as that was their *modus-operandi*, so there were no more English lessons for our (then) young friend!

Tank depot

Mailly-le-Camp served several purposes. It was a tank depot, a substantial distribution hub and a significant military training barracks. It also had excellent rail links throughout France and Normandy in particular and the Normandy link was one of the reasons it was targeted.

Pre-war photographs show a sprawling base that covered an enormous area, after the night of May 3/4, 1944, it would be vastly reduced, but at a price.

Imminent invasion

With D-Day looming, the Allies needed to destroy certain targets that could impede the invasion. It was vital that Mailly-le-Camp's array of tanks, self-propelled guns and armoured personnel carriers didn't make it to the Normandy beaches, so its fate was sealed.

Just over 360 bombers took part from No.1 and 5 Group, with the support of Halifaxes from 100 Group.

The route to the target involved crossing the French coast north-east of Dieppe, then following a straight line before turning right just south of Reims. From there it was a straight run to Mailly-le-Camp, just minutes away. After 'bombs away' the aircraft were to turn right, south of Romilly but north of Troyes, giving Paris a wide berth as they continued south of Fontainebleau and Chartres, before banking right towards Bayeux and continuing back over the coast. There were German night fighter bases on the route down in Montdidier, Reims and at St. Didier. That evening, the Luftwaffe could not have had it easier. All their birthdays had come at once, as 360 bombers circled a target only a few minutes flying time from their bases.

What could have been simpler for the bomber crews; they were following a pretty easy route with the normal issues for the crews to cope with, night fighters and flak, something they were used to. To divert the attention of the Nachtjagdgeschwadern (NJG) the German night fighter wings, Mosquitos would attack their airfields, plus an ammunition dump and a chemical works. At the same time, Halifax units would interfere with the German radio communications and early warning systems.

Mosquitos from 627 Sqn, led by (then Wing Commander) Leonard Cheshire were to mark one target so that bombing could commence with wave one, comprising 173 Lancasters from 5 Group, at midnight. The second wave, with aircraft from No.1 Group would attack another target 18 minutes later. This was when things went horribly wrong.

Communications failure

The Mosquito crews had repeatedly sent out the instructions to start bombing. Both Cheshire's radio operator and another Mosquito radio operator were repeating the instructions and wondering why no bombs were being dropped. The answer was that, coincidentally, the US Armed Services Radio broadcast unit was transmitting dance music on the same radio frequency from the UK. This was confirmed to me by my father and other pilots that were on the raid. He recalled that there were Lancaster's everywhere, some flying in opposite directions, some firing on each other, relentless flak and the dreaded Ju 88s picking off the heavily laden and slow quarries. Radio silence was broken, my father's aircraft followed others in to bomb after hearing an aircraft saying they had seen the flares and an "authoritative" voice shouted above the interference to give the instruction to bomb. My father, his pilot and navigator had mentioned to me who they though it was, but this could not be corroborated – but obviously someone that they knew.



A Lancaster is illuminated as a silhouette by the burning fires at Mailly le Camp on the night of May 4/5 1944 (IWM C4335)

Below, Mosquitos were harrying the flak units with considerable success. In no time, 'cookies' were falling everywhere with the accompanying blast being felt in the aircraft above. Maily was rapidly becoming a blazing inferno. A close (now deceased) friend of ours who was a child at the time of the raid and whose family farmed about 5 miles away, told us that all of the windows in their house were shattered as a result of the blasts and that the camp had been turned into an enormous fire.

My father's aircraft went in to bomb. He said the bomb-aimer did a first-class job, the pilot kept his nerve, taking instruction for the approach. Then the "bombs gone" call came and the Lancaster ascended after jettisoning its deadly cargo. Just when the crew thought that things could not get worse, the Lancaster in front of them took a direct hit and my father's aircraft flew though the resulting explosion. There was a large crashing sound and they realised from the sudden rush of air, that the nose of their aircraft had been completely destroyed from just front of the blister. The wind blew straight to where my father stood; he never sat down during a raid, sating that he could get out of the aircraft quicker if not strapped into a seat. He suffered with a 'frozen' shoulder for many years as a result of the -15C or so wind that had raced in at over 100mph.

The inner port engine had been damaged in the explosion. It wasn't on fire but had stopped. "You'll have to get us back on three Geoff," the captain said. This was possible – but what other damage was there. In the moonlight the mid-upper gunner thought the tail had been damaged, but the aircraft's control surfaces were still operating, and a slower than normal trip home lay ahead of them. There were also night fighters ahead, and their crews found struggling or damaged aircraft easy prey.

Close to Bayeux the Luftwaffe aircraft the crew feared the most, a Ju 88, spotted them, possibly because they were flying lower than normal or maybe because there were only trails from three engines. then turned away. Perhaps he had run of out of ammunition, or was short of fuel. Either way, it was a lucky escape.

The Ju 88 added more holes to the tail and fuselage but then turned away. Perhaps he had run out of ammunition, or was short of fuel. Either way, it was a lucky escape.

As they approached Fiskerton, they encountered another problem, it was fogged out! Fortunately, it was one of a few aerodromes that was equipped with the Fog Intense Dispersal Operation (FIDO) system. It burned vast amounts petrol which was pumped through metal tubes running alongside the runway. It had the dual effect of helping to disperse the fog and light-up the runway. They were saved, and the undercarriage deployed to everyone's relief. A post-landing inspection showed how close they had come to being shot down. The explosion had nearly taken the port side control surfaces out, and the Ju 88 had holed the tail, again, close to the control surfaces. The aircraft went for repair and apparently did fly again.

Back in Mailly, the camp was almost entirely obliterated. Over the next few days, photo-reconnaissance Spitfires took pictures that showed the devastation. The base never regained its fully operational status and played no part in resisting the Allied invasion.

The Crew: JB178/EA-V May 4/5. 1944

Pilot:	P/O William Green	RNZAF	(KIA 19/07/44)
B/A:	F/Sgt Melvin Holland	RNZAF	(KIA 19/07/44)
F/E:	Sgt Geoffrey Brunton	RAFVR	(survived the War)
Nav:	S/Sgt Herbert Neal	RAFVR	(KIA 19/07/44)
W/Op:	Sgt Colin Davison	RAFVR	(KIA 19/07/44)
MU/G:	Sgt Allan Ansell	RAFVR	(KIA 19/07/44)
R/G:	Sgt Gordon Hands	RAFVR	(KIA 19/07/44)

(courtesy: 49 Squadron Association)

Legacy

The Germans made hay in terms of how many British bombers had been destroyed and fabricated a story that extraordinarily little damage had been done to the camp and, importantly, their casualties were small.

The local farmer's son I mentioned earlier, who lived on the roadside between Arcis-sur-Aube and Mailly-le-Camp, told us that for several weeks, German trucks loaded with bodies were keeping several crematoriums constantly busy. There were trucks going in other directions too, from Mailly to the crematoriums of Troyes.

A local person in Mailly-le-Camp told us that the Germans told the families of their own casualties that they had been killed on the Eastern Front...

We still attend the Mailly-le-Camp commemoration every year, with my father of course, until he died in 2011. Sadly, the coronavirus pandemic has forced the cancelled of this year's event. In the early days we saw 40-50 veterans attending the service, but time has taken its toll and it is mainly veteran's families that attend now. The RAF has always sent a detail with a bugler, and often either our Defense Attaché from Paris or an RAF officer reads an account of the raid.

It is important that we recognise the residents of Mailly and the surrounding villages who lost many people due to the number of aircraft that crashed in close proximity to the target. One village, Poivre, about 4-5 miles away, had six Lancaster's crash either on it, or close by. There is a line of 42 graves in Poivre cemetery and, every year, flowers are placed and the words "for our freedom" are recited at each of them. The villagers take turns to lay the flowers. Then after completing this, the attendees turn round to do the same for the local people that died. Young and old alike, there are many.

Right: The Mailly le Camp memorial comprises two explanatory stones, a central bronze plaque and a propeller blade.
(Via author)





Above: Veterans' family members join the local forces' representatives at the annual Mailly commemorations. (Via author)

Below Michael and Charles Brunton place the 49 Squadron rosette, and their own family tribute, at one of the annual Mailly le Camp commemorations.





Above: Geoffrey Brunton laying a wreath of the Mailly le Camp memorial.



Above & Below: Geoffrey Brunton is seen visiting the graves of his former 49 Squadron crewmates at Herbisse, France.





LINCOLNSHIRE'S LANCASTER ASSOCIATION

Supporting the RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight



***needs YOUR support to
keep these magnificent, historic
aircraft flying***

**Membership details:
www.lancasterassociation.co.uk
Tel: 01522 521512 please leave message.**

DONATIONS

We have received very generous donations from the following people:-

Mr David McCracken

Mrs Rita Harris

Mrs Doris Madden

Mr David Etherton

Ms Gill Lucas

Mr A Campbell

Mrs Moxon

I would like to thank everyone else who regularly donates to the Associations funds.

ADDITION TO THE ASSOCIATION WEBSITE

I would also like to bring to the attention of members that our Webmaster Malcolm Brookes has successfully added to our website back copies of 4T9er Newsletter. Following a detailed search and with the assistance of “The Crew” you can now enjoy complete issues of our Newsletter from No.1 through to No.55 with the addition of some Historic Extracts. I would strongly recommend that you take the time to visit this new section of our website for a most interesting and emotional journey down memory lane with many treasured contributions from the past.