



The Hornet

The Newsletter of
100 Squadron Association

President: Air Commodore N. Bonnor F.R.I.N. F.R.Ae.S RAF(Retired)

Chairman;

Treasurer:

Secretary:

Newsletter Editor:

Officer Commanding
100 Squadron
Royal Air Force
Leeming
Northallerton
N Yorks DL7 9NJ
01677 423041 Ext2047

JS Willis MBE
10 Orchard Close
Harston
Cambridge
CB2 5PT
01223 872743

Sdn Ldr AC Wedderburn MBE
11 Bury Way
St Ives
Huntingdon
Cambs PE17 4SL
01480 461415

JW Holford
42 Merley Lane
Wimborne
Dorset
BH21 1RY
01202 885905

hornet100uk@yahoo.co.uk

Newsletter 60 - February 2003

Dear Colleague,

Happy new year to all our readers! I hope you have all recovered from any excesses of the festive season, and are ready to enjoy 2003.

After our first year as editors of your newsletter, Judy and I wish to thank everyone who has contributed either material or suggestions, and we hope you will keep them coming; this is your N/L so let us know what you what you would like to read! We have had to learn a lot more computer skills; it's been hard work but most rewarding, not least for the new friends we have made both in England and Holland.

On the 2nd of December, your committee met at RAF Wittering to arrange this year's programme and other matters relevant to the Association. Secretary Alex Wedderburn reported that we have welcomed 6 new members in the last year, but that sadly 8 of our comrades have passed away, and 2 have resigned. Stamper Metcalf and Alex have designed Certificates of Honorary Membership which will be sent out a.s.a.p.

Website: it is hoped that Kevin Webster's health will improve soon and that he will be able to reinstate the website.

John

Pitstone Farm Museum

The President has brought to our notice that this museum, near Leighton Buzzard, houses a replica Lancaster cockpit, complete with navigation and radio equipment.

Honorary Membership

In the AGM minutes, the name of Hendrick Cazemier was omitted from the list of Dutch people being granted honorary Membership; this inclusion was ratified by the committee.

Remembrance Day 2002

Donations were approved as follows: £25 to Holton-le-Clay church towards order of service costs, £10 to Holly Smith the 12 year-old trumpeter.

Annual Reunion 2003

Provisional Programme

Friday 20th June

11.00 - 12.00 Meet and greet in the Officers' Mess

12.00 - 1300 Light lunch in the Officers' Mess

13.15 - Depart by coach or private cars to visit Ickworth House NT or Duxford.

14.15 - Arrive Ickworth House or Duxford

17.00 - Depart Ickworth House or Duxford.

18.00 - Coaches arrive RAF Wyton

19.30 for 20.00 Dinner in the Officers' Mess

Saturday 21st June

09.00 - 10.30 AGM in Officers' Mess.

Ladies meet in Ladies Room and/or visit Pathfinder Museum.

11.00 - Church service in St George's Church.

12.00 - 13.00 Light lunch in the Officers' Mess.

A booking form is available with this newsletter. We look forward to meeting up with many friends in June.

Battle of the Rhur

This spring marks the 60th anniversary of the loss of four 100 Squadron crews who are honoured in villages in Holland. Individual communities in Holland are to hold remembrance services on 4th May, the eve of their Liberation Day. Members of 100 Squadron association are invited to attend ceremonies at Eelde, Twello, Vlodrop and Grashoek. Please contact Arthur White if you would like to go. Arthur is negotiating with the Squadron to see if it is possible to arrange a fly-past.

A Challenge

Congratulations to Stamper Metcalfe who managed to raise a grand total of £5,443.36p for the 2002 Poppy appeal. He was responsible for 52 collecting boxes. The challenge, of course, is to see if anyone can beat that! That is one amazing amount of money.

The Itinerant Airman

Arthur Gamble now has copies of his book available for sale. The price is £8.99 plus p&p and the book can be obtained by phoning Arthur on 01776 840595 or writing to him at 3, Coastguard Cottages, Drummore, Stranraer, Wigtownshire, DG9 9QX.

Sir Frank Whittle

As promised in the last issue, here is a slightly shortened version of the article about Sir Frank Whittle which member Tony Davey wrote for Roundel, the Journal of the RAFA Swiss Branch.

Sir Frank Whittle

Everyone has heard of Sir Frank Whittle as the inventor of the jet engine, but less is known about his earlier life before he joined the RAF. Tony's interest was aroused by the famous old boy of Leamington College where he taught, and he even acquired a Whittle engine for the college.

Frank was born in Coventry in 1907 and began his education at Earlsdon Council school, "a street urchin six days of the week and a carefully washed and dressed little boy on Sunday". He was given a toy tin Bleriot monoplane at the age of four. When he was about nine he witnessed the forced landing by an aeroplane on Hearsall Common near the Standard Works which was manufacturing warplanes. When it took off again it nearly decapitated him! Frank moved to Leamington Spa in 1916, where his father used his savings to buy a one-man engineering business.

Frank won a scholarship to the Leamington College for Boys where he was a pupil from 1918 to 1923. It is said that he learnt much of his engineering by studying in the public library in his spare time and helping his father in the workshop. The College boys were identified by a yellow gore in their caps which the locals called Tuppenny Custards and these promoted fights between the two factions. As Frank was rather small, he frequently had to run the gauntlet of groups of jeering young toughs. He was well below average height and was nicknamed "Grub". Because of this he was rather shy. He was not an outstanding student; he wasn't good at games, and he didn't become a prefect. He is remembered as a quiet lad, not mixing in the kick-about with a ball at breaktimes. In 1944, when he became the Youngest Freeman of Leamington Spa, he remembered his schooldays "as being punctuated with too-frequent and painful trips to the Head's office".

In his first term he did so badly that he was demoted from IIIA to IIIB. He felt .. "the disgrace provoked me out of a natural laziness into becoming top of the form in the succeeding term - the only time I was to be top of the form in my whole school career". He was greatly encouraged by the science master, Major Ivor Hart and on one occasion the boys were invited to give a ten minute talk. Whittle came forward and held the boys fascinated for an hour. His knowledge of aircraft at that time was profound. Later in life he reflected that "Had the head-master realised what a useful amount of knowledge I was acquiring out of school, they might have been more lenient about the results of my official studies." In the School Certificate he obtained six credits but no

distinctions. and he failed to matriculate. However, during his last two years, his schoolmasters allowed him to work alone in the laboratory instead of being on the playing field. "I dissolved....Picric Acid in a strong solution of caustic soda. I then allowed the solution to cool and filtered off the crystals of sodium picrate and then put the beaker with the solution back on the sand tray, with the aim of obtaining a second crystallisation. Within a few seconds....it exploded. I was profoundly astonished that anything in water could blow up and had to spend the next two hours wiping bottles, etc..."

When he was fourteen, he decided to join the RAF as a boy apprentice. His parents agreed that he could go after his fifteenth birthday in 1922. Thus he had a short time in the sixth form before passing the written exam for entry as an aircraft apprentice at RAF Halton. He failed the medical examination due to poor physique and discovered that he was undersized at five feet tall. However, he took advice from a Sergeant PT Instructor and followed a diet: he was back at Cranwell in September 1923, and this time passed his medical. Thus began the career of one of the RAF's most illustrious members.

A few years ago, I returned to Sir Frank's old school, seeking a file that was opened in 1945 when he presented the prizes on Speech Day. I also looked for the painting of the Gloster/Whittle E28/39 on its first flight, by local artist Ken Aitken. Again I couldn't see it. The formal plaque on the wall recording the fact that Frank Whittle had been a pupil was there, as was the Whittle engine on a ten year loan from the Rolls-Royce Heritage Trust. The painting was there but above the reception area window. Sir Frank would have been pleased that it was necessary to look up to the sky to find the first aircraft powered by one of his engines!

Sir Frank died in America on August 8th 1996, aged 89. On September 10th 1998, his ashes were flown from Bournemouth Airport to Cranwell in a Meteor which was escorted by a Vampire flown by Frank's son Ian, an airline captain. The RAF agreed to Captain Whittle's request that his father's remains be interred at St Michael's Church, Cranwell.

Ref: "Genesis of the Jet" John Golley. "Warwickshire's Genius of the Jet" Warwicks. CC.

Here's one from Bill Chisholm in Canada

A good looking couple met on a Caribbean holiday. After a week of good times together they were lounging by the pool one day when the young man began diving from the highest board into the water. The girl asked him if he had ever been an Olympic diver. "Yes" he said. Then the beautiful girl jumped into the water and began swimming back and forth many times at great speed. He was most impressed and asked if she was an Olympic swimmer. "No" she replied, "I'm actually a prostitute in Amsterdam, and I work both sides of the canal!"

A useless fact for you

If a statue in the park of a person on a horse has both front legs in the air, the person died in battle; if the horse has one leg in the air, then the person died as a result of wounds received in battle; if the horse has all four legs on the ground, the person died of natural causes.

And now for something useful **Focus on Veterans**

This is the title of an MOD pamphlet which may be of interest to some of you. It gives information about changes to War widowers' pensions, priority treatment for War Pensioners, and the War Pensioners' Welfare Service among other things. Formerly known as the War Pensions' Agency, it is now the Veterans' Agency. You can obtain a copy by calling their free helpline 0800 169 22 77. It also gives details of other useful Ex-Service organisations, including the Royal British Legion's Remembrance Travel.

Greta's Story - The Occupation Years

Much has been written about this, mostly witnessed or gone through by innocent persons, but behind the screens there were the other thousands of countrymen and women who had their own little battle to fight, sometimes with danger, the others with less risk, but in many cases worthwhile to mention. One of these cases happened to me, nothing heroic but always remembered as something human in that dark and sad time in which not much humanity was left.

I remember that my mother was rather weak and needed extra nourishment. So I went to the farmer on my bicycle twice a week to get 2 litres of milk every time. The distance was not too far, only 12 kms. To get there, I had to pass 3 big farms, the first of which was confiscated by the Germans. The farmer and his family had to live in the smallest part of the house. It was a unit of the notorious SS, and I had to pass a guard posted outside. Many of them were whistling as I cycled along (after all I was a teenager and men do these things) but with an iron face I went on, like my mother had taught me.

At that time, it was the second half of August 1944, and the days went by in the same routine. There was one soldier however who did not whistle but always politely greeted me. It did not seem to bother him that he never got a reply. Somehow he was different, did not have those fantastic manners and appeared to be friendly. So after days of silence I finally said 'hello' to him. That was all. Until one day when he asked me a question. I stepped down and started to talk for a short while. But the short whiles became longer and more interesting. He told me where he lived and about his parents and family etc. He was very outgoing for a German and eventually I started to like him. No love, for that was against my principles.

And then one day he asked me whether I knew someone who could help him to a hiding address. I was stunned and asked him 'why?' His answer was that he was forced to join the SS and after all he had seen during those years he felt ashamed and wanted to get out.

Feeling a bit confused I went home. My parents knew about Paul (that was his name) and I told my father about his request. It did not take

him long to answer NO. When I asked why he said, "Being a policeman I cannot take the risk and what's more, I would put your mother, brother yourself and me in danger, for a traitor never sleeps. Much as I feel for that boy, I cannot and will not jeopardise our lives. Who tells me that it is not a trap. Tell him I am very sorry and wish him the best."

With that message I saw Paul 3 days later and told him. Of course I didn't tell him the reason, but he was so very disappointed and there were tears in his eyes. I couldn't keep mine dry either.

In the meantime, it had become half way through September and there was something in the air. You could sense it and when I passed the farm on my way to get milk, the Germans were packing and very restless, shouting at each other, etc. But there was no Paul on guard, it was another one with a face that frightened me. He looked in my bags and confiscated the milk, thereby telling me that I was not allowed to do this. We had food coupons and with them I should go to the proper store for it. On my question where Paul was, he answered that they had sent him away for he was not reliable and not tough enough for the SS. I was shocked, but he told me to be glad for they could not win a war with men like him.

I never went fetching milk any more. My parents made me understand that and the next day the Battle of Arnhem started so everything was upside down, and so were we, although the silent joy didn't last long for it would take 7 more months of occupation.

It was right after the liberation when my father told us that he had been a member of the underground and in that case NEVER could have helped Paul. None of us knew about my father's activities.

Still, there are moments that I wonder what has happened to Paul. Did they kill him, is he still alive? I would like to know, for I like to believe that he was one of the few good ones.

We are grateful to Greta Overmeen for that article and wish her a speedy recovery.

RAAF Beaufort Squadron Association

As those of you who have read Arthur White's excellent squadron history "The Hornets' Nest" will already know the first of the new Beauforts, sent to replace our ageing Wildebeests arrived at Seletar in early December 1940 just days before the invasion of Malaya by the Japanese and the first bombing raid on Singapore.

Unfortunately, serviceability proved to be a major problem so all of "Q" flight's crews and aircraft were sent back to Australia (where the planes were built) for modification. Tragically the rest of the squadron lost all their Wildebeests, mainly in action, and the personnel either escaped or were killed or captured. "Q" flight eventually became 100 Squadron RAAF and distinguished themselves throughout the rest of the war.

More on Page 15.

A Plea from Down Under

We received a copy of RAAF Beaufort Squadron's newsletter too late to include the following in our last newsletter.

Karl Lawson of Main Q-store 9 CSSB Warradale Army Barracks, Warradale, SA 5046 is asking for information about his late grandfather Brian Ivan Lawson ('Twinkles') formerly of 100 Squadron RAAF. He particularly wants to hear from any of his crew.

John White at the Australian War Memorial office wants to know whether the following members were Beaufort Flying or Ground Instructors while at 1 OCU East Sale in WWII:

F/O Gordon Leslie Bland, DFC 407519

F/O Leonard Graham Fuller DFM 402052 (died 18/3/44)

Catalinas

A group of Australian volunteers recently purchased an airworthy Catalina in Portugal.

The Catalina Association, in conjunction with the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society and the Seaplane Pilot' Association will use the 'Cat' as a flying museum to visit Australian cities and country regions to educate and inform the public, particularly youngsters and new settlers of the important contribution the aircraft made to the survival of Australia during WWII.

Mr R Drew.

John Willis recently received a letter from Mr Drew who was with 243 Squadron in Singapore in 1941. In it he writes of his friendship with Flt. Sgt. Borrás of 100 Squadron, who was shot down when his Vilderbeest torpedo bomber received a direct hit from a Japanese anti-aircraft ship as the Japanese invading force was landing on the East coast of Malaya. Following Pearl Harbour, Mr Drew writes that they lost most of their aircraft; he himself was injured and taken to a Dutch Military hospital in Java.

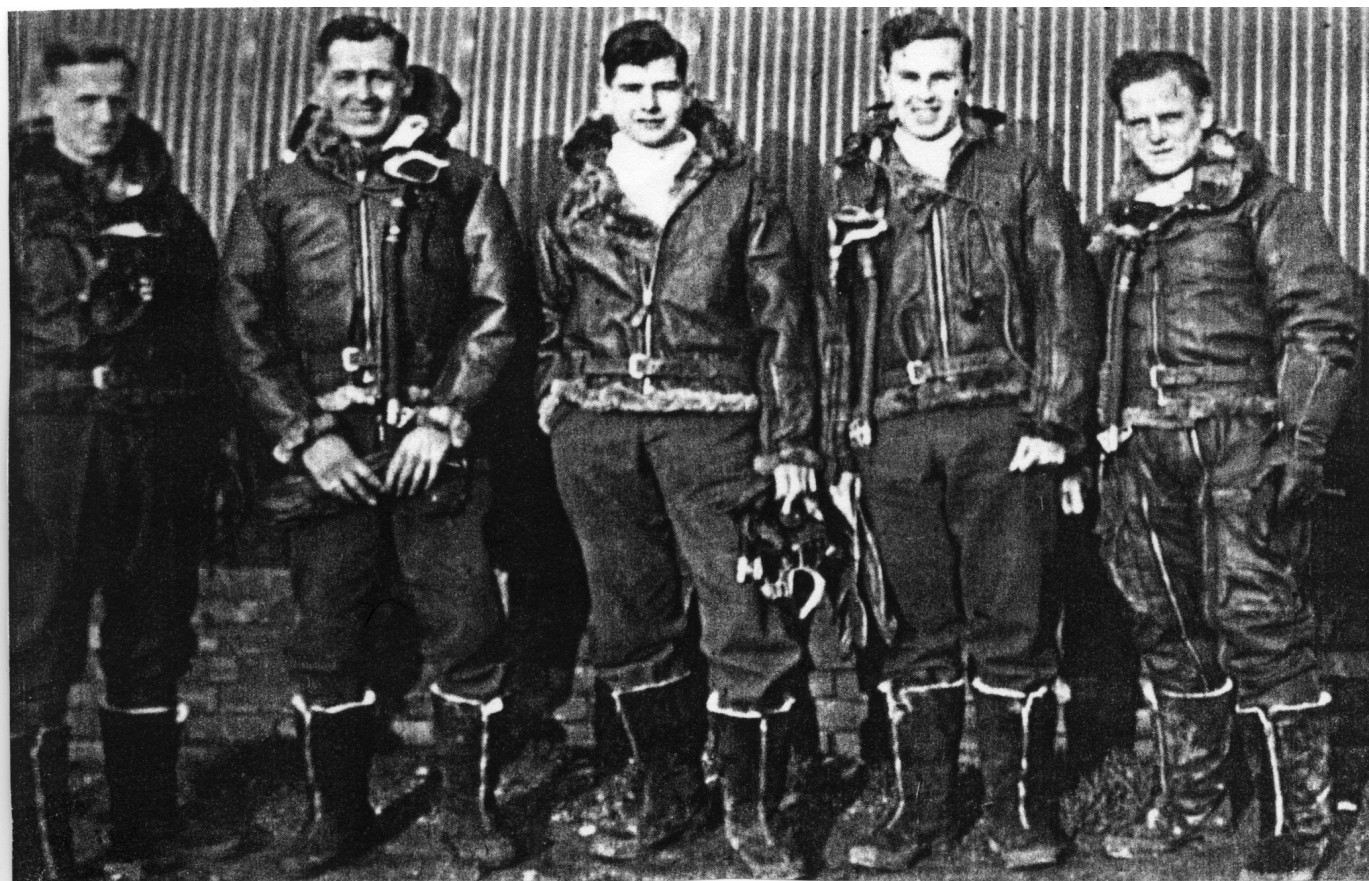
Just before the Dutch East Indies surrendered he was taken on board the P & O liner Orcades and eventually got to Ceylon then on to India and a long period in a Calcutta hospital. He then joined 615 Fighter Squadron on the Bengal-Burma border and served with them till June 1945.

He is now 87 but still recalls his time in Singapore. In 1970, he moved to the Isle of Sheppey and there he met a lady who turned out to be Mrs Borrás, widow of his friend. She now lives in New Zealand.

W/O Borrás' name is on a memorial at Kranji.
Does anyone recall Flt Sgt Borrás?

ED973 ...the story continues

Orma Stevenson was the widow of Edward, the Canadian member of the crew of ED973. They were married only two weeks before Edward met his death over Grashoek. Orma died last October, unaware of the Grashoek ceremony, and at her funeral Alex Stevenson who had attended the memorial service in Holland last May met Orma's nephew David Hubert for the first time. Subsequently, David got in touch with Arthur White and has now sent us these photographs and the poem on page 13. The original photos are now in the Grashoek School.



Left to right: Geoff Mason (W/Op), Bill Cram (Bomb Aimer), Bob Weddell (Pilot), Alf Veitch (Navigator) and Ed Stevenson (Air Gunner)

Change of Address

Mr J P Barker
Gilton Ash
Tile Barn
Woolton Hill
Newbury Berks RG20 9UX
Tel: 01635 253226
e-mail jpbarker@compuserve.com

AVM Herrington
2 Wayewood Lodge
Branksome Park Rd
Camberley
Surrey GU15 2AE
Tel: 01276 22308

W H Adams
Charm Green House
Wokingham
Berks RG40 3ER
Tel: 01189 770232

New Member

Mr A D Walker
157 Northumberland Rd
North Harrow
Middlesex HA2 7RB
Tel: 0208 8686800
He was a Flt. Lt. Navigator on Lancs at Waltham in 1943.

Long Memories?

Can anyone help Corporal Castle? After more than 35 years, he would like to make an apology to his Orderly Officer at RAF Wittering. Having lowered the flag, Corporal Castle failed to secure the rope properly. The Station Commander noticed this and both airman and Officer were subject to disciplinary action. This has been on his conscience!

The Lancaster ED973

O they fought for Britain and they fought for Canada
They went through darkness to the light
Yes they ordered up democracy to cancel out tyranny
They fought for our freedom there that night.

Well they started out in England at Waltham near Grimsby
To turn the tide and make things right.
They were the Lancaster crew of ED973
To warm their guns and take their flight.

So they took off at midnight on June 14 '43
Through the clouds and through the ice,
They were looking for their target at Oberhausen, Germany
To drop their bombs with all their might.

O they fought for Britain and they fought for Canada
They went through darkness to the light
Yes they ordered up democracy to cancel out tyranny
They fought for our freedom there that night.

Intercepted over Holland on their way to Germany,
Night fighters in their sight,
As the guns lit up the sky, on their way to Germany
They never made it home that night.

Now a monument stands to honour their bravery
It speaks of courage and their plight
There are war graves in Holland so we can remember
Seven brave souls who died that night.

O They fought for Britain and they fought for Canada,
They went through darkness to the light,
Yes they ordered up democracy to cancel out tyranny
They fought for our freedom there that night.
They died for our freedom there that night.

By David Hubert (Nephew of Rear Gunner Sgt. Edward Stevenson RCAF.
ED 973, who is seen on Page 14 with wife Orma on their wedding day.)



Some achievements of our Australian offshoot 100 Squadron RAAF during the war:

- Reconnaissance and patrol: seaward reconnaissance hours for 1943 totalled 3163; about half of that was flown during July and August.
- Reconnaissance sorties totalled 152 for July and 170 for August, in each of these months the total operational flying time exceeded 1160 hours, reaching 1272 in August.
- The aggregate hours flown on operations in July and August represented 34.5% of the total operational hours for the whole year.
- On convoy patrols, hours flown in 1943 totalled 2711 of which 78% were flown between March and August.
- Hours flown on torpedo and bombing in '43 exceeded 400.

World Record

What has been stated to be a world record for any one Squadron flying hours over any period of 30 days was established between August 20th and September 19th. In this period, hours totalled were 1,615 in 432 sorties. At that time, the Squadron was short of crews, so the average flying time per crew was approximately 80 hours. For the month of August flying hours totalled 1,423 for 411 sorties, and this also is believed to be a record.

To quote again from Arthur's book: "It is with a feeling of deep satisfaction to record that 100 Squadron's offspring flew the last operation of the war in the Pacific. As Stan Danman writes, 'whilst in New Guinea with 100 Squadron, the war finished on 15th August 1945. On this day, 100 Squadron took off at 09.00hrs - the actual time that hostilities ceased. We continued and bombed our target. Other Squadron Beauforts however were airborne after us but were recalled and so did not bomb. This makes the strike by 100 Squadron RAAF the last of World War 2.'"

Memorabilia

Squadron ties, blue or maroon: £12.50 inc p&p
Blazer Badges. (Specify King's or Queen's crown): £12.50 inc p&p
"The Hornet's Nest" – History of 100 Squadron: £12.00 inc p&p
Supplement to "The Hornet's Nest": £4.50 inc p&p

All the above are available from the Treasurer.
Cheques payable to 100 Squadron Association please.

Black Baseball caps: £7.00 inc p&p
From Flt Lt Percival or Flt Lt R Simpson, 100 Squadron, Leeming.
Cheques payable to 100 Squadron Aircrew Fund please.

"Bread and Butter Bomber Boys": £8.00 inc p&p from Arthur White.
Cheques payable to Arthur White please.

Lost chapter from Genesis

Adam was in the garden of Eden was feeling very lonely, so God asked "What's wrong?" Adam said he had no one to talk to so God decided to make him a companion called Woman. He said "This person will gather food for you, and when you discover clothes she will wash them for you. She will always agree with every decision you make, she will bear your children and never ask you to get up in the middle of the night to take care of them. She will never nag you and will always be the first to admit she was wrong when you have had a disagreement. She will never have a headache and will freely give you love and passion whenever you need it."

Adam asked "What will a woman like this cost?" God replied "An arm and a leg."

Then Adam asked "What can I get for a rib?" and the rest is history.....