



# Confound & Destroy

**The magazine of RAF 100 Group Association**

Spring 2011

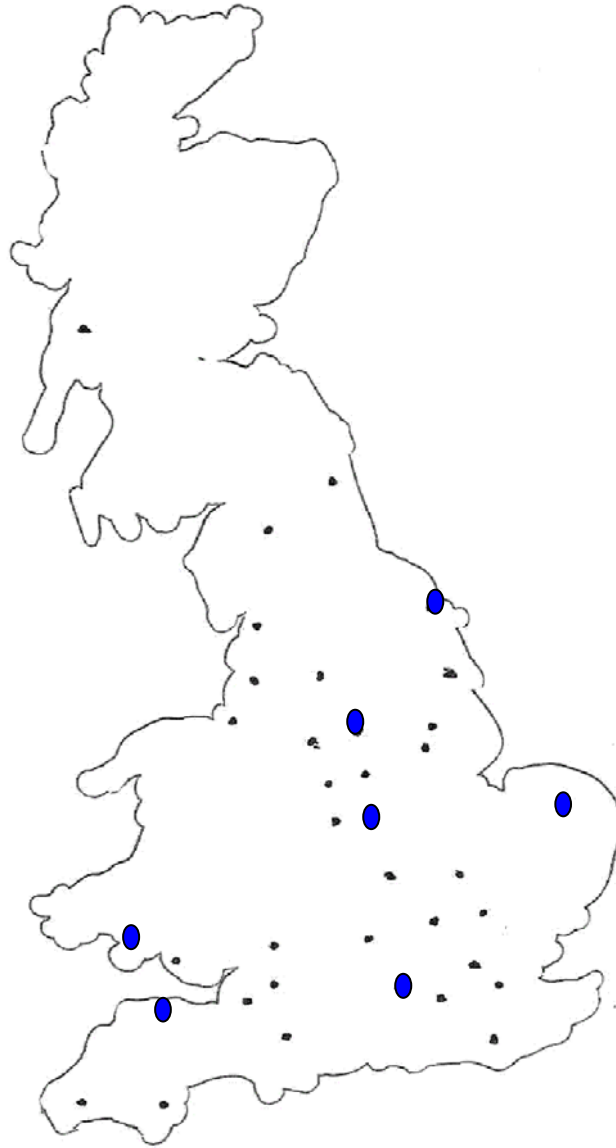


100 Group Association Chairman Wing Cdr John Stubbington: 01420 562722  
100 Group Association Secretary Janine Harrington: 01723 512544

Home to RAF 100 Group Association  
City of Norwich Aviation Museum  
Old Norwich Road, Horsham St Faith, Norwich, Norfolk NR10 3JF  
Telephone: 01603 893080

# RAF 100 Group Association

## Membership Areas



Each dot represents an area where there is a cluster of members  
Big dots show where members of the RAF 100 Group Association Committee live

Members who live abroad are in the following countries:

Northern Ireland  
Canada  
Austria  
China  
Germany  
Australia  
USA

# RAF 100 Group Association

## Committee



**Chair/Treasurer:**  
**Wg/Cdr J E G STUBBINGTON**  
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 ☎ 01420-562722  
 ✉ [john.stubbington@btinternet.com](mailto:john.stubbington@btinternet.com)



**Secretary:**  
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**CHRIS LAMBERT**  
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 ☎ 01263 733904  
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**LEN WITTS**  
 📱 0788140620  
 ✉ [leonard.witts@ntlworld.com](mailto:leonard.witts@ntlworld.com)

\*\* We are currently looking for new members to join our Committee. We would be happy to hear from any member interested in getting involved.

The City of Norwich Aviation Museum is home to RAF 100 Group Association. The Museum is a charity with a board of elected Trustees, some members of 100 Group Association:



Derek Waters  
Chair



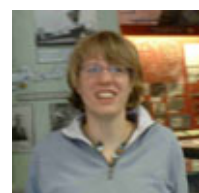
Kelvin Sloper  
Treasurer



Kim Barwick



Rob Walden  
Curator



Steph Walden  
Secretary

# EDITORS PAGE



*Dear Friends,*

A very happy new year to you, and a warm welcome to all our new members .... Ross, Peter T, Peter S, David, and Linda and her parents, whose father Hugh, is the brother of W/Op (Air) Jimmy Hollingworth, of the crew who flew in Fortress BU-N of 214 Squadron. Linda has written for this issue a moving memorial piece to her husband Ian who sadly passed away 28 December, just after their only daughter gave birth to their first granddaughter, Freya. We remain very close friends, in touch daily, and are looking forward to meeting her and all members new and old at our annual RAF 100 Group Association Reunion in May.

Your new 2011 membership card is enclosed together with a full Reunion programme of events. If either of these is missing, let me know immediately and I will send it on. And thank you, Michael Moorby, for your generous donation. We're sorry not to be seeing you this year. For those attending the Reunion, please fill in your requirements together with menu choices, etc, and send the form back to me as soon as possible with a cheque to cover the main Saturday evening meal. And to avoid disappointment, please know that accommodation in the area fills up fast!

Tony is very much looking forward to sharing his first Reunion, and meeting members we have been speaking to by email, letter and telephone. Christmas was a very special time for us as we celebrated our first Christmas together. Thank you for all your gifts and cards. They affirm the friendship, goodwill and very real sense of family and love which has always been the essence of the Association and of which I continue to be privileged and proud to be a part.

However, there are others for whom Christmas and the New Year were not happy occasions. It is the worst time of year to be alone, worried or unwell or to experience sudden bereavement. Please therefore hold in your thoughts at this time Linda and daughter Jane, George, Julie, Ron & Brenda, Evelyn, and Dot who has just had major surgery. We do wish you all well.

I would also give a huge apology to Roger Mills for inadvertently attributing his father and crew to the wrong plane in the winter edition. Well spotted Roger, Gerhard and George!

Finally, thank you to those members who have agreed to accept the magazine for the future by email. We will, of course, continue to create and produce in paper format to put in the post, but by using the internet it does save costs, and is quicker and easier for those who can get it this way.

Can any member receiving this magazine who has not yet sent in his/her subscription for 2011 please send a cheque to ensure copies for the future. A membership card will be sent by return.

We look forward to meeting many of you at the Association Reunion in May.

*Janine & Tony*  
*XX*

Items for Newsletter should be sent to:  
Janine Harrington/Tony Bradley  
'New Dawn', 7 Ashley Court, Filey, North Yorkshire YO14 9LS  
Telephone: 01723 512544 [raf100groupassociation@gmail.com](mailto:raf100groupassociation@gmail.com)

# Chairman's Report



## THE 100 (BOMBER SUPPORT) GROUP ASSOCIATION

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN, FEBRUARY 2011

Dear Members,

My very best wishes to you all,

I am delighted to report that the No.100 Group Standard has been successfully produced and it is in my possession, ready for the Reunion in May. The Association owes a huge debt of gratitude to Peter Witts and his family for their great generosity in paying for the Standard. The Association paid just for the Accessories. We need to decide where it would be best to hang the Standard throughout the year.

Janine has as ever been extremely busy on our behalf with the programme for the May Reunion and we all owe her a debt of gratitude for her time and effort.

There is a matter that has been exercising the Committee for a while. As you all know, I act as Chairman and also as Treasurer. The reasons for that go back to the revival of the Committee in 2008. The question now is whether or not this dual role should continue; and if there should be change, who would act as Treasurer. I shall discuss this at the Annual General meeting and I would invite you all to express your views please. For those of you who are unable to attend, please take the time to write to me or to Janine and tell us what you think. The Committee needs to have your views; we cannot serve your interests if we do not know what you want.

I believe that the Association must look to the future so far as membership and activities are concerned. On one hand we have a duty to original members who have their irreplaceable experiences, companionships and memories to cherish. The Newsletters are a most valuable contribution to that task.

On the other hand, we have an equal duty to new members to raise the visibility of the achievements and history of the Group and the individual Squadrons; and to continue to uncover archive evidence of those achievements, before it becomes irretrievably lost over time. I have recently delivered a paper on 192 Squadron, including the subsequent 51 Squadron after re-numbering in 1958; David Kitching has delivered a paper on 515 Squadron with specific attention to the use of deception jamming; and Richard Forder is producing a book on 223 Squadron. Past Newsletters contain relevant books and articles. The City of Norwich Aviation Museum and The National Archives at Kew are just two separate sites where there is a great deal of factual historical material. But so much of this material remains in archives with little or no public visibility.

I am well aware that a number of books already exist which speak of 100 Group in various ways. But I have the view that the Association should look towards compiling an original Bibliography, recording material that has not previously been published. That Bibliography should be made available to any new member on joining. I would be very interested in the views of members on this suggestion and I would welcome discussion at any time. Please let me know what you think and what you may be prepared to do to help.

I hope and expect to see as many of you as possible at the Reunion.

With my most sincere best wishes,

*John Stubbington*, Wing Commander, Chairman

# City of Norwich Air Museum



## Archive Organisation at CNAM

As the Museum enters a new year, one of the most important and exciting tasks under way is the ongoing improvement of our archive.

The archive is an invaluable resource for the history of aviation in Norfolk, consisting of over 16,000 items—photographs, books, service records, aircraft parts, etc.—on display in our exhibits or held in permanent storage on the museum site.

As with many small Museums, there is a backlog of catch-up work to be done to improve our artefact documentation. Over the years the Museum has lacked the staff resources to fully catalogue certain areas of the collection, such as the large number of items received at the closure of RAF Coltishall. Other areas we are focusing on include the full digitization of records and the updating and maintenance of our electronic collections database.

To make a good start on this project, we have recently advertised for volunteers and in March we expect to welcome 5 to 10 new people who will form a dedicated archival team. These volunteers will attend on a weekly basis to catalogue, photograph and research artefacts, organise storage areas and correct and update records.

It is hoped that this work-intensive project will have lasting benefits for Museum members and the public, not only by ensuring our practices conform to national professional standards but by making our documents and artefacts more accessible to all interested research groups.

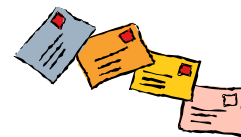
*Jessica Lamothe*

Administrator and Collections Manager  
City of Norwich Aviation Museum

Any member with research enquiries, or with any questions or comments about CNAM's collection, is welcome to get in touch with Jessica by writing to the Museum or emailing

[admin@cnam.co.uk](mailto:admin@cnam.co.uk)

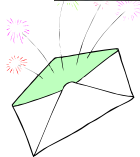
# LETTERS PAGES



Correction: In the winter edition of 'Confound & Destroy' a report by Gerhard Heilig about the loss of Fortress BU-A in mid 1944 was followed by the names of a crew. This crew should rightly be ascribed to Fortress BU-C from December 1944. Thank you Roger Vaughan Mills for pointing out this error, and for sending the following photograph and crew, which includes your father FS John Tudor Mills WOP/AG RAFVR:

Crew of Flying Fortress Mark II BU-C  
Dec 1944,  
No 214 Squadron RAF Oulton

*FS Blake, Waist Gunner*  
*FS Green, Flight Engineer*  
*Sgt Herbert Harker, Waist Gunner*  
*(3rd from Right)*  
*FS John Tudor Mills WOP/AG RAFVR*  
*(4th from Right)*  
*FS Plumber, Navigator*  
*FS Al Schaeffer DFC, Rear Gunner, RCAF*  
*(far Right)*  
*Flt/Lt Shiel DFM, Special Wireless Operator*  
*FS "Smithy" Smith, Mid Upper Gunner, RCAF*  
*Sqn/Ldr Ralph Van Den Bok DFC\*\*, Pilot,*  
*RAFVR (4th from left)*



Dear Janine,

*Your 'flurry' of emails has resulted in an excellent e-Newsletter full of interest - so very grateful thanks for all the work you put into its compilation. It reproduced into a PDF formatted email perfectly & I look forward to receiving it this way in future ...*

*You are clearly getting much contact these days from relatives, friends etc of those who served in 100 Group. This is excellent for the Association is going to be in their hands one day and the larger the overlap the better.*

*Keep up the good work. These are just words as we all know that you will!*  
*Very best wishes,*

*Alan Thomsett*



Dear Jan,

Thank you for your e-mail and attachments, all of which opened easily. I think that sending the magazine in this format is a splendid idea and I am quite happy to receive it this way. Enjoyed the contents too, keep up the good work. Wish that I could say I will see you some time in the future but I am sorry to say that travelling from this rather remote Scottish hamlet to Norfolk is a little too much for my old bones, which is why the magazine is so helpful.

*Arthur Newstead* ex Flight Engineer 462 RAAF Squadron

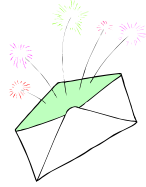
Hi Jan,

We are looking forward to reading the Newsletter in the new format. Thank you so much for all the work and passion you put into our Newsletter. We are also pleased to hear how happy you both are, you certainly deserve all the luck in the World.

Thanks again and I'm sure this electronic method will be a great success.

Best Wishes for the New Year.

*Roger & Helen*



Hello

We wonder if any Association member can help us. We are looking for information about our father, Peter McDermott, based at Sculthorpe from January 1944 to May 1944, and RAF Oulton from May 1944 until July 1945. These dates link him to 214 Squadron with a photograph we have of him in a group of people in front of a hut with a plaque on the door showing 214 Instrument Section.



Father: Peter McDermott, is middle front row

From his Service Record he was promoted to Act Flt/Lt on 1st August 1944. We also have another photograph of a large group from No 46 Initial Course "B" Officers School dated June 1943. It looks like his time in 100 Group was relatively short, though he initially joined up in 1936 and had time with 18 Squadron with a trade showing as Instrument Maker.

We have a copy of a Certificate showing he was mentioned in dispatches, though the section printed from the London Gazette is just a list of names without showing any detail of why. It was a long list when I found the copy online. But it is our understanding that he was linked to the development of Window. Any information would be most welcome.

Regards

*Susan Jordan* [Susajord@aol.com](mailto:Susajord@aol.com)

*David McDermott* [DM516831@ncr.com](mailto:DM516831@ncr.com)



*Dear Janine,*

*My late father, Wilf Thompson, was at 171 North Creake as a WOP/AG from 7.1.1945 to 6.7.1945 as written in his Log Book. The crew was Reg Law, Skipper; Wilf Thompson, WOP/AG; Frank O'Hara, B/A. The Flight Engineer was from Scotland and they had Canadian Gunners. The aircraft was Halifax III 6YXB coded NA 690. This was their main aircraft and I am trying to find if there are any photos.*

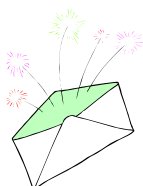
*My father lived in Knaresborough, North Yorkshire, where I have lived for 62 years of my 65 years. So I am well versed with Yorkshire airfields and many crash sites including the Lake District. I have been to North Creake many times and I have all books on Halifax and airfields. Having moved to Lincolnshire to be near our daughter and grandchildren this last three years, the airfields round here are mainly Lancs which I am not interested in. I have not got a wartime photograph of my father, so I cannot help on that score. However, I was a member of Norwich Aviation Museum, but let it lapse in 2007 ... Nice place Filey ...*

*Kind regards*

*Peter Thompson*

[halifaxpete690@btinternet.com](mailto:halifaxpete690@btinternet.com)

9 Vicarage Gardens, Old Leake,  
Boston, Lincs PE22 9NP



Dear Mrs Harrington

I regret to inform you of the death of my father Flight Lieutenant Albert Victor (Vic) Parker of 192 Squadron on Sunday November 14<sup>th</sup> 2010. We were so lucky to have him for 95 years and to be able to take care of him at home until the end.

Yours truly,

*Ann Felsky*



Dear Janine,

My father, John Henry BALL, was a member of the Association for many years until his death on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009. He had been a Special Operator (Wop) on 192 Squadron. I have been meaning to write for many months, as I am sure that he would wish us to continue his membership in his memory, if that is possible?

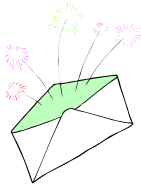
Yours faithfully,  
*Susan Lawford* (Mrs)



Hello Janine

I have just had news of the death on 8 Nov 10 of Mervyn Utas, 2nd Pilot in the late Tony Morris's crew. The news has come from Andrew Barron who was the crews' Nav - Andrew will be providing a write up on Mervyn for the Newsletter. Mervyn was one of 223 Sqn's Canadian contingent.

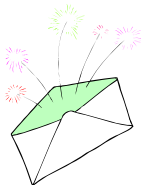
Regards  
*Richard Forder*



Dear Janine,

Just in case Mrs Bostock has not been in touch this is to say that her husband Les passed away before Christmas. He was the Bomb Aimer in Don Austin's crew. I was the m/u gunner. Unfortunately not too many of our crew are still standing.

Yours sincerely,  
*C A Piper (Pip)*



Dear Janine,

My father, Flying Officer Reginald Coates, completed the whole of his second tour of operations as a Bomber Pilot with 214 (FMS) Squadron in March 1945. He died at home on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1963 leaving a widow and three children.

Thank you for all the work that you do for the Association. Please could you add my father's name to Final Postings?

Yours sincerely,  
*R I Coates*



Dear Janine,

I have a friend who is a 'room orderly' at Blickling (Janet Felgate) who sent me a copy of 'RAF OULTON 1940-1947 by Len Bartram. I'm sure you are aware of this, and I found it quite fascinating. I have also had a very fruitful correspondence with Richard Forder whose knowledge of Oulton and the personnel there is incredible. He was even able to tell me the name of one of my crew which I had completely forgotten!

I have noted the dates of the Reunion and fitness permitting I certainly hope to come with a hopefully interesting walk down memory lane! I recently went back to where I trained at Pensacola Florida under the auspices of Help for Heroes. I have to say I hardly recognised anything. I suppose one can expect changes in 66 years after all.

Very best wishes for the New Year

*Bob Belton*



Dear Sir/Madam,

On 20<sup>th</sup> March 1945 a Lancaster crashed near the village of Nieuwdorp, South Beveland. All the crew members died in this crash and were first buried near the crash location. In August of this year some constructors found one of the engines of the plane and this was given to our local war Museum. Since that day we are searching for relatives of the crew to find out if they could provide us with information of the crew members and/or the plane.

The engine and props found were of a Lancaster MkIII, serial no: PB667 MG-Q. The crew members were all from No 7 Squadron, 8<sup>th</sup> Group Pathfinder Force.

With the help of people all around the world and by looking in archives we've already traced relatives of 2 of 7 crew members. We now need to find the remaining 5. We are looking for information about the following crew members:

***Flying Officer Bacon, Lindsay Page, Captain (Pilot)***

***Coffs Harbour, NSW***

- RAAF 62186
- Parents: Victor Frederik Bacon & Emily Bacon (Marboursa NSW)
- Brother/sister: Kathleen, Elisabeth, Maisy, Wesley, Alan
- Friend: Miss Clair Virgo

***Sergeant Harry McClements, (Flight Engineer)***

***Hillsborough, Sheffield***

- RAFVR 1592648
- Parents: Harry & Elsie McClement

***Flight Sergeant Richard Evans (Navigator)***

***Port Talbot, Glamorgan***

- RAFVR 1652888
- Parents: Richard & Catherine Evans
- Member of Pharmaceutical Society

***Flying Officer George Huttleston (Bomb Aimer)***

***Enfield***

- RAFVR 154615
- Parents: William Alfred & Violet Beatrice Huttleston

**Warrant Officer Philip Tennant (Wireless Operator)**

**Westport, Nelson**

- RNZAF 455771
- Parents: David Thomas & Emily Jane Tennant
- Married: Margareth Affleck-Tennant, 3 children

**Sergeant Jim Cornwall (Mid Upper Gunner)**

**Manchester**

- RAFVR 2210978
- Parents: John Tomas & Jane Cornwall
- Married: Laura Cornwall

**Sergeant John Taylor (Rear Gunner)**

**Radford, Coventry**

- RAFVR 1869191
- Parents: John William & Ada Kate Taylor

We are looking for pictures of these men and possible copies of their Flying Logs. With this information we can complete our search and on the place of the crash build a little monument.

All information to:

Hans Van Dam, Prins Bernhardstraat 27, 4455 BA Nieuwdorp (Netherlands)

☎ +31 113 670095

✉: [hansvandam@zeelandnet.nl](mailto:hansvandam@zeelandnet.nl)

*Phil James MBE, who lives in Port Talbot, has found **Flight Sergeant Richard Evans** (Navigator) parents' grave. They lived in Porthcawl 12 miles away. He is in the process of trying to find out if he was married with any children as he was 27 years old at the time of his death.*



Dear David Kitching,

*My father Leslie Robson was Bomb Aimer on Halifax MZ932 (192 Squadron. 100 Group), Special Duties based at Foulsham in Norfolk.*

*On the night of 7/8 March 1945 they were carrying a Special Operator Henry Joseph Carley on a night raid over Dessau. The plane was badly damaged and caught fire as a result of a night fighter attack. Mr Carley baled out and my father and the Mid Upper Gunner Gallagher who were both injured followed him. Both my father and Mr Gallagher were taken as POWs but Mr Carley was shot and killed by three SS officers when they stopped the car on the journey from Kulte to Arolsen. I have only recently found out Mr Carley's identity. I know that he was 29 years of age when he was killed and that he was married with two children. His wife was Mary and his children's names were Peter and Anne. I am in contact with some German historians who have an interest in these events and were in contact some years ago with Mr Carley's son. I would very much like to make contact with him if possible. If you know Peter Carley and have contact details for him I would very much appreciate it if you could put me in touch.*

*If you know any details about what happened to Mr Gallagher after the war, I would be very grateful for any information about him too. My father and Mr Gallagher were the lucky ones. Very fortunate to survive.*

Thanks very much,

*Jeremy Robson*

(Letter forwarded to Association by David Kitching: [davidkitching@aol.com](mailto:davidkitching@aol.com)  
17 Drury Lane, Hunsdon, Hertfordshire SG12 8NU)

Dear Janine,

John Reid's enquiry about the Mandrel Screen appears to be answered by the late Mervyn Utas' memoirs of his RCAF wartime service (he was co-pilot in Tiny Morris' crew) so this is what he wrote:

*'Two other 100 Group Squadrons provided what was called the "Mandrel Screen". This was an electronic jamming screen designed to delay enemy radars from seeing the bomber or spoof forces approaching Germany. The Mandrel Screen used what was known as the Racecourse Pattern. The idea was to fly circuits up and down the navigation GEE lines most nearly perpendicular to the enemy coast. The first circuit was 10 miles long, rate one turns (3 degrees/second) being made between the straight legs, and each successive circuit was adjusted to take account of the prevailing wind conditions so that it took exactly 10 minutes. The aircraft of each pair (two aircraft forming a jamming centre) started at opposite ends of the circuit, thus maintaining a strong average intensity of jamming. These Squadrons used the Handley-Page Halifax bomber aircraft.'*

The answers to John's other queries (about navigation etc) are that navigating to some Latitude and Longitude in the middle of the North Sea would be no different for the Navigator, from navigating to some position over France or Germany (all the Turning points and Targets were defined by their Lat and Long). As for two A/C being in proximity (the parallel legs of the Racetrack would have been about 2 nautical miles apart) that could have been solved by one being at the designated altitude +500ft and the other at -500ft (1000 ft is the standard vertical separation in Holding Stacks today)

Regards

*Andrew Barron* (Navigator in Tony and Mervyn's crew)

*Andrew Barron has written a tribute to Mervyn Utas featured as part of our In Memoriam section towards the end of the magazine.*



Hi,

*My father, F/Lt Tom Anderson Smith, was in 100 Group, No 23, based at Little Snoring. He also became a member of the Guinea Pig Club.*

*I have something that may be of interest, perhaps the Museum might like it on loan or something? It is a print of a Mosquito signed by all 100 Group Headquarters Staff, including Addison, and Micky Martin, formerly of 617 Dambusters fame, latterly with 515, then HQ. It has something like 60 + signatures. It is just sadly in my spare room, in amongst all my books, so it would be kind of nice to let other people see it.*

*I have been writing a book for the past four years to bring together my father's exploits so that nothing he experienced might be wasted. I would therefore welcome hearing from anyone who has memories of him to share.*

*Pete Smith*

[pete@psinspections.co.uk](mailto:pete@psinspections.co.uk)

*Note from Editor: Extracts of Tommy's life at Little Snoring will be shared in the Summer or Autumn edition*



## Millies: RAF pals meet after 68yrs

Two RAF pals who had not seen each other for 68 years were reunited at the Millies as the forgotten heroes of World War II's Bomber Command.



*Honoured ... RAF 100 Group Association member Dr Peter Lovatt, circled left, and Bill, also circled, with bomber chums, Ann and Katherine*

**The Sun Military Awards** is an annual awards ceremony which honours members of the British armed forces and civilians involved with the forces. The Millies were created by His Royal Highness Prince Charles. The awards are organised and sponsored by The Sun newspaper.

During the televised ceremony, awards known as "Millies" are given out. The awards and their recipients are chosen by a select panel of ten judges, made up of national figures and military chiefs. Nominees of all but one of the categories are selected by the general public, with the remaining category winner chosen by the judges.

As Millies hosts Phillip Schofield and Amanda Holden asked Bill (seen right in picture above) to chat about old times on stage, The Sun sprang a surprise by bringing out our very own RAF 100 Group Association member Peter Lovatt for an emotional reunion.

Flight Sergeant Bill Moore, 87, and Sergeant Peter Lovatt, 86, became great friends as they trained for war together in 1942.



Way they were ... pals in '42

At the Awards, Bill, who was an Observer in a Lancaster, said: *"There was no other person closer to me at that time. We trained together - our life was the Royal Air Force. We parted ways in 1942 and lost touch later when I went to live in Africa. To be brought back together means so much. Money simply cannot buy it."*

Peter, who became part of RAF 100 Group flying American Liberators, called the meeting *"marvellous ... A great thanks to The Sun for bringing us back together."*

At the Millies, they were honoured with the judges' Special Recognition Award, presented by Katherine Jenkins and Ann Widdecombe. TV star Stephen Fry called Bomber Command: *"one group of men who have not received the recognition they are due"*. He has made a special video to salute them, shown on ITV1 9pm Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2010

*Rod Vowler sent in the above piece for members to share Peter's good news*

# Shared Experiences

## The Beast of Bourbon

by

Stephen Hutton

(author of 'Squadron of Deception')



February 19<sup>th</sup> is the Anniversary of the crash on take-off of the 36<sup>th</sup> Radar Counter Measure Bomb Squadron's B24 Liberator Bomber #42-50385, R4-H, otherwise known as the *Beast of Bourbon* in which three out of the ten-man crew lost their lives.

To mark this occasion, on Saturday May 7, 2011, a memorial dedication event is being held, honouring the 36<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron and those who lost their lives, including the men in the village of Long Marston, England where the airplane crashed. A flyover from an Air Force aircraft from Lakenheath will make the occasion even more memorable. John Howarth, navigator on the Liberator when it crashed, will be in attendance with his wife Ann and son Brian along with other British and American veterans. Stephen Hutton, author of '*Squadron of Deception*' is organising the event through Chas Jellis, who established a Memorial in England last November honouring the Gremlins. RAF 100 Group Association members have also been invited. (RAF 100 Group Squadrons flew with the 36<sup>th</sup> on operational night time missions beginning in the small hours of D-Day June 6, 1944 until January 3, 1945. After that time the 36<sup>th</sup> flew exclusively on daylight missions for the 8<sup>th</sup> Air force.)

The following is the story of what happened on that fateful day, and our next magazine will include coverage of the Anniversary event 66 years on.

On 19 February only No.1 station was occupied for the VHF Screen. Squadron Liberator #42-50385, R4-H, nicknamed *Beast of Bourbon* piloted by Lt. Louis McCarthy and his crew were assigned to station No. 2. *Beast of Bourbon* crashed on take off and the other stations were cancelled prior to takeoff. The crash was attributed to instrument failure. Of the ten crew members aboard, three were killed, two were moderately injured, and five slightly injured. Killed were S/Sgt. Carl Lindquist, Pvt. Fred Becker, and Pvt. Howard Haley. S/Sgt. Robert MacAdam also received moderate injuries and was hospitalised. Aside from the regular McCarthy crew members, Lt. Victor Pregeant and Lt. Foreman, pilot and navigator of the new crews were on this aircraft. Lt. Pregeant escaped injury, but Lt. Robert Foreman, navigator on Lt. Pregeant's crew suffered a broken hip and was grounded indefinitely. The aircraft was a total loss.

The actual crash report stated that at 0916, the time of the accident, the weather had ground fog up to 400 feet, the surface visibility was 30 yards, and the wind was south-southeast at 2mph. The temperature and the dew point were the same at 45 degrees Fahrenheit -- perfect weather conditions for England's infamous dense fog. It was determined that the cause for the take-off accident was instrument lag (flight indicator and airspeed indicator) and extremely poor visibility.



Lt. Louis McCarthy crew

The official narrative of the accident read:

The pilot, Lt. Pregeant, after making routine cockpit check, taxied out to marshalling point for take-off. The pilot then checked everything again including engine run-up check. The B24 moved out to the end of runway 26 and took off in ground fog with visibility of 30 yards. The aircraft became airborne at approximately 105mph and cleared the end of the runway at 110mph. The pilot was immediately on instruments and held the aircraft in flying attitude to build up airspeed to 135mph. The engines operating at full throttle sounded normal and gauges indicated 43" and 2500 rpm. At approximately ½ mile west of the west end of the runway, slightly to the right, the aircraft touched ground and the mark of its path indicated that it was in a proper attitude at the time of contact, altimeter reading reached 45 feet and never reduced again. After hitting hedges and trees, the pilot cut throttles and co-pilot cut switches which possibly delayed fire and explosion which took place approximately seven minutes after the crash.

Lt. Louis McCarthy, the senior pilot giving Lt. Vic Pregeant the check-ride, spoke of the crash:

*'It was a terrible morning. Everything happened so fast. The fog was right down to the tops of the grass. They lined us up on the runway with flashlights. We should never have been allowed to take off. They pushed it and why they did I don't know. The plane just gave out on take-off. There was no power on any of the engines for some reason and that's when we hit. It was a terrible foggy morning. The thing caught fire. I don't know whether*

*gasoline spilled on the hot engines or what. We had to duck because all the ammunition started going off. We got everybody out including the ones who got killed. I remember looking out through the top of the thing and counting the yellow May Wests to make sure everybody was out. We should never have been sent out that morning, it was so bad.'*

One of the injured, Lt. Robert Foreman, navigator for Lt. Pregeant, was unable to remember much about the crash. Foreman wrote to fellow crewman Sgt. Harry Broadhead on June 24, 1945:

*'Cursed was the day of February 19th that I had to leave you boys. From what I remember of Vic's visit, it was some crack-up. One of the boys on leave from the 36th, Lt. Corder, stopped in to see my folks and told them about it. Seems that six of the boys were killed (not so, but three), including McCarthy, the pilot. Since I don't know too much about the crash, could you write me what you know about it Harry? Anyway, all I got out of it was a fractured hip. I was in a body cast up to my arm pits till two weeks ago. I'm up on crutches now and the Doc said that my hip looks good. I should be able to throw the blasted crutches away in a few months.'*

Word of the crash spread quickly. S/Sgt. Ed Lampson, engineer, remembered learning of the good luck of his pilot, Vic Pregeant:

*'The only event I really remember is the feeling the whole crew had when we heard that Vic had crashed on his check ride. This is heady stuff for a bunch of 20 year olds, far removed from home and family not knowing our future. You can know the relief we felt when Vic walked in with nothing but a band-aid on his head.'*

Another lucky man was Lt. James Snoddy, the regular co-pilot for Lt. McCarthy. He recalled:

*'I was fortunate to be flying with another crew and was not in that crash. Carl Lindquist was our tail gunner who was killed when our crew crashed on take-off. He was only nineteen. Carl was a good little country boy. He looked like a little elf because he smoked a big yellow crooked stem pipe. He had a girlfriend back home and every night he would come by my hut with a letter to her for me to censor. He didn't mind my reading his personal letters to her. In fact, he would bring letters he had received from her for me to read. He called her his "Little Four Leaf Clover." He mentioned repeatedly that she was his good luck charm. It didn't work out that way.'*

Tail gunner Hank Parke remembered:

*'I remember that we heard the crash and all the sirens went off. We were in the barracks, me and this guy Fred Neiser. We ran right out there and went over to Long Marston and saw it. All the bullets, the ammunition was going off in the flames. We were wondering around the field there looking. You couldn't get too close. We talked to some of the guys that were in it. But what amazed me was those medics we had. We used to make jokes about them you know. Those guys were something. They were running into that thing, pulling guys out. They were really something. I had a lot more respect for them after that, 'cause we only knew them before, handing out the whisky after the missions you know.'*

The subject of the crash was the main topic of discussion around the airbase. It also led to some debate. Cpl. William Fenster, a squadron mechanic for the Liberator *Beast of Bourbon*, reflected:

*'I never could figure out how the pilots could see to taxi out to the runways, let alone line up with the runway and take-off. When the Beast of Bourbon crashed, the fog was so thick. They never should have been allowed to go.'*

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Stephen Hutton [www.36rcm.com](http://www.36rcm.com)

# ON THE OUTSIDE WANTING TO GET BACK IN

by

Jack Hope

Tail Gunner, 7/44 - 2/45

B-24J 42-51230 "Li'l Pudge"

Our crew was brought together from various training assignments in March 1944, at Pueblo Army Air Base, Pueblo, Colorado. We were assigned to the 360th and 215th Combat Crew Training Squadrons, of the 2nd Air Force. I had graduated from the Army Air Forces Flexible Gunnery School, Harlingen Army Air Field, Harlingen, Texas on February 19, 1944. After a couple of personnel adjustments, we were formed as a complete B-24 combat crew consisting of:



**Standing, Left to Right:** Brookshire, Kay, Young, Van Noy  
**Kneeling:** Johnson, Kottenstette, Long, Isgur, Hulne, Hope

The crew assignments were as follows:

Pilot, Lt. Joseph R. Brookshire - Joplin, Missouri  
Co-Pilot, Lt. Robert L. Young - Freeport, Long Island, New York  
Navigator - Lt. Oscar F. Van Noy - Los Angeles (?), California  
Bombardier - Lt. Glen C. Kay - Yonkers, New York  
Flight Engineer/Gunner - Robert E. Hulne, Grundy Center, Iowa  
Radio Operator/Gunner - Leonard A. Kottenstette, Pueblo (or Denver), Colorado  
Nose Gunner - Jack Long, Jr., Perry, Missouri  
Left Waist Gunner - Joseph A. Johnson, Des Moines, Iowa  
Right Waist Gunner - Julian Isgur, Brooklyn, New York  
Tail Gunner - Jack I. Hope, Tinnie, New Mexico

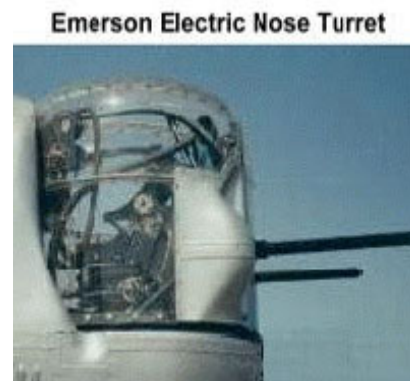
Originally, we were assigned a ball turret gunner, however, he was reassigned and we did not receive a replacement. As it happened, we did not use a ball turret gunner in our radar countermeasures operations in Europe, but I doubt if that fact was known at that time. I do not remember the official reason he was not replaced.

We immediately began an intensive program to prepare us for combat over enemy occupied Europe.

We normally flew as a complete crew, but one day [Jack Long \(Nose Gunner\)](#) and I were detailed to fly with another crew for a high altitude mission.

[Jack Long](#), of Perry, had been drafted at the age of 22 years old. Sent to Florida to be evaluated, he was chosen to go to Radio School in Chicago, from which he graduated as a Radio Operator/Repairman. However, he'd been persuaded into being a Nose Gunner. Asked: 'Would you like to get into Air Transport Command where you could try transports and all that?' he'd replied: 'Well, that sounds good!' and after signing papers, was sent off to Gunnery School at Tyndall Field, Fla. The School was difficult, requiring men to do a variety of duties including putting a .50 calibre machine gun together blindfolded. They'd had to do the task in a set amount of minutes and locate any worn or bad pieces. As a Corporal, he had been surprised to see a Major sitting next to him, taking the same test.

Now our mission was to fire at a sleeve target that was to be towed behind a B-26 (Martin Marauder) bomber. Although Jack was our nose turret gunner and I was the tail turret gunner, the two turrets on B-24's were very similar in appearance operation.



Originally, when nose turrets were outfitted to the nose in place of hand held fifty calibre machine guns the Consolidated hydraulically operated tail turret was used. Later, the Emerson electric turret was developed for the nose position. After the advent of the Emerson turret, B-24s were produced with either of the turrets installed. As can be seen in the photograph of our crew, above, that aircraft was equipped with the hydraulic turret. Whereas, the B-24J 42-51230 'Lil' Pudge', which was assigned to our crew in England; was equipped with the electric turret as may be seen in the photograph above.

(The plane was named 'Lil Pudge' after the pilot's mother who was lovingly referred to as 'Pudge' by her family. The aircraft insignia was Mickey Mouse sitting on a bomb. It was painted on the side of the plane.)

Except that I believe the Emerson turret was of lighter weight, I do not recall any significant advantages of one turret over the other in efficiency. However, the hydraulic pump that operated the Consolidated turret was very loud when activated. It was bad enough being just outside of my

tail turret. It would have been especially loud in the confined quarters of the navigator and bombardier if it had been located in their compartment. The two turrets were essentially the same in operation; therefore a gunner trained in one would have no problem operating the other. On this training mission, Jack Long and I were to take turns firing from the nose turret.

We missed our rendezvous with the B-26. After circling around in the area at 24,000 feet our pilot could make no radio contact with anyone that knew the status of our target plane, he decided to fly back to our base at Pueblo to check things out. In discussing the matter with the tower, it was decided that we would land and call the whole thing off.

Because of the room needed for the nose landing gear to operate, it was critical that no one remain in the nose section of the aircraft on landing. However, the pilot forgot about us and failed to tell us that we were going to land. The flight engineer came down to see if the nose landing gear was down and locked. When he saw us, he motioned frantically for us to leave, and he hurried back to the flight deck to warn the pilot. Too late! He had already started extending the nose gear.

There was a narrow catwalk along the floor and two small hand rails that ran along the right side of

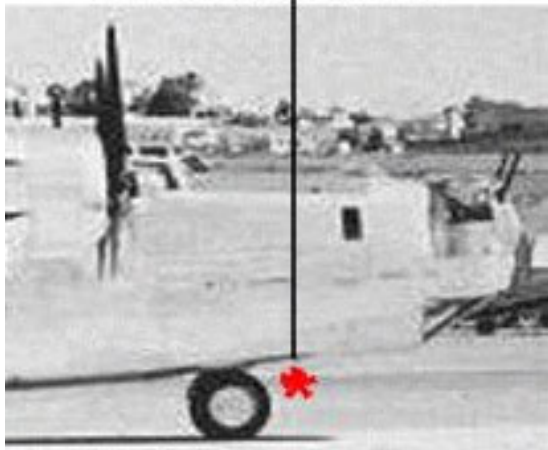


the airplane as an access passage between the bomb bays and the navigator, bombardier and nose gunner stations of the airplane. Because of cramped quarters, we wore only a parachute harness, and had a separate parachute canopy pack that could be attached to the harness when needed. So, when we traversed the access route to and from the nose section, we would push our parachute packs ahead of us as we crawled along the catwalk. As we were leaving the nose section, Jack was crawling ahead of me. I was pushing my parachute pack along just behind him. As I came alongside the nose gear doors, they began to open. At the same time, violent turbulence threw me into the opening doors, and I found myself partially on the outside of the airplane. Since the nose gear was folded up inside the airplane, the opening was much larger than apparent in the picture below. I was holding on for dear life to the hand rail with the one hand that was still on the inside of the airplane.

I will tell you, I was astonished to find myself on the outside, when I was supposed to be on the inside! But there I was! What to do? First, I remember vividly taking a quick look at the runway about 2000 feet below. My thought was, "*That thing is a long way down there, it looks very hard, and I have no way to break my fall, so I had better get back inside!*"

The nose gear doors on later models of B-24's were designed as slab type doors that opened to the *outside* of the airplane. However, the model that we were in that day was equipped with doors that opened in a bi-fold manner to the *inside* of the airplane. *That fact saved my life.*

**Bi-Fold Doors Retracted  
To The Inside of Plane**



**Slab Style Doors  
Opened Outward**



If the nose gear had moved to its landing position, I would have been pushed free of the airplane. There simply was not enough room for me and the gear to occupy the limited space of the opening. Fortunately, I knew that the nose gear could not extend until the doors were fully open. The door was designed so that when it reached the full open position, a portion of the door activated a micro switch that allowed the nose landing gear to extend for landing. I was wearing heavy GI shoes (the same ones that I am wearing in the crew picture) under my sheepskin flying boots. Believing that the shoes would be strong enough to hold the door open short of the micro switch, I jammed my left foot, which was still inside the airplane, in one of the door folds to keep it partially open.

Most of the right side of my body, including my head, was on the outside of the aircraft, with my legs toward the direction of travel. My right leg was bent back toward my head because of the wind slipstream of probably 160 miles per hour. It seemed as if it was bending where there was no joint provided to allow such activity. That hurts, but I thought it was a much better deal than heading for that runway 2,000 feet below without a parachute!

Jack saw my predicament and turned back to see if he could help. He reached and caught the part of my parachute harness that crossed over my left shoulder and gave a strong tug. At the same time, I exerted all of my strength to pull myself toward the handy-dandy little hand rail. It worked! Just as my body cleared the opening to the safety of the interior, the doors closed. This is because the flight engineer had made it back to the flight deck and warned the pilot that the nose section had not been cleared of its occupants. The pilot pulled the "gear up" handle and the doors closed in obedience to his will, waiting only long enough for me to get back inside. Otherwise, we would have been flying around with two doors doing their best to cut off the leg of a tail gunner who should have been back in the tail turret where he belonged. I'll bet a B-24 would look silly with just a leg sticking out of the belly of the nose section!

I mentioned this incident to Jack Long recently, and thanked him again for saving my neck. Typically, his attitude was, *"Aw shucks. I didn't do much. You were pretty well on your way back in when I saw you."* Nevertheless, I give him credit, and thank God that he was there!

Since Jack and I were the only members of our crew, we were not acquainted with any of the folks that we were flying with. After we landed and had secured the airplane, as we were walking back to the Flight Operations Office, I said to one of the officers, *"Sir, were you flying that airplane?"* I was right on the edge of committing gross insubordination and disrespect for a commissioned officer.

My plan was to report to the Operations Officer and suggest that the pilot not be permitted to fly a B-24 without adult supervision. He answered that he was the pilot. I said that I would like to talk to him about not clearing the nose section of the airplane before landing and I needed to do so before we got to the Operations Office. He stopped and told the others to keep on walking. Of course, he was aware I was pretty upset about the whole affair and was about to "rat" on him. He said something like, *"Sarge, you can call me every foul thing you can think of, say anything you please, and I will have nothing to say. I assure you there is no thought that you can have against me that I have not already had against myself. I pulled a dumb, stupid stunt, and I am very sorry."*

My! That took all of the wind out of my sails! I sheepishly said something like, *"Aw, it's OK, Sir. I understand. It has been a tough day on you, with all of the confusion and frustration connected with not meeting up with our target. Everyone is entitled to a mistake every once in a while. As far as I am concerned, we best forget it."* The matter was dropped.

You see, we were both just *"kids,"* and we had a war to win! Beside that, look at the education that I gained that day. Now if someone asks me what it is like to fly on the outside of a B-24, I can tell them. But, I hope that I am the only person that can do that, because I would not wish the experience upon anyone else!

As I look back over my life, I could relate several other experiences where it was seemingly preserved by some inexplicable, or unaccountable turn of events. *"Inexplicable?" "Unaccountable?"* Not really! I have come to believe that it happened only by the intervention of God.

### *Jack Hope*

Tail Gunner, 7/44 - 2/45  
B-24J 42-51230  
"Li'l Pudge"

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Jack Hope - California - Age 82

*Jack Hope at 82 years old*



Jack Long, Jr. - Christmas 2001

*Jack Long Jnr 91 years*

# WAR CRIME

by  
David Hales



[Sgt. R.B. Hales](#), a Flight Engineer, aged 20 years old; was posted to 192 Squadron on 23 October 1944.

The rest of his crew were:

[W/O B.H. Harrison](#) (pilot, aged 29)

[Sgt. R.P. Clancy](#) (mid-upper gunner, aged 21)

[Sgt. T.D. McGill](#) (rear gunner, aged 20)

[Sgt. A.P. Bloomfield](#) (bomb aimer, aged 20)

[F/Sgt. J.G. Smith](#) (wireless operator)

[Sgt. S. Wharton](#) (navigator)

They only flew 4 operational flights (1 of which was aborted shortly after take off). Their final flight was in Halifax MZ806 DT-R taking off from Foulsham at 16.00 hours on 21 November 1944, to accompany a raid on railway yards in Aschaffenburg. Their task was to investigate transmissions from rotating freyas and the Special Operator on board was [W/O J.R.](#)

[Sutton](#), aged 24 years old Whilst over the target area they were attacked by a Nightfighter which resulted in their aircraft crashing at a place called Langenbromach, near to the town of Koenig (now Bad Konig).

Sadly [Harrison](#), [Clancy](#), [McGill](#) and [Sutton](#) perished in the aircraft, but my uncle, together with [Bloomfield](#), [Smith](#) and [Wharton](#), baled out and landed safely, although [Sgt. S. Wharton](#) suffered injuries which were treated by local people before he became a POW the next day. [F/Sgt. J.G. Smith \(RAAF\)](#) laid low until he was apprehended and he also became a POW.

My uncle and [Alec Bloomfield](#) landed near to a village, Nieder Kinzig, and they were treated civilly by the local community before being taken under escort to Koenig where they were to be held overnight. Unfortunately in the nearby town of Erbach a number of local party members, together with a Wehrmacht Officer, heard of the crash and set off to track down any parachutists they could find. They eventually caught up with them in Koenig and took my uncle and [Alec Bloomfield](#) into their custody. Under the surveillance of [Horn](#), [Mayer](#), [Haigh](#), and [Geisler](#) they were marched back towards Erbach, [Maurer](#) and [Hunter](#) followed in their car. But then overtook the group near the southern city limit and stopped. [Maurer](#) remained in the car while [Hunter](#) stepped into the November night. He ordered the prisoner group to turn from the road onto a footpath. Shortly thereafter several shots were heard. [Alec Bloomfield](#) was killed instantly. My uncle disappeared into the darkness to be found the next day 100 yards away in a field with a chest shot.

Three weeks following the shooting, two of those involved, [Hunter](#) and [Sauer](#), were killed in a car accident. Another named [Giesler](#) was never tracked down, and it is suspected he fled to the Russian zone. Those who died in the aircraft were initially buried in a cemetery at [Kirchbrombach](#) (close to [Langenbrombach](#)) and my uncle and [Alec Bloomfield](#) were buried in the cemetery at [Koenig](#). The remains of all those who perished that night were subsequently moved to their final resting place at the CVGC cemetery at [Durnbach](#), south of [Munich](#), which is approximately 275 miles from the aircraft's crash site.

After the war their murder was investigated and some of the perpetrators were tried in Hamburg and found guilty of committing a war crime and received various prison sentences. However, the main criminals died before being brought to justice. With Horn committing suicide by hanging himself in his cell ten days before the start of proceedings against them, only Schwinn, Maurer, Mayer and Haigh were put on trial. In court, Mayer said that it was Haigh, Hunter and Horn who delivered the fatal shots. All four were found guilty and sentenced: Maurer to 15 years in prison, Schwinn to 12 years, Mayer to 7 years, and Haigh to 5 years.

In June 2010 I undertook a lone pilgrimage by car to visit the area around Bad Konig to find the site of the crash and the scene of the murders. With some local assistance I discovered the crash site, but from files held in the local Government Offices it was established that any remains of the aircraft had been destroyed years earlier and there was nothing more to be seen. In these files there was also a record made of a visit by Stan Wharton in October 1985 (his first since the crash).

I did however find the path outside Bad Konig where my uncle and Alec Bloomfield were murdered. I laid a wreath which was quite emotional. I also continued on to visit the cemetery at Durnbach to pay my respects to all those that perished and have promised to return.



*David Hales*

\* \* \* \*

*If you share my love of books and a good read you will understand my excitement on discovering a book written quite a few years ago. On taking my wife to a charity sale just before Christmas, not really expecting to buy anything for myself, just small things for the tree as novelty pressies for members of the family and idly glancing at a row of spines – all love stories by the colourful titles, one was spotted with ‘The Great Coup’. Looked for the author and not a name I knew, cannot give a reason for pulling it out of the row but the dust jacket gave me a thrill, my pleasures are simple ones! On the jacket was a night-fighter. It was a Ju.88 and from that moment I knew the story was non-fiction, and just up my street. The book was purchased without more ado.*

*I am not going to spoil anyone’s read by going into detail, but if you can find a copy, even if you have to approach your local library, the story tells us that we captured the latest radar being used against our bombers in 1943 when this crew deserted by flying the aircraft to Scotland in daylight. It was a miracle the intercepting Spitfires didn’t shoot it down. After examination, this allowed our people to plan counter-measures to reduce the terrible loss of our crews flying over Germany and the other occupied countries. On getting home, I turned up Prof. R V Jones’ ‘Most Secret War’ and he recalls the excitement when he was summoned to Scotland to view this prize.*

*So if you are interested, I’ve already given you the title. Author: Robert Hill, published by Arlington Books (Publishers) Ltd. And it came out in 1977. The author admits that he has had to make a number of guesses over certain facts owing to official files still being kept from the public domain. Also the odd schoolboy howler appears in print, such as: ‘the 2-engined Halifax’, but it’s the story that matters.*

*Other topics are touched upon, such as the debate on the subject of when to start using Window, again, to save lives. Professor Jones gets mentioned again and again, and I will say no more. If you can find the book, I’m sure you will enjoy it. I did!*

*Ron Durand*

# In Memoriam

**Ian Fraser**

**17<sup>th</sup> May 1945 – 28<sup>th</sup> December 2010**

Ian and I married 22 years ago and he inherited a daughter, Jane, a lively 7 year old he treated as his own and was loved and respected in return. He wanted her to have all that a child would want without being spoiled and he guided her with patience and wisdom.

Ian loved to travel and wanted to take Jane and myself to all the places he had been to and enjoyed. When Jane was 10 we went on our first trip to New England and Canada, exploring places off the beaten track which were a wonder to us. Later trips were to California, Nevada, Arizona, Washington State, Idaho, Wyoming, South Dakota, Oregon ... and Ian's beloved Canyonlands in Utah.



Ian had a lifelong interest in Native Americans and he favoured the Sioux. The last 'souvenir' he brought back was a genuine Sioux bow and arrows which he insisted should not be loaded with the cases as they were too precious. Eventually, after a stand-off with a burly Security Guard, a compromise was reached and the 'weapon' as it was called, travelled back with the pilot!

Our final trip 'across the pond' was when our flight to Chicago on September 11th was diverted to Goose Bay in Labrador, where we spent 4 days as guests of the German Air Force (who treated us very well) until all American airports reopened and our flight could continue.

Just over a year ago, a chance find of wartime photographs of my Uncle Jimmy Hollingworth ... of whom I wrote in the last edition of this magazine ... with fellow crew of 214 Squadron, led us to contact the Squadron Association and subsequently 100 Group Association. Last July, we attended the 214 Squadron Association Reunion in Derby and met Gerhard and Sissy Heilig and Peter Witts and it was a marvellous weekend. Both Ian and I thoroughly enjoyed meeting such wonderful people there. The following week, we flew to Belfast and had the pleasure of meeting John and Gwen Gilpin, how good it was to hear first hand about my Uncle. Ian was just as passionate as I to find out so much about my Uncle's life in the RAF and I am so grateful that we were able to share so much together.

As Ian retired last May, he enjoyed spending time with his new laptop, researching all he could about the Squadron and 100 Group. He was looking forward to the 100 Group Reunion in May and we planned to explore Norfolk and walk in the steps of Uncle Jimmy. In time, we wanted to travel to all the places where he served with the RAF and had no more thoughts of travelling anywhere else other than in England.

Our daughter Jane's baby was due on January 1st, but Freya Rose arrived early on December 26th, a true Christmas miracle as Ian saw her before he tragically passed away on December 28th. Our loss is heartbreaking, but Freya is such a comfort and we are so thankful that Ian saw her.

My heartfelt thanks go to Janine and Tony for their continued messages of comfort and support and to Gerhard and Sissy and John and Gwen for their messages too. Thank you also to Peter Walker for his kind telephone call.

I hope to see you all at the May Reunion and know that Ian will be with us in a way.

*Linda Fraser*

# MERVYN UTAS

Oct 1924 - Nov 2010  
223 Squadron



Rear row L to R: Andrew Barron (Nav), Mervyn Utas (Co Pilot), Jimmy Bratten (W/Op) Mick Stirrop (Beam Gunner).  
Front: Mulligan (RCAF) (Beam Gunner), Mick Parrack(RCAF) (Tail Gunner) Vic Green (F/Eng) and Sim (RCAF) (Mid Upper Gunner).

Mervyn was Co Pilot in Tony Morris' crew, in which I was Navigator (after their 4<sup>th</sup> Sortie). He joined the RCAF in October 1943 as soon as he was 18 and gained his wings when he was just 19, after which he was posted to GR School on Prince Edward Island in the Gulf of St Lawrence and from there to 111 OTU in the Bahamas where, to his annoyance due to his age, he was not given a Command but assigned as a Co Pilot.

Posted to the UK his crew was pitchforked into Bomber Command to crew the Liberators of the newly re-formed 223 Squadron at Oulton. After a few minutes into their third 'Big Ben' patrol off the Dutch Coast they found themselves in the centre of a salvo of flak. Their Navigator, John Wallace, was wounded and they aborted the Operation.

Mervyn wrote in his 'memoirs' that ....

*'... the trip changed my outlook on the war....Up to that time the war had been a bit of a game. You got to fly aircraft ... had a nice uniform to wear...the pay was reasonable and people respected you. I now realised that people on the ground were trying to kill you. I knew that they were shooting at us because there was no one else there ... we ran into a lot of flak on later trips .... It was more impersonal as there were a lot of other bomber aircraft there so you felt that they were ... shooting in the hopes of hitting someone. The optimistic outlook of young people!'*

I was offered John Wallace's position as at the time I was 2<sup>nd</sup> Navigator, to Freddy Freake, in Scotty Steele's crew and, effectively, 'redundant', flying as Front Gunner! Mervyn completed a further 36 sorties, culminating in the last Bomber Command sortie of the War on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 1945. He left Oulton on the 6<sup>th</sup> May and arrived back in Canada (via New York) on 24<sup>th</sup> May.

He was due to form part of Canada's 'Tiger Force' (the British/Commonwealth Bomber force destined to attack Japan). This was cancelled so in July he was offered the choice of staying in the Air Force or his Release, which he took to go to University. At the end of three years (of a four year course) in Mining Engineering he took a Vacation job down a gold mine in Yellowknife (Northern Territories). Soon deciding that 5000ft above ground was preferable to 5000ft below he quit University and started looking for a job in Aviation. Unfortunately all the Airlines had all the pilots they needed. Luckily he received an invitation to rejoin the Air Force. Attitudes don't change! The Senior Officer on the Interview Board refused to believe that he'd completed a full Tour at the age of 19! Someone should have told him that the average age of Bomber Command's crews was 22!

After several years in Search and Rescue, in 1958 he was posted to pilot a ski-wheel DC3 on glacial research (Canada's contribution to the International Geophysical Year which involved landing on glaciers in Ellesmere Island (83 degrees North!) at 4000 and 6000ft, the first time ever for such a large aircraft. He was sent to Europe in 1961 amongst Canada's NATO reinforcements, transferring in 1962 to Paris for the very pleasant job of flying Senior Officers etc, to Northern destinations in Summer and Southern ones in Winter! He had hardly returned to Canada when he was sent to Kashmir to fly a STOL aircraft for the UN for a year. He spent his final 2 years in the RCAF flying CL44s, retiring after 25 years in 1969.

He joined the Canadian Department of Transport in 1969 flying as an Air Carrier Inspector checking Airline Pilots for Type Endorsements and Annual and Route Checks.

Having lost his licence for Medical reasons he was made Project Manager for the introduction of the Micro-Wave Landing System and, later, Canadian Member on the ICAO All Weather Operations Panel, finally retiring in 1987 after 45 years in Aviation.

*Andrew Barron*

# A Quiet Corner



## Spirits in Flight

I saw them return, seven spirits in flight.  
Engines fired by the sparks of night,  
Lumbering, throbbing like a battered ghost,  
So thankful for a friendly coast.

Glowing and gliding, it roars without sound.  
The rubber screams, as it kisses the ground.  
Perfect touch down, on a deserted plain,  
Now a cornfield, a field with no name.

Night after night, mission after mission,  
Helmets, visors, masks and ammunition.  
The Seven Sky Warriors from long past,  
All knowing tonight could be their last.

I hear the fields, alive with noise,  
Filled with brave men, some are just boys,  
I see them walk, in their suits of leather,  
Slowly and proudly, they walked together.

Where their planes rose to meet the foe  
Now the larks rise from their nests below.  
Down the runway only peace is heard,  
Save for the wind and the song of a bird.

Time passes – January to December,  
From Spring to Winter, the years drift on.  
Every April, every Easter – I will remember  
Cliff, Al, Pete and John – Nick, Stan and Skipper Don.

Eddy Coward (1985)

Taken from his book *'The Poems We Wrote'*  
An Anthology of Air Force Poems

*Written in memory of Lancaster LL899, B Flight  
RAF Fiskerton, Lincs. Target: Aachen, Germany  
Killed in action: 11<sup>th</sup> April 1944*



## Final Postings

*Death is but crossing the world as friends do the seas  
- they live in one another still.*

**Martin Albert Staunton, Eileen Boorman (nee Staunton), Len Bartram**

Founders of RAF 100 Group Association – remembered with love.

- 192 Squadron** George Ward DFC Sqd/Ldr; Phil James' Canadian pilot
- 192 Squadron** Kenneth 'Paddy' Passmore: DFC Flt/Lt; Canadian, died 2005.
- 192 Squadron** John Cooke left memorabilia to the Museum archive collection.
- 192 Squadron** Ron Phillips passed away late 2005
- 192 Squadron** Ted Gomersall passed away 30<sup>th</sup> November 2004,
- 192 Squadron** Hank Cooper DSO, DFC passed away 2005.
- 192 Squadron** Michael Simpson W/Op & F/O passed away on the Isle of Man.
- 192 Squadron** Richie' Richards Rear Airgunner, who flew Wellingtons, passed on, as did son, F L Richards in August 2009, both members of the Association.
- 192 Squadron** Air Commodore Vic Willis, C.O, RAF Foulsham, passed away 30.7.06
- 192 Squadron** Group Captain Jack Short passed away December 2006. Chair of RAF 100 Group Association until 1996.
- 192 Squadron** W.O (later P/O) A G McEachern RCAF died 15th August 2007 at home in Lanigan, Saskatchewan aged 85.
- 192 Squadron** LAC Harris, Ground Crew passed away 15<sup>th</sup> August 2007. Grandson James Kerslake is now a member of the Association.
- 192 Squadron** Wing Commander David Donaldson, DSO\*DFC passed away 15.1.2004.
- 192 Squadron** Wilhelmson, F/O Sander Willie Raymond (J10026).Distinguished Flying Cross. Home in Elbow, Saskatchewan.
- 192 Squadron** F/Lt Richard (Dick or Dobbie) William Dobson, died 1996, remembered by son, Roger & daughter Susan, both members.
- 192 Squadron** W/O John Rhys Powell, rear gunner flying Wellingtons, died 1992 remembered by son John Powell.
- 192 Squadron** Sgt George Richards, tail gunner, posted missing 4th/5th July 1944. Remembered by niece Cheryl Cairns nee Colgan & sister Agnes Colgan.
- 192 Squadron** F/Lt Henry Victor Vinnell (Vic), posted missing 26/27<sup>th</sup> Nov 1944. Remembered by fiancée Nina Chessall always & her daughter Janine H.

- 192 Squadron** Jack Glen Millan Fisher, Pilot Officer with Royal Canadian Air Force, posted missing 26/27<sup>th</sup> Nov 1944. Remembered by sister Audrey.
- 192 Squadron** Flight Lieutenant Albert Victor (Vic) Parker passed away on Sunday November 14<sup>th</sup> 2010. Daughter Ann Felsky says: 'We were lucky to have him 95 years and be able to take care of him until the end.'
- 192 Squadron** Spec/Op (Wop) John Henry BALL, Association member for many years, passed away on 23 April 2009. He is remembered by daughter, Susan Lawford, who wishes to retain membership in his name.
- 199 Squadron** F/O Ed Emmerson, Navigator to Flt/Lt Paddy Passmore DFC, Canadian Pilot, passed away.
- 199 Squadron** Arthur Fitch, former RAF Bomber, passed away July 2006
- 199/171 Sqdn** Group Captain George Cubby, MBE, FRMets passed away 2005. Wife Betty donated memorabilia to the Museum. Also remembered by Roy Smith, only surviving member of his crew.
- 171 Squadron** Joe Brogan, Halifax pilot, who finished the war at North Creake; passed away 2004, remembered by his widow Sheila.
- 171 Squadron** Arthur Adcock passed away February 2008 & Syd Love, Canadian crew member, passed away April 2008. 'Friends to the end!'
- 171 Squadron** Len Fanstone passed away 13<sup>th</sup> January 2010. Greatly missed by Harry Freegard & wife, who were in touch since his return to Canada in 1946.
- 171/102 Squadron** Ken Ratcliffe Nav/Bomb Aimer passed away March 8<sup>th</sup> 2010 age 86. He flew Halifax & Lancasters, in touch with his crew all their lives.
- 157 Squadron** Bryan Gale Flt/Lt passed away 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2009. Remembered by daughter Valerie & son Chris.
- 214 Squadron** Geoff Liles, pilot, passed away 4 March 2006.
- 214 Squadron** Mr J Creech passed away April 2006.
- 214 Squadron** Don Austin, remembered by Les Bostock.
- 214 Squadron** Air Vice Marshall Jack Furner passed away 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2007.
- 214 Squadron** Sqdn Leader/Flight Commander Bob Davies passed away June 2007.
- 214 Squadron** Bill Howard passed away October 2007.
- 214 Squadron** Flt Lt Blair passed away Sept 2007.
- 214 Squadron** John Hereford, Spec Op has passed on.
- 214 Squadron** Robert Moorby W/Op passed on January 2008. Remembered by sons, Michael and Robin. Also Shirley Whitlock.

- 214 Squadron** Ft/Sg Hadder, Air Gunner in Fortress III HB815, bearing code letters "BU-J" killed 3/4<sup>th</sup> March 1945, remembered by nephew Leslie Barker.
- 214 Squadron** Alan Mercer passed away 6<sup>th</sup> June 2009.
- 214 Squadron** Warrant Officer Gordon Wing, 'Howie' (character out of Australian newspaper cartoon page) passed away end of Nov 2009 age 87. Rear Gunner in Eric Morrison's crew in Stirlings & Fortresses; also Founder member of Airgunners Ass.
- 214 Squadron** Robert Louie William Darracott, navigator, philatelist, opera buff, avid bridge player, died May 8<sup>th</sup> 2010, 94 years. Bob was one of England's gentlemen, gone to his rest. Sadly missed by family & friends.
- 214 Squadron** Flying Officer Reginald Coates completed the whole of his second tour of operations as a Bomber Pilot with 214 (FMS) Squadron in March 1945. He died at home on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1963 leaving a widow and three children. Remembered by his son, R I Coates
- 214 Squadron** Bomb Aimer Les Bostock in Don Austin's crew died just before Christmas 2010. He is remembered by m/u gunner C A Piper, 'Pip'.
- 223 Squadron** Flt Lt A E L Morris (Tony) died June 2005. Remembered by Andrew Barron, his skipper: Oct 44 – 1945.
- 223 Squadron** Tom Butler 'Bishop', remembered by Peter Witts.
- 223 Squadron** C. L. Matthews (Les) rear gunner, Peter Witts nose gunner in Flt/L Stan Woodward DFC crew before Peter went on to 214 Squadron.
- 223 Squadron** Arthur Anthony, Flight Engineer, passed away May 13<sup>th</sup> 2006.
- 223 Squadron** F/Lt Jack Brigham DFC passed away 2008. Original Captain when 223 reformed. Flew mainly Liberator TS 524, 6G-0; 36 ops. Remembered by Len Davies, Waste Gunner, only surviving member of crew.
- 223 Squadron** F/L/Sir John Briscoe passed on a few years ago and now been identified as one of 223 Squadron.
- 223 Squadron** 2<sup>nd</sup> Pilot Mervyn Utas, Canadian in the late Tony Morris's crew, passed away 8 Nov 2010. News came from Andrew Barron, the crews' Nav.
- 88 Squadron** F/Lt Len Dellow passed away Christmas/New Year 2006-7; veteran of 88 Squadron, 2 Group & rear gunner/wireless operator on Bostons.
- 49 Squadron** Len Bradfield passed away Nov 2005. Len & pilot Johnny Moss survived as war prisoners when their Lancaster ED625 was shot. Len returned to Britain with injuries sustained in escape attempt, nursed back to health by Nora, who he married.
- 462 RAAF Sqdn** F/O H .R. Anderson DFC 'Andy' passed away 6<sup>th</sup> April 2008 at home in New South Wales with family around him.

# Dates for your Diary

## 2011

**7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

### **Final Memorial Ceremony & Celebration**

Honouring RAF 36<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron Radar  
Counter Measure Unit

A Memorial shall be dedicated in the village of Long Marston remembering the service and sacrifice of airmen Fred Becker, Howard Haley, and Carl Lindquist of the Lt. Louis McCarthy crew that perished in the take-off crash of the B24 Liberator nicknamed *Beast of Bourbon*. To give tribute for this fitting occasion John "Des" Howarth, crew navigator, will be in attendance along with son Brian, plus other British and American military representatives and veterans

Chas Jellis, who established a Memorial in England last November honouring the Gremlins, is organising the event. A flypast is expected by the Air Force for the big day with newspaper and TV media coverage. The 3-day event includes a visit to the American Cemetery at Cambridge, a tour of the American Air Museum at Duxford and also the old airbase at Cheddington.

This shall be the last official squadron gathering so anyone interested in attending or wishing to contribute to this final Memorial event honouring the 36<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron, should contact –

Stephen Hutton  
919-772-8413  
[smhutton@36rcm.com](mailto:smhutton@36rcm.com)

\* \* \* \*

### **Friday 13<sup>th</sup>/Saturday 14<sup>th</sup>/Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May RAF 100 Group Association Reunion 2011**

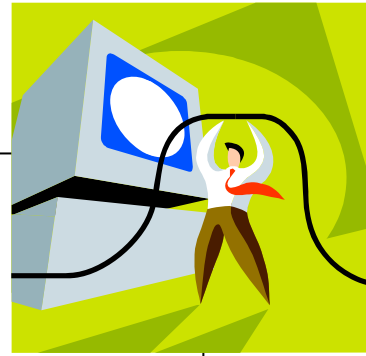
Please send your cheque and choices for your main Saturday meal  
to ensure a place for you in this very special event

We look forward to seeing you there!

And anyone wanting help with their computer  
and problems regarding the internet,  
getting the magazine through email

see next page!

# COMPUTERS CONFUSING?



How do I know there is an attachment to an email

Tony will be on hand during the Reunion Weekend

to help and advise

on any personal computer problems

What is a PDF file?

How do I open a picture being sent to me on an email?

Please let us know in advance of the Weekend

so that we know

how many members

would like to use

this service

How do I send these pictures to Janine for the magazine?



Contact:  
Tony or Janine  
01723 512544

[raf100groupassociation@gmail.com](mailto:raf100groupassociation@gmail.com)

# 100 Group Order of Battle

<b>SQD</b>	<b>AIRCRAFT</b>	<b>1st 100 GROUP OPERATION</b>	<b>BASE</b>	<b>SORTIES, LOSSES ROLL</b>
192	Mosquito, Halifax Wellington Lightnings	Dec 1943	Foulsham	2171/5 Losses Electronic Intel/Elint
141	Beaufighters, Mosquito	Dec 1943	West Raynham	1214/11 Losses 80 EA, 58 Trains, 7 Ships Dest
219/239	Mosquito	Jan 1944	West Raynham	1394/9 Losses 51 En AC Dest
515	Mosquito	March 1944	Little Snoring	1366/21 losses 29 En AC Dest
169	Mosquito	Jan 1944	Little Snoring, Great Massingham	1247/13 Losses 25 En AC + 1 V1 Dest
214	Fortress	April 1944	Sculthorpe, Oulton	1225/13 Losses Electronic Jamming
199	Stirling, Halifax	May 1944	North Creake	1707/6 Losses Electronic Jamming
157	Mosquito	May 1944	Swannington West Malling	1336/6 Losses 37 En AC +39 V1 Dest
85	Mosquito	June 1944	Swannington West Malling	1190/7 Losses 71 En AC+30 V1 Dest
23	Mosquito	July 1944	Little Snoring	1067/8 Losses 18 En AC Dest
223	Liberator Fortress	Sept 1944	Oulton	625/3 Losses Electronic Jamming
171	Stirling, Halifax	Sept 1944	North Creake	1583/4 Losses Electronic Jamming
462 RAAF	Halifax	Jan 1945	Foulsham	621/7 Losses Jamming/Windows
36 & 803 BS	Boeing B-17F P38	Jan 1944	Sculthorpe, Oulton	1211/0 Losses Electronic Jamming
857 & 858 BS	Consolidated B-24G	Jan 1944	Oulton	280/2 Losses Electronic Jamming

Produced by  
Janine Harrington/Tony Bradley