



The Hornet

The Newsletter of 100 Squadron Association

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Newsletter 66 - August 2004

Dear Colleagues,

It was nice to meet so many old friends at the reunion at Leeming in June, and thanks for the many kind words about The Hornet. What a reunion it was too! The airshow on Friday afternoon was equal to if not better than a lot of the public ones I have been to; well done Flt Lt Chris Bullteel who oversaw the whole event! Sadly for us, Chris is leaving us for greater challenges representing the RAF over the pond; we wish him the best of fortune in the future in the USA.

We all extend a warm welcome to the new Squadron boss Wing Co Wayne White MA DEM RAF (a brief resume on page 9) and thank him for his enthusiasm towards the association. Our previous leader Wing Co Mike Simpson has been posted to "somewhere hot and sandy". We wish him well and thank him for all his help and support.

Arthur White, my mentor and predecessor in this job has decided that it is time give up his place on the committee, although not his interest in the Association. My personal thanks for all your help and friendship Arthur!

Fortunately for us, the defence cuts seem to have missed us this time I'm happy to say.

John

Correspondence

Tony Davey has e-mailed us a translation from the Lyon branch of the Royal British Legion's newsletter. The article concerns the annual commemorative visit to the graves of crew members of Lancaster HW-Z in France, of which Norman Thom ex-100 Squadron was and is the only survivor. 'It is on a sunny but windy morning that the Vosges countryside saw, on the 60th anniversary of the crash, the gathering with our friend Norman Thom surrounded by his children and great grand children. A family ceremony in simplicity but full of emotion for this gathering which revived our memories in front of the graves at the site of the crash. I was able on that day to be near that man I admire for his kindness, simplicity and charisma. I am sure that he was full of emotion but what grandeur at such a time. I am certain that Thom, Evans, Maclean, Jakeman, Keeping, Belle, Baschi and the HW 'Zebra' flew over us that day. Let the Vosges keep them in peace and let God protect them.'

As promised, Ted Locke's letter from WWII appears on Page 4.

An e-mail from Pip Dorssers-Kay on page 10 brings us up to date on events in Grashoek (although she began it last May!) Also we have received a book of comments translated from the visitors' book at the Grashoek Memorial. There are some very moving sentiments.

Lawrence Stow writes about the events of 'Black Thursday' and offers an extract from his diary to aid Richard Knott in his research. We reproduce part of it on page 14.

Arthur White wishes to thank everyone who contacted him with good wishes during his recent illness. We are happy to report that he is making good progress, and wish him a complete and speedy recovery. However, he has decided to stand down from the Committee. He has served on the Committee for 19 years, and is happy to go on giving assistance. Alex and Norman Bonnor have both written to thank him, and he will be replaced on the Committee by Dr Keith Ellis.

Apologies, Corrections and Follow-up to Newsletter 65

Page 2: relating to ED 709 - the skipper was Wg Cdr Swain who was the CO of 100 Squadron at the time.

Page 14: Mr A F Smith has joined the Association as a full member.

Page 14: the cause of so many crashes on the night of 16th/17th December 1943 'Black Thursday' was FOG. 100 Squadron lost four Lancasters, including JB 560 skippered by Wg Cdr David Holford. If Richard Knott would like to contact Greg Harrison, he has accident reports for 29 bombers which crashed that night. He is trying to find the crash site of PB 572, 1st/2nd February 1945. Greg also has a photo of the headstone of Rear-Gunner Sgt Hudson, brother of new member Josephine Daly, buried in Jonkerbus Cemetery in Holland.

Page 17: 138 Squadron was not at Wittering in 1944 but at RAF Tempsford in Bedfordshire. The Squadron disbanded in 1950: it reformed at Wittering under Wing Commander Oakley.

Thanks to Greg and to Tony Davey for the above.

An Ageist Joke

The vicar called the other day and said "At your age you should be thinking of the hereafter." I told him "Oh I do! No matter whether I am in the lounge, upstairs or in the kitchen or the shop, I ask myself 'Now what am I here after?'"

and another...

Old folk are worth a fortune - with silver in their hair, gold in their teeth, stones in their kidneys and gas in their stomachs!

I have become a frivolous old girl, seeing five gentlemen every day. As soon as I wake, Will Power gets me out of bed. Then I go to visit Lou. Next, Mr Quaker gives me my oats. They leave and Arthur Ritus shows up. He takes me from joint to joint. After such a busy day, I'm ready for bed with Johnny Walker...and I'm flirting with Al Zymer!

This was the letter written by Ted Locke to his parents.
He had celebrated his 19th birthday
on 5th December 1944

10th January 1945

Somewhere in the British Isles

Dear Mom and Dad,

As you know there is very little for us to write about, due to this, that and the other thing being secret. So I've decided to let you know a little about my crew up till the time of our last trip. As you know we met at OTU. Everybody was running around filling in forms but as the morning wore on little groups started forming. These were the beginnings of crews.

I had been rather busy and hadn't spoken to anyone for very long. It was just then that we were given a ten minute break. I started for the door on the double and had just about made it when a big hand reached out and I was spun around. I stood facing a tall, dark Flying Officer. He inquired if I was in a crew and when I said no he said how about joining us. That was OK with me. The crew consisted of Fg Off Butler (Tony) - who you have already met; Fg Off Pryde (Ray) - navigator, a slim chap, glasses and very quiet; Flt Sgt Cox (Len) - bombardier, another quiet type at first, blue eyes, blonde hair, slimly built. Then there was Jack - Flt Sgt Jack Roadhouse, later to be our rear gunner, auburn hair, quick smile, short and stocky with a touch of the devil in his eyes. Flt Sgt Joe Rivers - mid upper gunner, black hair, pale blue eyes a little too quick tempered; Joe was the handsome boy of the crew. One thing they all had in common was the ability to be friendly. It was only about half an hour and we were all old pals. Every one of us had the feeling that we were going to be OK.

Well time flew past, we piled up the hours, went out and got tight together, and most of all we gained confidence in each other. When OTU was over we went on leave together, and then came Conversion Unit. This was it, our first go on the four motor jobs. It also meant picking up an Engineer. Our luck with picking a crew still held. We met Bill Daymont about four days after we were at Conv. unit. He is a big hefty Geordy with a big smile which lights up his whole face and turns the girls' minds to an age old custom. Well there you have us, the whole crew.

It didn't take long until we found ourselves in a squadron and feeling a bit cocky. Then came our first trip. It was a baby – no fighters, not too much flak. We just slipped in and out. The next one wasn't quite the same, but it wasn't too bad. We piled up a couple more and then one night BINGO it happened. We were crawling out of a target with nose down and about 212 indicated. Jack reported "Predicted flak to starboard." "OK keep your eye on it." "Flak dead ahead" came from Len. Tony started weaving. I stood up in the astrodome. I saw a kite go down off to port. Just then I heard a dull thud and the kite shook from stem to stern. We dived to port. The time dragged by and then the next one came. It was dead on. I saw it burst just below the starboard inner. Again we dived to port. I guess we all figured they would get us. Just then WHAM. I felt her burst under my feet and then we hit the clouds. It took me a while to realise that we were OK. I heard Bill say "Starboard outer on fire." They feathered her, and Tony called each of us in turn. Everybody was OK so he sent me to check up on the damage done. I went back down the fuselage and except for a few holes, everything was OK. When we got back we found 30 holes in the starboard side, with a few scattered pieces of flak inside the kite.

After that trip we weren't so cocky, but we did come home again on three motors. Everything went fairly well up to our ninth trip, and it was what you might call a shaky do. Joe was sick that day, and we had a spare gunner - a Londoner, swell fellow, about twenty, very dark and with twelve trips to his credit. It was the 24th day of December. Yes, Christmas Eve. We were all grumbling and everyone was cranky, but we had to press on regardless. We went in with the first wave and from the astrodome I could see the flak bursting in little black puffs over the target. We sneaked in and out as nice as pie and headed for home.

Coming up the Channel, I received a message and informed the boys that we were to land at another drome. Ray plotted a course and in a while I heard Tony calling the drome on RT. They gave us permission to land, but that was easier said than done. In the first place, the runway was pretty short, only eleven hundred yards and we should have had at least fourteen hundred. As if that wasn't enough there was one of those typical English fogs closing in. You know the kind – one minute it's miles off and the next it's all around you. To top it all off, there was a city with its main street running at an angle of about 45 degrees to the flare path. Tony brought her around and we made our first approach, but he was just guessing, and too late we saw that we were

too far to port. Bill kicked the wheels up and we shot over the control tower and up again. The flare path was brightened by a few extra lights and we were to try again. I was standing in the astrodome, and I heard Bill and Tony talking. Bill mentioned the fact that we had only half an hour's fuel left.

Tony kept making the approach. I heard Bill shout a warning, and I heard the motors roar with increased power. The kite dipped to port and I saw the spire of some building flash past our starboard wing. What they had though was the drome was the main street of the town. Tony sent us scurrying to our crash positions and began another approach. He called for yellow vereys to be fired from the caravan on the edge of the runway so he could identify it from the city. We came in again, and again had to swoop up again. This time Bill said "Once more, Tony then we will have to climb and jump." Tony replied by calling the ground "Making one more attempt, then will climb and abandon aircraft. Over." The answer was "You can make it. I'll try and help you as much as possible - Out."

Sitting still was too much for me. I scrambled back to the asrtodome just as we broke through the fog. Below and ahead I could see the black and white caravan, and beside it but moving like the wind, a light pickup truck. Men were running in circles, and I sighed with relief as the wheels came up and we shot over the caravan, missing it by inches. Then we were climbing and as I fastened on my chute I heard Tony report "Climbing on 090 preparing to bail out." I moved up behind Len and plugged in. The ground operator was saying "Turn on to 270 and head for sea Good luck." And then Tony said OK but nobody moved. Ray and Bill couldn't get the escape hatch free. Bill finally pushed Ray aside and jumped on it. The door went and so did Bill. Ray followed quickly. Len turned to me and with a smile on his lips said "Afraid?" I managed to knock my heart out of my mouth and say "Now we'll be OK." Then he tapped Tony's knee and the skipper gave him a thumbs up and he was gone. I gave Tony a pat and as soon as I saw his thumb go up I moved off.

I sat on the edge of the hatch, felt the pull of the wind against my legs and started counting like hell. I was still counting long after my chute opened. The next thing I remember is seeing my chute drifting along beside me. Then it swung up and I stopped falling. Behind me I could hear Hart yelling so I shouted back. As I drifted down, I remembered reading about guys steering their chutes by pulling the shroud lines. I decided to try it and maybe get closer to Hart. Very timidly I reached up

and pulled but nothing happened. I decided to try again. This time I gave it all my strength and things happened. My chute seemed to collapse and then opened with a snap, and I was shot across the sky. That was too much so I contented myself and floated slowly down. Below I could see what I thought were clouds, but I later realized it was fog.

My head had hardly entered them when I hit the ground. My feet disappeared into the mud, as did my hair. Quickly undoing my chute I scrambled free, pulling my boots out after me. I had landed on a mud bar in what I thought was the ocean, but later learned that it was only one of numerous bogs. After a while I heard somebody yelling so I returned the yell and scrambled along in the mud till I came to a high ridge. Returning, I dragged my chute clear and started whistling. Hart returned my signal and we started out to find each other, calling and whistling. After about half an hour we got together but by then we were completely lost. He pulled out his compass, but the darned thing wouldn't work. We noticed a lot of sheep prints but it was impossible to work out which way they had come from.

After an hour of stumbling about we found my chute. We decided it was useless to try and find our way in the dark so we made a tent out of my chute, snuggled down in the mud and tried to sleep. About four we got up and tried to make a fire but everything was wet. The exercise we got from gathering wood warmed us a bit.

Next morning the fog was still too thick to walk about in, but by ten to ten it was nearly clear, so we set out following the ridge. Soon we sighted flocks of sheep and by ten thirty we had found a house. The old chap at the house gave us breakfast and I had my first smoke. Boy, it sure was good. After we had eaten, we made our way to a nearby village where we phoned in. They told us that everybody had been accounted for. After a while a van came and picked us up. We learned that Len was down the road a piece in a pub where he had spent the night in solid comfort. Bill and Ray had slept in the police station, Jack in a farm house and Tony had found his way to the aerodrome.

We were taken to the drome and after a medical inspection we were fed, given clean clothes and a bath. Everybody bought us drinks so it wasn't till after Christmas that I learned the other boys' stories. We will start with Bill and Ray. Bill landed OK and started walking and soon bumped into Ray who was also OK. On their way into town, Ray was

telling Bill how after his chute opened he had decided to have a smoke. Out came his cigarettes and a lighter, but the lighter wouldn't work. I can just imagine Ray floating down with a smoke hanging out of his mouth, cussing his lighter cause it wouldn't work.

As soon as Jack's chute opened he also grabbed for a smoke but he didn't have any matches. After landing he walked for about an hour and then sighted a house. As Jack tells it "I just opened the door and walked in." You should have seen the surprise on those people's faces. There were three Italian prisoners sitting drinking beer. They got so excited, but finally got him near the fire and having given him a beer they rushed for the master. The old boy came down and when Jack explained things they fed him turkey and ice cream and more beer, after which he retired to a feather bed.

That only leaves Tony to account for. As Jack was leaving, he put the automatic pilot (George) in and climbed out of his seat. Jack fell clear and Tony was ready to follow when the starboard motors quit, and the kite swung over towards the aforementioned city. Afraid of the damage it would do should it crash in the city, he climbed back in his seat. Taking George out he righted the kite and brought it back on to the proper course. Then putting it in a gentle glide, he once more climbed free. Those motors should have packed up, but they would any second. The skip was at 2000 feet as he left his seat. Tony is a big chap, about six two and the escape hatch isn't any too big. The first time he tried to get out he got stuck and it wasn't till his third try that he fell clear. Just as he did so the motors quit. The ship, like a giant bird of prey, circled him twice and then broke away to crash in open country.

Well Mom and Dad that's our crew. I think you will agree they are a pretty calm lot and Tony sure had the guts when he went back to straighten the kite after the first motors quit. Now you know why I have confidence in him and also the others.

Hope you weren't bored.

Love to all. Be seeing you. Love, Ted

PS If there are lots of mistakes don't blame me. I refuse to read this all over again.

A bit about the new Boss

Wg Cdr Wayne A White MA DEM RAF

After completing his pilot training, Wayne's first tour was in Germany with 31 Squadron in 1983 flying Jaguars and Tornados. He became one of the first to fly the GR1A variant of the Tornado and was posted to Cottesmore in 1990 as an instructor pilot.

He was promoted to Squadron Leader in 1994, and in March 1997 he became flight commander at Marham. From there he led detachments to the Middle East patrolling the "No Fly Zones" over Iraq and in October 1999 he received a Mention in Despatches. He was promoted to Wing Commander and has held responsibility for air-to-ground weapons, strike attack and training aircraft. Since 2002, he was sent to Saudi Arabia in the build up to the second Gulf war and then to Qatar as leader of the operations team. For this he was given a Queen's Commendation in April of this year and in May he took command of 100 Squadron at Leeming.

He has been married to Jinny since 1984 and they have 4 children. He is also a keen sportsman and a committed football referee. He also ran in the Madrid Marathon in 2002 (very hot, very hilly).

He also holds a General Service Medal for Air Operations Iraq, the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, the Diplomado Estado Mayor and the Iraq Campaign Medal.

New Members

Dr Keith Ellis
20 Napoleon Drive
Bicton Heath
Shrewsbury
SY3 5PH
Tel: 0174 3360810

Mr Christopher Hickman
29 Merton Avenue
Hillingdon
Middlesex
UB10 9BN
Tel: 01895 236687

Lost Touch

Are you aware of the feature on Channel 4's teletext, page 152 called Service pals. You can reach them at P.O. Box 32549, London, W4 %TX. 'Alan' is seeking Colin Woodhouse (Yorkie) ex 100 Squadron.

If you go down in the woods today!

If you go down in the woods today in our small village of Grashoek in Holland you have a pretty good chance of bumping into someone either going towards the monument or coming back. When you open the visitors book you will be surprised how many people continue to sign in and comment on the monument itself or on the importance of not forgetting the price of war.

June 2002 saw the official unveiling of a Monument to the Crew of Lancaster 'ED-973 D' at its woodland crash site. At the unveiling ceremony, it was adopted by the local Primary school 'The Horizon', who would be responsible for taking care of the Monument and for ensuring the continuity of memory.

Over the last year. the Monument committee, Wim van Ophoven, Huub Kluijtmann, Piet Kurvers and myself have been meeting with the new Head of school Mrs Gerrie van Hoof. Gerrie joined the school after the initial unveiling and was very keen to see the adoption as being more than a spring cleaning exercise. Between us we have been trying to work out the 'how, what, when and where'.

The 'Lancaster ED 973 D' crashed on the 15th of June 1943. The Dutch Remembrance Day is the 4th of May, held on the eve of Liberation Day. Commemoration Ceremonies are held at many villages and towns through out Holland on this day. We had therefore to make an initial decision with the greatest respect to all those who had lost their lives on a date for future Remembrance activities. It was felt that it made sense to honour all the dead on the date that the Dutch were already familiar. All 'Brits' know the 11th of the 11th just as the Dutch know the 4th of May is dedicated to the National Remembrance Day. So some form of Remembrance service will hopefully be held annually on the 4th of May. To remember the actual crash it was decided that on the 10th, 20th, etc, anniversary of the unveiling, a Remembrance service would be held on the 15th of June.

Gerrie Van Hoof was very keen that the Monument and all that it represents becomes an established aspect of the school curriculum. To be revisited at the same time of year, through out the children's education at the school. Children join the local school in the week following their fourth birthday until they are about twelve.

So we spent some time bouncing ideas about how to create a framework into which projects, age appropriate would be placed. These projects to begin each year in April in preparation for the Remembrance Day on the 4th of May. The children are split into classes from 1 to 8. It was felt that for the lowest groups 1 to 4 that the 'War and all' was a bit over their heads and so they will be involved with a belief based project Freedom.

Groups 5 to 6 will be involved with making pictures and stories about the war. The plan is for local people to come in with bits and bobs from the war; Piet Kurvers will bring in an exhibition that the children can look at and feel. Local speakers will be invited into school to tell their stories and share their memories. One thought is to display the resulting work in the trees on the 4th of May.

Groups 7 and 8 will go to the Monument for among other things a spring clean but equally important to hear stories and learn about the war and what occurred on that site. They will be involved in a variety of projects for example what was life like at that time? What did children do? Were the schools open? Was there much food? Fortunately most children in our village have clothes in the cupboard toys on the floor and food in the larder, so the very idea of not having items is new.

What exactly will be done on the 4th of May in Remembrance of the fallen is still being worked on. There are already established ceremonies that take place nearby in Panningen a short bicycle trip away. We were sensible in our planning of last year's events to allow enough time for the musicians to leap onto bikes and jump into cars in time to meet their next appointments. What we had not expected was the interest within the village to establish a ceremony on the 4th of May in "our" woods. The school is more than happy to be involved but this year for example May the 4th falls in a vacation. There is still plenty to sort out.

On another note, if there are any serving men or women from the Squadron, with a grasp of Dutch, who need an excuse to visit the Art Galleries of Amsterdam and could spare a couple of hours to show Dutch school children what a real 100 Squadron person looks like... we are only 2 hours away from the bright lights and temptations!

Pip Dorssers-Kay.

Well time has certainly passed quickly between writing this and sending it to the Hornet! So much time that the 4th of May has now been and gone.

Last night saw for only the second time a Memorial gathering held by the Monument. Unlike the previous two ceremonies where the weather was perfect, last night the skies were heavy with rain. There were between 50 and 70 people in attendance.

Despite the school holidays poems were read by three school children. Piet Kurvers also read poetry. Albert Paulissen from nearby Panningen spoke and laid a wreath in the memory of the Dutch who were rounded up and deported to forced labour camps in Germany. Apparently 99 people had been 'collected' from Grashoek alone. This is an area of history for which some like me may not be familiar. The 'Lancaster' holds particular memories for such survivors as the planes brought about the release from slavery for many Dutch.

Andre Hanssen also spoke as a member of the local WW2 Deportation Group. Both Albert and Andre travel to schools within Holland and Germany sharing their knowledge and experiences.

We escaped the rains and were able to mark the passing of many and particularly of seven in an appropriate manner.

Our thanks to Pip for keeping us up to date.

Remembrance Day 2004

Our annual Service of Remembrance will take place on Sunday 14th November at the Squadron Memorial at Holton le Clay as usual at 12.00 noon. It will be followed by a buffet lunch in the Village Hall arranged for us by Colin and Jean Johnson at a cost of £5.00 each. Please contact Colin or Alex if you will be requiring lunch. There will also be a short committee meeting in Colin's home after lunch. Our grateful thanks to Colin and Jean and family.

Colin has also been contacted by Mrs Haggerty, widow of John Charles Haggerty who served as a Rear Upper Gunner. He was in Vancouver in 1942 with the Royal Canadian Air Force and also associated with RAF Scampton. If anyone recalls anything about him, please contact Colin Johnson on 01472 822406. Mrs Haggerty has expressed a wish to scatter her husband's ashes on the site of the Waltham airfield.

Rules of the Air

Compliments of the North Atlantic Aviation Museum, Gander NL.

1. Every takeoff is optional. Every landing is mandatory.
2. Flying isn't dangerous. Crashing is what's dangerous.
3. The only time you have too much fuel is when you are on fire.
4. When in doubt, hold on to your altitude. No one has ever collided with the sky.
5. Learn from the mistakes of others. You won't live long enough to make all of them yourself.
6. You know you've landed with the wheels up if it takes full power to taxi to the ramp.
7. There are three simple rules for making a smooth landing. Unfortunately, no one knows what they are.
8. Always try to keep the number of landings you make equal to the number of takeoffs you've made.
9. Never let an aircraft take you somewhere your brain didn't get to five minutes earlier.
10. It's always a good idea to keep the pointy end going forward as much as possible.
11. Keep looking around. There's always something you've missed.
12. Remember, gravity is not just a good idea - it's the law. And it's not subject to appeal.

One last effort.- Berlin **16th/17th December**

Here we go again for the last time, when we get this one over we will have completed our tour.....

As we flew back across the North Sea, Ken reported that he had received a message stating that the cloud base at home was down to 500 ft. We were flying in cloud and slowly letting down from 20,000 ft or thereabouts. As the altimeter unwound, the hand indicating feet, calibrated in 100's, kept sticking at 500ft (the six o'clock position) every time it went round. The thousands hand unwound easily enough, but I could not rely on the accuracy of the height. With the cloud base down to 500 ft this presented a problem, especially as I was aware of the crew's unspoken apprehension, who were mindful that on the last occasion we virtually came in through the gate without our aircraft.

I instructed Ken not to wind in his trailing aerial as this suspended some 40-50 ft below the aircraft. He was to tell me directly it was lost as this would give me some warning if we were still in cloud, unable to see the ground.

What a relief, we came out of cloud at about 700 ft and could just make out the sea below and, as we crossed the coast, we picked up our flashing pundit. Such was the accuracy of Aubrey's navigation with the aid of Gee. Had we not had the set replaced we would have been in real trouble. We circled base at 500feet, and as we approached Ken yelled that the aerial had gone, but I had the runway lined up. The visibility below 500 ft was adequate and Control cleared us to land. We were down on the ground, our tour of operations finished, to the loud cheers of us all.

However, tragedy was happening all around us. There must have been 15 or so aircraft popping out of the cloud, all trying to locate base. Two collided head on within sight of the airfield, and two more hit the ground as they emerged from the cloud. It was our new 'Winco' David Holford DSO DFC who crashed at Kelstern killing himself and four others of the crew. Flt Sgt Kevis collided with Sgt Denham just south of the airfield: the fourth 'kite' to crash was flown by Fg Off R L Proudfoot. He hit the ground near Barnoldby le Beck, killing himself and three crew.

Three were very seriously injured and badly burnt.

So on what became known as "Black Thursday" our tour of 'ops' on 100 Squadron ended. We survived somehow and remarkably, never had to fire our guns in anger. We never flew again as a crew.

The crew:

Blackie (rear gunner)

Dick (bomb aimer), Johnnie
(Pilot), Ken (radio op.)

Bill (mid upper gunner),
Ginger (flight engineer}

Aubrey (navigator)



Although the events of Black Thursday are fully documented in "The Hornet's Nest", we are very grateful to Lawrence for sending this personal account. Ed.

V-Force Reunion

As mentioned in a previous edition, the first "V Force" reunion was held at Newark Air Museum in May. AVM Herrington and his wife Cherry attended and were sad to note that there was very little representation from the Wittering era. We will publish details of future when they are known. Meanwhile, we bring the following requests for information to your attention.

HP Victor Operators

Did you fly or service the Victor B1, B1A, B2, B2(BS), B2(SR), K(2P) variants, or K2? Were you at RAF Gaydon, Cottesmore, Honington, Wyton, Marham, St Athan or Boscombe Down when Victors were being operated? Do you recall, leading edge flaps, ECM packs, organic brakes, zero readers, TRU cooling fans, hydraulic pump contactors, bogie tip hooks, brake parachute slips tests, sim starts, ILS crystals and the like? Not to mention Blue Danube, Yellow Sun Mk 2 and Blue Steel? Were you involved with Exercises Macassar, or Tilton, or pre-QRA operations?

If so, please assist in the preparation of a new book on the operation of the Victor throughout its service life. There are so many stories to document as part of the history of the V-Force. Memories, stories, documentation, and photos are urgently required to assist in this project.

If you are able to help, please contact: Bob Prothero, 15, Gannet House, 5 Eastern Parade, Southsea, E04 9RA or telephone 07956 244442

Please can you help?

Did you have association with any of these aircraft? Victor B2/SR2/K2 XH669, Victor B2 XH670, Valiant B1 XD826, Vulcan B2/K2 XH560. Do you have any stories, photographs, manuals or even parts relating to these types or these aeroplanes specifically? Do you have any pilot's notes, flying clothing or general V-Bomber memorabilia and related items? If so, please assist in a project to establish a collection dedicated to the V-Force, its people and the three aircraft that served this country in a wide range of roles. The aim is to present the story of all three types throughout their RAF service. The centre piece will be the cockpits of these aircraft and related hardware. It is hoped that this may be supported by photographs and stories relating to their service. The hope is that this will become a more personal story of these aircraft in service with contributions from all that may have an association with them and may add to their story. Please help preserve the story of the V-Force and its aircraft so that others may learn of the valuable service given to our country in a variety of roles over many years. If you are unable to help, please contact Nigel Towler either by phone on: 01702 480962; by email: info@v~bombers.org; or by post: Nigel Towler, V-Bombers, 120 The Broadway, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 1AA

Association Reunion at RAF Leeming

On a bright and breezy afternoon, about 80 members and their guests joined families of the Squadron outside the 100 Squadron hangar to enjoy a barbecue lunch and watch what must be the best private airshow ever! We had the Typhoon (Eurofighter) and an army Apache helicopter. Our guests from Holland had a short flight in a VC10 before one of the highlights of the afternoon, as the RAF Falcons 'dropped in'. Right on time their Hercules flew into view, and the tiny dots far above us evolved into parachutists. They landed in front of us seven minutes later, exactly on their targets and the new Officer Commanding 100 Squadron was there to take the salute. Next up was an RAF glider put through its paces by Dick Cole, formerly of 100 Squadron.

Tucano, Harrier GR7, Tornado F3, Jaguar, Nimrod, Hunter, 4 French Mystere 2000's and the Squadron's own Hawks displayed for us and the climax of the afternoon was a fly through by the Red Arrows. It seems that our Liaison Officer, Flt Lt Chris 'Crisis' Bulteel, had called in several favours to put it all together. What an impressive show!

The day continued with a (very) Happy Hour in the Officers' Mess; an opportunity to greet old friends and to chat to the lads and lasses who are on the Squadron now.

Saturday began very early for some of the members as their hotel had a fire alarm at 04.15 hrs! The AGM took place at 09.30 with Wing Commander Wayne White in the chair. He introduced himself and passed on good wishes from Wg Cdr Simpson and his wife. He reported that although the squadron had completed about 6,500 flying hours in the year, its future was in some doubt. We list the Squadron's main activities on page 19.

The Secretary gave apologies from 8 members. Three members had died, 6 new members had joined and two had resigned. Changes to the Constitution are to be published in the Hornet for discussion and approval before the next AGM. The Memorial Service at Holton le Clay and the 2005 AGM are being arranged.

There followed the Service of Thanksgiving at St Bede's Station Church, including the presentation of the Squadron Standard and the Role of Honour, and then we set off for lunch (delicious) and a tour of the Black Sheep Brewery in Masham (fascinating).

Returning to the Mess later we sat down to a buffet supper before dancing to the New York Dance Band. It was an informal evening, with just a few words from Norman Bonnor and from Wg Cdr White. Both expressed pleasure that our guests from Holland had been able to join us, and both praised Chris Bulteel for his organisation. He leaves the Squadron in September and will be greatly missed.

A very successful raffle and auction, a final dance and it was time for most of us oldies to say cheerio, and to leave the youngsters to their disco.

Main Activities of 100 Squadron

1. Providing support to Joint Maritime Courses, Combat Qualified Weapons Instructor exercises, and four-ship ground attack and air defence missions.
2. Three detachments to Belgian Air Force base Florennes to support multi-national aircrew leadership courses.
3. Three aircraft deployed to Cyprus to carry out Air Combat Training with RAF ground attack squadrons.
4. Helping with the introduction of the Typhoon into service; most of the photos featured in RAF News were taken with the help of 100 Sqn.
5. Flt Lt Dave Harvey has again been selected as Strike Command Hawk Aerobatic Display Pilot. He flew 40 displays last season including Belgium, France and Czech Republic.
6. To commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Battle of the Rhur the Squadron carried out a four day detachment to Holland. Flypasts were flown over 100 Sqn memorials at Eelde, Twello and Grashoek and over Nijmegen Cemetery. Members of the Association attended some of the ceremonies, together with Wg Cdr Simpson.
7. Ten officers and NCO's attended the Remembrance Service at Holton le Clay where the Squadron Standard was paraded.
8. Operational Training Flights were carried out to various parts of Europe, and ten squadron members took part in the Last Post Ceremony at Ypres.
9. Personnel - an exchange posting to the Royal Australian Air Force, a return to the Red Arrows, retirements and promotion. The Squadron looks forward to deployment to Poland to support "Excercise Polish Hawk."

Memorabilia etc.

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 Hornet's Nest: £4.50 inc p&p

All the above are available from the Treasurer.

Cheques payable to 100 Squadron Association please.

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Black baseball caps: £7.00 inc p&p

Flt Lt Higginbottom.

100 Squadron, RAF Leeming.

Cheques payable to 100 Squadron Aircrew Fund.

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

Cheques payable to Arthur White please.

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"The Itinerant Airman" By Arthur Gamble £10.50 inc p&p

Orders and cheques to:

Mrs D Thurley. 3 Coastguard Cottages, Drummore, Stranraer DG9 9QX

Reminder

Deadline for the next edition of the Hornet is Monday 25th October.

And finally...

The Treasurer has asked us to issue the usual reminder that subscriptions were due on 1st August (as if you needed reminding!)