



THE HORNET

The Newsletter of the 100 Squadron Association

President: Air Commodore N Bonnor FRIN FRAeS RAF (Ret'd)

Chairman:
OC
100 Sqn
RAF Leeming
Northallerton
DL7 9NJ
01677 423041

Treasurer:
M English
4 Forest Rd
Chalet Hill
Bordon
GU35 0BH
01420 489543
mikej1947@
hotmail.co.uk

Secretary (Temp):
Air Cdre N Bonnor
Knob Hall
Barrowden
Oakham
LE15 8EH
01572 747658
bonnors@
gmail.com

N/L Editor:
Mrs N Crane
B3 Woodside
55 Surrey Road
Bournemouth
BH4 9HS
01202 761627
nina.crane1@
ntlworld.com

Association Website: www.100squadronassociation.org.uk

Newsletter 105 - May 2014

Dear Members,

Those of you who knew my mother, Mollie Clark, through meeting her at reunions will be very sorry to hear that she died in March, just six months after my father. Thank you to members who sent kind messages of condolence and also to those who attended her funeral.

An application form to attend the reunion at RAF Leeming in June is attached at the end of this Newsletter, and I hope a good number of you will be able to attend what promises to be an enjoyable and interesting time with 100 Squadron.

Many thanks to Air Cdr Goulthorpe for his memories of RAF Wittering in the 1950s and also to Harry Nuttall for his memories of his brother Gp Capt Robert Nuttall. All your contributions are most gratefully received including jokes/funny stories if you can supply these as well.

Nina Crane
(Editor of The Hornet)

The Association Reunion 2014

This is a reminder that the 2014 Reunion will be held at RAF Leeming on Friday/Saturday, 13th/14th June 2014. The Boss, Tony Cann, is very keen that we focus the event on the Squadron and RAF Leeming. After the initial "Meet and Greet" in the Officers' Mess, Lunch will be available as "Pay as You Dine", but the Mess clearly needs some idea of the extra numbers we will generate, so please indicate your intentions on the application form. After lunch, we will split those attending into two groups. One group will head for the Squadron to have a briefing on current operations and a chance to browse in the history room and spend time with the some of the pilots. The other group will head for the RAF Leeming - Historic Training Facility, which has been put together over the past eighteen months. It tells the history of the station from its construction in 1939 and use as a bomber airfield initially by RAF squadrons and later by the RCAF squadrons of 6 Group, Bomber Command. After WWII, the airfield was a night fighter base with Meteors and Javelins before it became No. 3 Flying Training School with the Jet Provost until, after 10 years, again it became a fighter base with the Tornado F3 and the Hawk. A guided tour of the exhibits and video presentations will be arranged. The two groups would swap over mid-afternoon and gather again at the Squadron before departing for overnight accommodation. The Officers' Mess has rooms available on both Thursday and Friday nights; however, these must be booked using the application form rather than direct with the Mess Reception.

We will gather again in the Officers' Mess on Friday evening for a buffet dinner. **DON'T FORGET TO BRING A RAFFLE PRIZE!** Babcock Engineering has kindly agreed to sponsor the wine with dinner. On Saturday morning, we will hold the AGM in the Mess with tea and coffee for the ladies; however, the station goes onto centralised messing at the weekend, so anyone staying in the Mess will have to go over to the Junior Ranks Mess or the Jolly Bean cafe near the Spar Shop for breakfast on Saturday morning. For similar reasons, there will be no lunch facilities available in the Mess after the church service on Saturday. So the detailed itinerary is:

Friday, 13th June 2014

11.00 - 13.30 Meet and Greet and light lunch in the Officers' Mess

13.45 - Depart to the Squadron and the RAF Leeming History Centre

15.00 - Groups swop over but meet² again at the Squadron at 16.00

16.30 - Depart for overnight accommodation
19.00 - "Happy Hour" and Reunion Buffet Dinner
Saturday, 14th June 2014
09.30 – AGM at the Officers' Mess, RAF Leeming
11.00 – Service at St Bede's, the Station Church
11.45 – Depart RAF Leeming

The Squadron made a bid for the Lancaster to flypast on either Friday afternoon or Saturday morning; however, this is the Trooping the Colour weekend, so we are unlikely to get a flypast.

An application form is again included in the Members area of the website. Please ensure you indicate how many people require lunch on Friday, the number for dinner with your cheque and, if you would like to apply for the chance of accommodation in the Officers' Mess on Friday night.

Norman Bonnor

Obituaries

Walter Strange served on 100 Squadron at RAF Grimsby (known to all who served there as "Waltham") between late April and mid-August 1944, as the Wireless Operator in Flying Officer Orr's crew. Walter flew a full tour of 30 operations with the Squadron, starting out on the night of the 27th/28th of April 1944 against Friedrichshafen. A few nights later, on the 3rd/4th of May 1944, they took part in the raid against Mailly-le-Camp. A breakdown in communications between the bomber groups at the afternoon pre-raid briefing, followed by late marking by the Pathfinders once over the target coupled with radio interference by an American Forces radio station meant that the Main Force were called in late to bomb at Mailly, resulting in the German night fighters having a field day and the raid turned into nothing short of a massacre for the bomber crews, particularly those of No.1 Group of which 100 Squadron was a part.

Raids against numerous German cities and French targets (as part of the plan to disrupt French transport infrastructure in the run-up to D-Day) followed, including the precision daylight attack on German troop positions at Caen on the 7th of July 1944. German infantry and Panzer divisions were holding up a push by Canadian troops, and in The

Netherlands following very accurate marking by Bomber Command's Pathfinders, the Main Force delivered an accurate bombing attack on the enemy. 100 Squadron in particular achieved very accurate results, with Walter's crew coming in to the target at just 5000 feet, much lower than was the norm for a heavy bombing attack, to ensure their bombs hit the mark.

On the 12th/13th of August 1944, Walter and his crew attacked Brunswick, and piloting the crew on this night was none other than 100 Squadron's Commanding Officer, Wing Commander Pattison, DFC, DSO. The raid went well, and despite some fairly accurate flak over the target area, which they bombed just before midnight, the trip was uneventful.

Walter flew his thirtieth and final operation with 100 on the night of the 18th/19th of August 1944, against the oil storage facilities at Ertvelde Rieme. Some heavy flak was experienced over the target, but the trip was completed successfully and without major incident.

Following completion of their tour, the crew were split up and sent their different ways. Walter stayed with 100 until mid-October, when he was posted away.

Post-war Walter returned to civilian life, and was an active supporter of the RNLI, serving for twenty years as a Committee member of the Walton and Frinton Lifeboat Station. His funeral was held at the Emmanuel Church, Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex, on the 24th of March 2014.

Although not a member of the Association, we have learned that sadly **WO John Andrews-Mason** sadly passed away on 20th March.

John joined the RAF as soon as he was old enough and trained as an Air Gunner. He arrived on 100 Squadron, as the Mid-Upper Gunner in Sgt Neal's crew, on the 24th of August 1943, from 1656 Heavy Conversion Unit at Blyton, where the crew had learned to fly Lancasters.

His first operational mission was on the night of the 30th/31st of August 1943, against Munchengladbach, when he flew as a "spare bod" with WO Simpson and crew whose own Mid Upper Gunner was sick. The following night he flew with the same crew again, this time against Berlin. WO Simpson and his crew would be killed just a few weeks later in Lancaster ED555, and they are commemorated at Eelde in The Netherlands.

On John's third trip, on the night of the 5th/6th of September 1943 to Mannheim, the skipper was the Squadron's Commanding Officer, Wing Commander McIntyre, who routinely took new crews on their first operation as a way of boosting their confidence.

A trip to Munich passed by without incident before the crew were tasked to attack Hannover on the night of the 27th/28th of September 1943. Straying over Amsterdam on the return flight, their aircraft was hit by flak which punctured one of the aircraft's tyres. Despite this, the skipper managed to execute a safe landing back at base.

Trips to Munich, Modane (when the crew achieved a much-prized "Aiming Point" photograph on the bomb run) and various other German cities were punctuated with a number of trips to Berlin, the "Big City" and a target which claimed the young lives of so many Bomber Command airmen during the long winter of 1943-44. In all the crew would fly no less than ten sorties against the German capital, and on one of these on the night of the 1st/2nd of January 1944, the crew were attacked by a Ju88. The two Gunners successfully fought off the attack, although the Rear Gunner, Sgt Smith, received minor injuries in the combat which saw him taken off flying duties temporarily.

Two weeks later, and with Sgt Sanders occupying the rear turret, the crew were again attacked by a Ju88, over the target of Brunswick. This time the German night fighter pressed home a determined attack, causing severe damage to the Lancaster and killing Sgt Sanders. Tasked against Berlin again five nights later, the crew had the 100 Squadron Gunnery Leader, Sqn Ldr O'Donovan-Iland, occupying the rear turret. Always a "hot" target, the crew overshot Berlin on their first bombing run, and had to run the gauntlet with a second run over the target. The effort was worth it as the crew delivered their bombs directly onto the Pathfinder target markers. This raid also marked the end of the crew's tour, and WO Andrews-Mason was posted away for a spell as a Gunnery Instructor.

Following a spell instructing, WO Andrews-Mason returned to operational flying and commenced a second tour with 578 Squadron, flying Halifaxes from Burn in Yorkshire in the mid-under Gunner's position. He was shot-down during the night of the 20th/21st of February 1945 and was hospitalised in a German Hospital until the war ended. WO Andrews-Mason's funeral was held on Thursday 3rd March at Macclesfield Crematorium.

Group Captain Robert Nuttall, OBE, CEng, MRAeS, FI Mgt died peacefully aged 94 years in the Royal Lancaster Infirmary on 4th February 2014.

Bob joined the Royal Air Force in January 1940. He trained as a Fitter Armourer and subsequently as an Armament Instructor and rose to the rank of Sergeant by 1942. The following year he was commissioned and became a Specialist Weapons Officer, Aeronautical Inspector and Qualified in Bomb Disposal. He flew on operations as an Air Gunner/Bomb Aimer on Wellingtons, Hampdens, Blenheims and Stirlings during the war.

Bob served at Waltham in 1943 on Lancasters and at Hemswell in 1948 on Lincolns, and his main involvement with 100 Squadron was as an Armament and Air Gunner Instructor.

Between 1944 and 1959 he served at many RAF bases working his way up the ranks. In 1959, he joined the Admiralty, Greenoch as an RAF Armament Liaison Officer in underwater weapons. He had numerous postings within the UK and Europe, the Middle East and Singapore. Bob travelled to various Air Force Bases in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Indonesia, Borneo and Island of Gan besides special tasks in Australia (Darwin, Sydney and Perth) and Vietnam.

He was posted to the Air Ministry in 1960 with special duties as the Secretary to two NATO Committees dealing with Safety Standards, Cross Operating and Operation Requirements; this involved his travelling to France, Italy, Germany, Holland, as well as Washington, Key West, Edwards Air Force Base in the USA and Toronto and Ottawa in Canada.

Bob's work at the Air Ministry was honoured with an OBE in 1963. Further postings were to Coastal Command, the Far East Air Force and back to London at the Ordnance Board in 1969-75 where he finished his career in the RAF.

After retiring, Bob was a very active member and Chairman for many years of the Morecambe and Lancaster Branch of RAFA and the local Aircrew Association. Bob also loved being involved with air cadets and took a special interest in their activities as President of 455 Air Cadets Morecambe and Heysham Squadron.



Bob Nuttall

Memories of Bob Nuttall by his brother, Harry

In 1938, Bob announced we would ride on his tandem to Glasgow from Morecambe. My holiday was abruptly cut short. "It is some 180 miles and somewhat far, why go there?" The Empire Exhibition silly. "But in one day?" No, we were to stay the night somewhere. Relieved just a little, but finally exhausted riding over Shap entering Scotland, having tea for the exorbitant sum of a half crown at Lockerbie to arrive in Glasgow sometime in the evening. I had lost track of time!. The Scots landlady of a tenement took one look at me and declared "puir wee bairn". She fed us well.

Bob's interest in the Exhibition was in some printing machinery and satisfied by 4.00 pm. decided it was time to return home: well, Morecambe that is. I could hardly believe him. At what time will we arrive? His shrug was hardly encouraging. It may have been some forty miles south when we approached a very long straight and rising part of the main road to Carlisle. Was it Beatnock Summit? I was tired and not contributing much so I got off. Bob peddled away apparently oblivious to my absence or believing I had a new lease of strength. He disappeared over the top of the hill.

Coming toward me was some sort of van which I thumbed. It stopped and, as he intended to travel south through Carnforth, he agreed to give me a lift. "Watch out for my brother on a tandem, would you please".

I must add that Bob was a fitness fanatic having studied and carried out the Charles Atlas fitness regime with determination.

My refusal to continue cycling convinced Bob to accompany me in the back of the empty furniture van. It was dark at Shap on the A6 but at the Jungle Cafe, full of light and smoke, we ate a wholesome fry-up! Carnforth beckoned, and I trusted Bob to recompense the driver.

Arriving at 10.00pm, father was amazed that we had accomplished the journey in 6 hours. He was all for reporting it to the press

That evening Bob found a half crown in his pocket. It was a penny he had given to the driver by mistake. Pennies then were large and as heavy as half crowns. He drove to Carnforth the following day in the hope of catching the man who expected to be there on his return north. Not to be, however, he was missed.

It would be in 1942 when in Manchester, I recognized the van outside a shop. He appeared to be the driver. "Do you recall giving a lift to Carnforth in 1938 and receiving a penny?" Expletive!

I gave him ten bob which I never recovered from Bob!

From a RAFA website

News from The Squadron

Taken from "Excalibur" the magazine of RAF Leeming

Much of our time in recent months has been spent supporting a busy Typhoon Operational Conversion Unit and the front line but December saw a small contingent of the Squadron deployed to Eindhoven in The Netherlands for a combined air combat and close air support detachment. With three pilots, our operations Sergeant Morgan Thompson, an ever useful holding officer and the usual excellent support from Babcock, we were able to launch multiple sorties across the continent. Much of our time was spent working with the Dutch Army providing over watch and simulated weapon strikes for patrol bases or convoys moving through the exercise area. As we were based at Eindhoven

airport, we could be overhead the exercise in minutes and loiter for extended periods. During one afternoon, our resident dogfighting guru, organised some training with the Belgium Air Force and their impressive F-16s. Despite being promised a tune-up and full ECU remap by Robbie and his team, we were soundly thrashed by our opposition but left their airspace content as the Eindhoven Christmas Market beckoned. The real upset of the week came during a civilised (by that we mean aggressive, no holds barred, death or glory) go-kart race. Four aircrew egos were immolated by Morgan's racecraft and outright pace - various theories circulated but, needless to say, we won't be karting with him again!

Many of you will know that Nellis Air Force base near Las Vegas is the home of the USAF's aggressor units, and their repository of air combat knowledge. It was with some reluctance, therefore, that two of our number (Sqn Ldr Grieve and Flt Lt Murphy) deployed to the annual aggressor conference. We are not sure how much knowledge was actually gleaned as they have been using an oft-quoted "What happens in Vegas..." line to nullify inquisitions.

The New Year has so far been detachment free allowing us to train some new arrivals alongside routine tasking and enjoy a deployment to London for some force development adventures. Arriving in London during the middle of a tube strike did little to dampen the excitement with even resident Yorkshireman, Jim Whitworth, offering these choice words: "I can categorically state, in front of these witnesses, that London truly is the epicentre of all that is good in the world - hand me that Martini." An early start on Friday saw the team take in SO15, COBRA and a wander round No. 10 before a quick trip on the river and a chance to witness the famed "rush hour" first hand



Memories of RAF Wittering 1954 – 1957

Air Cdre P. J. (Charlie) Goulthorpe CBE RAF Ret'd

The Duty Engineer

"Well, who are you then?" It was my first appointment, and I had gone to see the RAF Wittering Tech. Adjutant on arrival. I explained that I was to be the Engineering Officer for 100 Squadron and the BCDU. He looked unimpressed. "None of the other Squadrons have got Engineers. I can't think what you will find to do". I suggested trials work for BCDU. "Right, then you can start by trying to keep your pilots from bothering us engineers now that they have got one of their own".

He phoned me two days later. "Now my lad, here it is five o'clock and you haven't signed on as Duty Engineer tonight". I indicated how surprised and encouraged I was to have been entrusted with the duty so soon. I went to his office. "You sign here, the Order Book's there. You stay here until flying has stopped and then you can use the Duty Engineer's bunk. There is a duty crew if you need help. You won't need to disturb anybody else." I took his chair and settled down to read the Order Book. It seemed to cover every eventuality including World War III. After a while, it became too dark to read but the light would not switch on. It occurred to me that power to the whole hangar had been turned off when work there had ceased. I went down to the hangar floor and found a large circuit breaker on one wall, above a rubber mat and alongside fire-fighting equipment, alarm bells and serious provisions against emergency. The circuit breaker was plainly in the OFF position.

In the gloom, it all looked rather formidable and I hesitated. What might start up? I had no idea. I thought of calling the Duty Crew, but I could not hear myself saying, "This is the Duty Engineer. Come and turn the light on for me". But nor could I stay there helpless in the dark. I remembered being told that large circuit breakers needed to be closed very firmly, otherwise there would be arcing and the lever would kick back out. So, with some anxiety, I seized the lever, closed my eyes, and thumped it home. Immediately a line of air compressors along the wall started up with a tremendous clatter, while all the big lights overhead, that were the sodium vapour kind which I had not seen before, began to flash red in the way that they do before striking and producing their normal light.

I leapt into the air and came down running away. After a few strides I thought, "I should run back and turn it all off". Halfway back I thought, "Save life before property", and ran for the door. As I reached it, the lights stopped flashing red and the compressors settled into their normal rhythm. I tried to recover some composure and returned to the Order Book.

After a time, the airfield lights went out and all seemed quiet, so I closed up and went to the bunk. I was barely asleep when the 'phone rang. "Flight Sergeant Smith, Sir, 40 Squadron. I've got a hang-up". A hang-up?? What could that be? I thanked him for sharing his problem with me and tried to sound sympathetic. There was a pause. "Will you be coming out, Sir?" I saw it all immediately; somewhere in that wretched Order Book there was a requirement that the Duty Engineer shall attend all hang-ups. "Right away", I said. "We are at the usual place at the far end", he told me. I started the little two-stroke motorcycle (transport which the MT Officer had allocated to me with the insistence that it accorded precisely with my lowly rank and requirements) and I rode out onto the airfield. There was indeed a single light at the far end. When I reached it I found a solitary Canberra, in the light of a sodium lamp, attended by a huddle of airmen, hoods up against the wind.

"You will want to check the switches, Sir?" said Flight Sergeant Smith. We both climbed into the Canberra. There was a pause while I surveyed my surroundings. Then, by way of help, "Shall I go through the sequence while you check the indications, Sir?" My eyes fell on the first 12/24 Way Bomb Selector I had seen in my life. The Flight Sergeant began briskly flipping the numerous switches up and down. Finally he said, "Well, no problem there". I had to agree; there was nothing wrong that I could see. We left the cockpit and were standing by the aircraft when someone put a length of rope in my hands. I looked around and realised that the whole party were holding a tarpaulin sheet, roped around its sides, beneath the aircraft in the manner of firemen who are about to catch survivors. In that instant I knew what a hang-up was; there was a bomb, insecure on its hook, or rolling about loose, or not there at all. By this primitive means we were to find out which. I decided I did not want to be a Duty Engineer ever again, supposing I survived.

"Clear to open the bomb-doors, Sir?" asked a voice. I began to mutter, "Dear Lord..." but the 'Dear...' was enough and the bomb doors

opened. Nothing fell; the armourers went in with their torches. "Good night, Sir" said the Flight Sergeant, "I will let you have a note of what they find". Against a headwind the two-stroke had carried me there at little more than walking speed but returning on the downwind leg it took wings at a pace that brought a cheery red glow to the cheeks of its small cylinder. Sadly that proved to be its lifetime's best; it was never so quick again.

Joining 100 Squadron

Until my arrival one of the pilots had been in charge of 100 Squadron's ground crew and its dispersal area. OC 'C' Flight was his title, and very competent he was. As an ex-apprentice, he had been ground-crew himself before being commissioned and becoming a very experienced pilot and the Squadron's Instrument Rating Examiner. In his day, he had been an inter-services middleweight and retained all the presence and self-confidence that goes with it. I was fortunate to have him as a mentor and to take over a well managed Flight.

We were at the dispersal, making the hand-over, when he became aware of some delay in the return of an aircraft from the Engineering Squadron where it had been in work. I heard him telephone the Squadron Leader in charge. Now I had been told very firmly by the Tech Adjutant that I was never to approach this august individual, who was far too busy to be bothered with my small troubles, so I was surprised by what I was hearing. I was astonished when the tone of the conversation became less than cordial. I was astounded when I heard my predecessor ask, "Where are you speaking from? – Stay right there, I'm coming down to fill you in!"

Nothing had prepared me for a circumstance in which I might need to address a superior in such terms, even figuratively; indeed I had been strongly advised against doing so. At the next moment there was an angry voice raised in the store-room. It was a sergeant shouting at one of the airmen, "Haven't I told you to cut any U/S hose in two and to return the pieces as Quantity 2? How do you expect me to keep this inventory straight if you are stupid enough to play it by the book?" Since the inventory was to be on my charge from that very day, I did not know whether I should be alarmed or re-assured by what I was hearing, but it was clear that I had much to learn which had not been adequately covered by my training. And so it proved.

A Woeful Tail

At one time, BCDU was tasked to evaluate a tail-warning radar as a possible enhancement for the Canberra. To that end, such a device was obtained on loan from the USAF and installed in a 100 Squadron aircraft. The trial called for the Canberra to operate against fighters from West Raynham and to record the precise progress of model attacks by them. It all seemed very straightforward; but it was far from that. The technical support for the radar was provided by a USAF unit in Norfolk whence the kit had to be taken for check-out and calibration on the bench before each trial sortie. Sometimes there was a delay for spares. The installation in the Canberra was not of the best; in particular, access to the aerial in the tail cone was very difficult. It was one of those jobs in which you could only just see what needed to be done, or you could just squeeze a hand in there to do it but then you couldn't see what you were doing, neither could you see what you had done when you had finished. So for our Corporal Radar it was a trial indeed.

Then there was the operational side. The weather had to be right, the Canberra and its crew had to be right, the fighters had to be in the right place at the right time and so on and so forth. What with one thing or another, time went by without any real progress to report. Bomber Command began to get quite stuffy about that. Then joy of joys, there was a day when it all came right! Statistically it was bound to happen – inevitable, we said, if you keep trying long enough. But the joy was short-lived; Paddy Hood, our scientific officer whose job it was to analyse the results, announced that they were worthless. The aerial had been wrongly connected such that left was right. He had tried looking at the data in a mirror and while standing on his head but it was no good. The sortie was wasted.

Recriminations flew and our Corporal Radar took them all to heart. Berated by all and sundry he declared that if any of his masters could do better then they should get on with it. It fell to me to convey this message up the line. I could see that it needed some re-wording - spin we would say nowadays – and, looking back, I marvel at my success in persuading our Tech Sig's Squadron Leader that he should show the necessary leadership, much needed to restore morale. The tale hardly needs telling, it is so foreseeable. The Squadron Leader also got the connections crossed and another sortie was abortive. But it restored our Corporal Radar to good spirits and everyone set to with a will to make certain that it never happened again.

As a further bonus, Bomber Command allocated us a Meteor 7 which we were to use as the attacking fighter. It was expected that we would make better progress if we did not need to call on another Command for this role and indeed we did, but the start wasn't propitious.

The Meteor arrived carrying under-wing fuel tanks and a large overload tank under the fuselage. It was decided to remove and store the under-wing tanks but to leave the overload one in place. A sergeant rigger who had previous experience of Meteors undertook the job. He drained the under-wing tanks, piled sand bags under them to cushion their release, went to the cockpit and pulled the jettison lever. The plan was sound, but a memory lapse led him to pull the wrong release and he dumped the overload tank which fell to the ground, burst open and spilled over 100 gallons of AVTUR into the storm drains. Much correspondence followed with the suppliers to account for our urgent but unaccountable need for a replacement overload tank and with the Water Board concerning the equally unaccountable presence of kerosene products in the storm water. We made our innocence very plain.

Shaggy Dog

I recall that Duggy Dugdale, a 100 Squadron pilot, had been flying one day in the rear seat of the Meteor. On returning, the front seat pilot was dropped off near No 1 Hangar leaving Duggy to taxi to dispersal. Now Duggy had a dog which was devoted to him and had been left at the hangar. When the dog saw that Duggy was in the aircraft it became very excited. As a kindness someone lifted the dog into the empty front seat to accompany Duggy back to dispersal. Plainly it enjoyed the ride, standing high in the seat and looking about. At the dispersal, an airman began to marshal the Meteor to its stand. Duggy, who enjoyed a little joke, ducked down in the rear cockpit while the dog looked attentively at the man outside who was waving his arms about. Eventually man and dog made eye-to-eye contact. Although it did not take the airman long to recover his wits, his first reactions are a treasured memory.

Bad Weather

I have a particular memory of the Meteor 7. Although I had been through flying training and was qualified as a pilot, all my hopes of flying Canberras were denied by a rule which precluded anyone who had not completed the Canberra course at RAF Bassingbourne from flying them. Try as I might, I could not get approval to do the course - the money men at MoD would not sanction it. But there was no such rule for the

Meteor 7, and its arrival seemed heaven-sent. However, as I had not previously flown either jets or twins, it was decided that I would need to be accompanied by suitably experienced pilots until I had succeeded in renewing my instrument rating on the type. One of the good souls who flew with me in this way was an Air Traffic Controller, a Polish officer who had served with the RAF throughout the war, with great distinction, and had not long since been instructing on Meteors. He was small in stature (even I can say that) but in no other way. I doubt I have ever seen a man wear so many decorations. There were four, maybe five rows of them. No doubt there were Polish awards which perhaps duplicated his British ones, but there were distinguished service medals among them. Ted had been around when it was busy. He flew with me one February afternoon, one of those winter days of cold blue skies interrupted by scurries of low black cloud with heavy snow showers beneath them. We returned to Wittering intending to do two rollers, for which there was just enough fuel remaining, ahead of a snow shower which was approaching from the West. I flew the first touch and go but climbed away into snow, which had come upon us sooner than expected. The cloud base was very low and the visibility in the snow was bad – I could see only the ground immediately under the aircraft with no slant view at all.

Ted said, "OK, make it a bad weather circuit, stay low enough to see the ground and keep close in to the airfield". I did my best, turned inbound when I caught sight of the Great North Road which marks the Eastern boundary of the airfield, and looked out for the runway lights. When I first saw them they led out to the left, almost at right angles. I had failed to turn tightly enough and had no option but to overshoot. "Right", said Ted, "I'll do the final one. Tell me what you can see as we go around". That was not much; I called out, one at a time, the fuel farm, quarters, the CO's house, Great North Road, and turning inbound again. Where are the lights? Then, once again, a glimpse of a glow away out to the left and Ted was overshooting. "Look, I'm not seeing anything at all back here. You have it". That left me too busy to think about our situation. I went round again. The fuel check downwind was zero both sides. I was determined to go a bit further downwind of the main road this time and to turn as tightly as I dare. This time the lights appeared more or less ahead; we were only a little too far right. An anxious S-turn at the last minute got us lined up and on the runway about a third of the way down – but there is plenty of it

at Wittering. We even reached dispersal before the engines flamed out. Ted made a kind remark about my efforts and that was it. He said no more about it, ever.

However, when I had time to think over what would have happened if we had missed the runway for a third time, I was appalled. We would have had to climb ahead to gain what height we could before the engines quit; it would not have been much. The Meteor 7 had no ejection seats. Abandoning it involved swinging aside the massive canopy which extends over both cockpits, unstrapping, climbing over the side of the cockpit, hoping not to strike the tailplane, and opening our parachutes manually. The chances of a successful abandonment in our situation were very poor. Although at the time I had not thought that through, Ted would have had it very clearly in mind. But there was never a hint of concern in his voice. His decision to hand over to a novice (I had very few hours in the Meteor and my ability as a pilot is barely average) was as cool an assessment of the possibilities as can be imagined. I have never forgotten it.

No Fault Found

The working week at that time allowed for sport on Wednesday afternoons and for general service training on Saturday mornings. The latter involved small arms training, gas and fire drill, parade rehearsals and tedious activities of that kind. The challenge to find an over-riding requirement to be engaged elsewhere on Saturdays was enthusiastically taken up by all. Although there was ordinarily no flying then, the ground-crew would usually have some faulty equipment which had defeated their efforts to rectify it on Friday evening and demanded their attention on Saturday morning. So it was that a Canberra which had been faulted as 'swinging violently when the throttles were opened for take-off' was investigated one Saturday morning. No fault was found. Afterwards I happened to meet the pilot concerned in the bar - this was in no way remarkable; everybody was always there ahead of Saturday lunch. When I suggested to him that there seemed to be nothing wrong with his aircraft, his response was not well-tempered.

"You come with me, Cloth Ears, and I'll show you whether it swings or not!" Our arrival at the dispersal found a few ground-crew there who helped us to uncover the engines and start the Canberra. I was surprised when the pilot said he would put the aircraft on the runway and show me there exactly what would happen. However, as the

airfield was closed, there did not seem to be any reason why we should not taxi out and do the ground run there. He lined up on the threshold, gave me a hard look and opened the throttles. The aircraft turned smartly through 90 degrees. "Gosh! Do that again". He lined up once more while I crouched to watch the engine speed indications to see if they would increase together. They did and I felt no swing at all. Looking up I saw a smiling pilot rotating and lifting off the runway. We were airborne, carried away on a whim. He selected 'undercarriage up' and got three reds. "Ground Locks!" we both said together. The smile faded, "I wonder ..." he said and waggled the wings and kicked the rudder. The smile returned - no control locks and three greens when he selected 'U/C down'.

As we turned downwind, I could see the ground-crew looking up at us with close interest, and I had a moment to reflect that neither of us was strapped in nor wearing flying kit, that our flight was unauthorised, that no checks had been done and much else. However, our sortie and return to dispersal seemed to have been unremarked except by our ground-crew, who fortunately saw the need to keep quiet about it. What had caused the aircraft to swing sometimes but not always was an occasional failure to accelerate which beset the engines of the early Canberra B2's. The point of telling this little tale is to convey the irreverent attitude of many of the aircrew in those days. The pilot concerned was immensely experienced - a Battle of Britain veteran - whose character was formed in war. Men like him did not wear their hats so squarely on their heads as pilots are expected to do today. But they set the tone in the 1950s.

It Happened One Night

One evening in the Autumn of 1956, when I was Duty Engineer and had been led to expect a quiet night, I learned by chance that six Beverley aircraft were arriving at Wittering. They were to be loaded with electronic equipment and planned to leave for Cyprus the next morning. The electronics centre knew all about it and had prepared the loads, and air traffic had seen the flight plans, but no one seemed to have thought to tell the engineers. The operation was in preparation for the attack on Suez, and I daresay the staffs wanted this kept to as few people as possible.

I protested. "No problem," I was told. "They are arriving fuelled for departure - they don't need anything except to load the freight and they are carrying their own people to do that. Just park them near the electronics centre and see them away in the morning." The Beverley was a big freight carrier, newly introduced as the largest aircraft then in RAF service. It was not regarded with universal enthusiasm. A critic once said that it could certainly carry 22 tons to Manchester but no more than a verbal message to Malta. With some misgivings, I got the duty crew out to the hard standing with some chocks and lights. As the aircraft arrived I checked with each of the captains. All were happy except for one. "Can you do me a generator trim?" Four-engined aircraft such as the Beverley usually have an electrical generator on each engine so that much of the electrical power supply is maintained if any engine should fail. In order that they share the load equally, it is important that all four should put out the same voltage. From time to time this has to be re-adjusted, or 'trimmed', and for that the engines have to be ground-run. I thought about this for a millisecond or two and said, "No!" I offered to lend him an electrician if he would get the aircrew to do the ground running, would tell my chap exactly what he wanted done, and sign it off himself. He settled for that.

It all took quite a long time and a lot of ground running. Meanwhile I got hold of someone from the tanker pool and asked him to turn out and be ready to top up the Beverley. After a while he called back to say that the one little tanker that we used for AVGAS, the fuel needed for piston-engined aircraft, was not full and we would probably need more for the Beverley. He had been down to the fuel farm but it was locked and no one was there. The fuel farm was manned by civilian staff who lived locally, off the station. I found some numbers and started telephoning them. It was one of those occasions when nothing would connect me with the man I wanted. Here there was no reply, there a wrong number, elsewhere Jim was playing darts at the Crown she thought but the Crown said not, perhaps it was the Jolly Butcher, and so on and on. At one point, I went to the fuel farm with some thought of drawing fuel myself. One look at the complexity of the installation put that out of mind. Eventually, long after the pubs had closed, I found help and the little tanker was filled up.

With the ground running completed, the aircrew and I left two of the duty crew to do the re-fuelling. It would be a slow job; the delivery

was through a single small hose - no faster than filling a car from a garage pump. I was back early in the morning, to find that they had only just finished. They had needed to go back to the fuel farm for more. I was beginning to think that things were coming to order but when the aircrew came to do their checks they were dismayed to find that all the Beverley's fuel tanks had been filled completely and that the loaded aircraft was now well over weight. It took a while to agree that responsibility for this misunderstanding should be shared between us all, without recrimination. Then, when our red-eyed duty crew began off-loading the unwanted quantity, it became clear that the little refueller sucked even more slowly than it delivered. So it was that the Beverley's take-off was delayed, but I can say with confidence that we had not wasted any of the time in exchanging pleasantries with the crew.

Cometh the Man

In common with RAF Stations everywhere, Wittering had an annual inspection by its Air Officer Commanding. In preparation all had to be scrubbed and brushed and polished and placed in straight lines, including the personnel. The AOC's inspection, as it was known, was comprehensive and lasted all day. The first that I recall at Wittering had most of the airmen paraded on a hard standing in front of No 1 Hangar on a warm June morning in good time to receive the AOC. He was to arrive by air – after all his Head Quarters were almost forty miles away – but he was late, over an hour late. Now most AOCs make a point of arriving punctually to the minute; a few devious ones come unexpectedly early, but only an unthinking one comes late. As the sun rose high it beat full on the steel doors of the hangar and our airmen began to wilt in the heat. In service dress and with rifles, they were very uncomfortable and not a few fainted. Eventually the Devon aircraft carrying the great man touched down on the runway. The arrival was in view of the airmen and raised a muttered and ironic cheer. The AOC emerged in overalls and promptly left for the Mess to change. He was back, refreshed from his journey and fully adorned, within forty-five minutes to inspect the parade.

He did a thorough job, taking time to inspect front and rear of every rank. He conformed to convention by stopping to speak with every fourth or fifth man. Reportedly he greeted one airman with, "And how long have you been serving here?" Eyes front and totally expressionless the airman replied, "Since a quarter to nine, Sir". I am not sure

whether that is one of those old service stories retold for the occasion, but it was so apt that it went round the station to general satisfaction. It brings to mind another tale of the same kind in which the inspecting officer addressed an airman with, "Now here's a man I remember. Where have we served together then?", "I am your batman, Sir".

More memories and anecdotes from Charlie Goulthorpe in the next Issue; Ed.

A Plea from our Historian

"During 1948, the squadron was engaged on a number of "Flashlight" exercises, one in particular towards the end of the year, was against Bristol. Can any members please shine any light (no pun intended!!) on what a "Flashlight" exercise was, how it was executed, and what the means was to measure a successful sortie or otherwise? Also, with specific reference to groundcrews, was there any special preparation of the aircraft needed before such an exercise?"

Greg Harrison (0292 031 6779) or greg@greg-harrison.co.uk

For YouTube Fans

Some of you may have seen this before, but just in case you haven't:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1nw6Co14aI

An excellent video put together by Nick "Jav" Javens in 2006 featuring 100 Squadron Hawks in a variety of locations and exercises; Jav also contributed video footage to the 90th Anniversary DVD. Although I may get to play with more horsepower every day than most people on terra firma, watching this I'm rather envious of those who take to the skies!!

I've got it on DVD - so if anyone wants a copy, they can get in touch with me. I can run the DVD off at no cost but would ask that postage costs are covered, as they are a bit more expensive than they used to be, and perhaps a small donation to the Association!! As well as the video, the DVD also includes a photo montage, set to music, of 100 Squadron at Leeming in 2005.

Greg Harrison

100 Squadron Association - New Website

The 100 Squadron Association Website has become an integral part of making ourselves known to the world. It is not only a tool to tell the world about our Association, but it is also allows our members, wherever they may be around the world to keep abreast of the upcoming events with which the Association is involved.

Since our very first website, the field of Information Technology has changed dramatically, allowing us to turn our new website into an aesthetically pleasing item for the world over to see. Containing our history and information about our recent events, it allows the public to see how active we are as an Association, and inevitably will help to recruit new members for the future.

Therefore, I am pleased to announce that after much hard work, the brand new Association website is now live and ready to be seen by you and the world.

The new website uses a system which is much easier to update, making it easier for all members of the committee to make changes as and when is required, without needing a PhD in Physics to know how. There is also a brand new 'Members Area' containing the latest copies of 'The Hornet', news articles and details about upcoming Reunions. This ensures that all information which should only be made available to the members is kept private.

As you will see, the new website is a pretty one, but we do lack a few photographs from previous events or even from members' time on the Squadron. I am always on the hunt for photographs for the website and would like to ask you all to contact me should you wish for some of your own photos to be placed on the website.

If you have not already done so, you must re-register on the new website to access the member's area. If you have not done this yet and wish to do so, then please do contact me on the following email address: damien@lingosolutions.co.uk

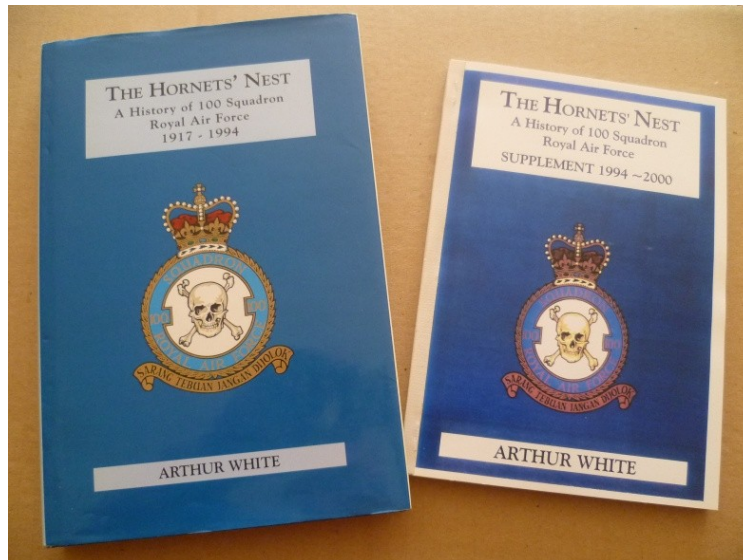
As ever, your feedback is very much welcome and I can always be contacted via email. If you have any questions about the new website, please feel free to send them over.

Damien English

Webmaster

How should we commemorate **“100 Squadron at 100”**

The committee has been looking at how we might commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the formation of 100 Squadron in 2017.



Greg Harrison has proposed that he could produce a new version of “The Hornet's Nest”; we have less than a handful of the original print run left. Clearly, while based on Arthur White’s original work, it would also need to include items from the Supplement that he assembled from inputs received after the book was published; these were mainly prompted by people realising they should have contributed something earlier! Further material arose from the work on the DVD produced to commemorate the 90th Anniversary.

Greg’s in-depth research of the National Archives, and many other sources, has uncovered much more official material which should be included. However, he is anxious that relevant personal stories, reminiscences, documents, texts and photographs may be lost to us as time passes.

**This is a unique opportunity for you to tell the story of
“My time on 100 Squadron.”**

So please contact Greg at:

Greg Harrison, 24 Dinas Street, Grangetown, Cardiff, CF11 6QY

E-mail: greg@greg-harrison.co.uk

Phone: 029 2031 6779 or mobile: 07872 069462

ASSOCIATION MEMORABILIA

Squadron Association Ties, blue and maroon	£12.50
Blazer Badges (specify King's or Queen's crown)	£12.50
"The Hornets Nest" History of 100 Squadron	£12.50
Supplement to above	£4.50
"Aircraft of 100 Squadron" Montage	£5.50
DVD "100 at 90"	£5.00

Postage and Packaging is included in all of the above. Please make cheques payable to "100 Squadron Association".

100 SQUADRON MEMORABILIA

Cloth 100 Squadron crest badge	£5.00
Cloth skull and bones badge	£3.00
100 Squadron crest zap	£1.00
Skull and bones zap	£1.00
100 Squadron print (blank)	£5.00
95th Anniversary Squadron print (signed)	£10.00
100 Squadron shield (wooden)	£33.00
Framed embroidered crest	£33.00
Mini hip flask	£5.00
Skull and bones baseball cap	£7.00
100 Squadron T-shirt Skull or Hawk (state size)	£10.00
100 Squadron polo shirt (state size)	£14.00
(Sizes of T-shirts and Polo shirts are S, M, L, XL and XXL)	
100 Squadron cummerbund (blue-yellow check - other side Skull and Bones white on black) (state waist size)	£33.00
100 Squadron bow tie (blue-yellow check) S, M, L	£15.00
100 Squadron engraved tankard	Price on application

Please make cheques payable to "ISS Defence" and mark the back "100 Sqn 203135".

To order any of the above, please contact the Treasurer.



100 Squadron Association

Reunion Timetable and Booking Form

Please PRINT all details below

Name: _____ Rank/Title: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone: _____ E-mail: _____
 Name(s) of accompanying guests: _____
 Vehicle details:
 Own Make: _____ Colour: _____ Reg Number: _____
 Guest Make: _____ Colour: _____ Reg Number: _____

Some of these details will be provided to the Guardroom, but remember to bring photo-ID.

FRIDAY 13th June 2014

11:00-	"Meet and greet" at Officers' Mess RAF Leeming.	Number
13:30	Split into two groups and depart from Officers' Mess for:	
16:30	Depart for their overnight accommodation.	
19:00	Return to Officers' Mess for 'Happy Hour' and reunion Dinner.	
20:00	Reunion Dinner (including all wines). £30:00 pp	

SATURDAY 14th June 2014

09:00	Arrive at Officers' Mess.	
09:30	AGM for Association Members.	
11:00	Church Service at St Bede's Church.	

PLEASE RESERVE:

	Place(s) for Dinner at £30:00 pp	£
	Single*/Twin*/Double* Room in the Officers' Mess	

Please indicate if any of your party has special dietary requirements for the dinner.

Please complete and send with your cheque made payable to **100 Squadron Association** to: **Air Cdre Norman Bonnor, Knob Hall, Mill Lane, Barrowden, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 8EH**

by no later than 1st June 2014

Acknowledgements will be provided only if you enclose a SAE.