



# 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	J S Willis MBE 10 Orchard Close Harston Cambridge CB2 5PT 01223 872743	Sqn Ldr A C Wedderburn MBE 11 Bury Way St Ives Huntingdon Cams PE17 4SL 01480 461415	J W Holford 42 Merley Lane Wimborne Dorset BH21 1RY 01202 885905 hornet100uk@yahoo.co.uk

## Newsletter 67 - November 2004

Dear Colleagues,

Once more, autumn is upon us. Time to batten down the hatches and dig out the winter woollies. We hope you all enjoyed the best ever holidays in the summer and that the fantastic reunion last June set the trend for the rest of the season.

Your Association Committee, however, has not been idle over the last few months. The ether has been buzzing with e-mails as they flew back and forth between members. An interim meeting was held at RAF Wittering in September to discuss basic requirements for a revised Constitution as approved at the AGM. After much positive and constructive discussion, the basics for a new website under the control of 100 Squadron Association Officers were agreed. There will be a further Committee meeting following the Remembrance Day Service at Holton le Clay on 14th November to finalise details.

It has been suggested that sometime in the future the Newsletter may go out on secure e-mail to those who have computers. We would welcome your views on this.

Best wishes to you all for the festive season,

John

# Correspondence

Our thanks to everyone who has contacted us over the summer by phone, e-mail or letter. We use as much of the material as possible so please keep it coming.

Our thanks to Hendrik Cazemeir who sent photographs taken at the Reunion at Leeming in June. Two of them appear on Page 18.

Brian Hulme went to the Arboretum near Lichfield on the Association's behalf and viewed the two trees we have paid for. He photographed the plaque (see page 19) and also the Squadron emblem on the Victor at Elvington Air Museum in Yorks.

Greg Harrison has had news from fellow researchers in Europe. 100 Squadron Lancaster ED647, HW-T, skipper Fg Off Spiers RNZAF and crew, lost against Peenemunde on the night of August 17th/18th 1943 has been discovered at the bottom of a lake in Germany. Details will be published as they emerge.

Among other things, Arthur White has sent us extracts from the journal of Flt Lt Vin Knight, so that we can publish bits of it over the coming months. Arthur has sent full copies to the Squadron archives.

Our apologies to Jack Riddell who hasn't been getting any newsletters. We'll try to do better. The Treasurer informs us that an updated membership list will be produced in the New Year, so it would be helpful if you could check your own entry and notify us of any changes or errors. We would also like e-mail addresses for as many members as possible.

E-mails have been flying among the members of your Committee regarding the setting up of a new official 100 Squadron Association website. Alex has written to Kevin Webster expressing the Association's thanks for all his work on the previous site. Regrettably, Kevin has since resigned from the Association.

We had a call from Jim George giving information about John Duguid 1822307. He and all his crew were lost 15th/16th February 1944 in Lancaster HW-H, ND 391. If John was a regular crew member with Plt Off Tunstall, this would have been his 18th operation, the last op being the 11th to Berlin. Can anyone verify this? We will send Jim's comments and other observations to the Squadron Archives.

Tony and Lucette Davey send greetings to their friends from their home in France. Tony has sent us a further account of the exploits of Norman Thom which we shall publish in February.

## **Reunion 2005**

We are pleased to announce that the Reunion next year will again be held at RAF Leeming. This is to ensure that the 90th Anniversary of the Squadron will also be held there in 2007. Please make a note of the dates for 2005: Friday and Saturday, 24th and 25th June. A booking form will be sent out with the February Newsletter when specific costs and details are confirmed. We would like to welcome Flt Lt Sal Cronin who has succeeded Flt Lt Chris Bulteel as our Association Liaison Officer, and we can assure her of our support in all her efforts.

## **Change of Address**

Mr L Emus  
Holly House 43 Alcester Rd  
Lickey End  
Bromsgrove B60 1JT  
Tel: 01527 876292

Alec Wiseman has moved from 3, Wilding Court down to the ground floor and is now to be found at 10, Wilding Court. He wishes all members good health and happiness for the immediate future. Alec is now 92 years old and served with 100 Sqn at Seletar in 1935/36 on Vildebeest 'A' flight.

RRW Parker  
48 Sherwood Crescent  
Hadleigh  
Essex SS7 2GL

## **New Members**

Mr Colin Barton Penfold  
(Pigpen)  
5 Old School  
School Lane  
Fittleworth  
West Sussex RH20 1JZ  
Tel: 07989 466897

Mr Bill Paterson  
14 Dunn Place  
Winchburgh  
West Lothian EH52 6UH  
Tel: 01506 890628

# Tribute to the V-Force Newark 2004

We received this poem from Cherry Herrington following the inclusion of the V Force reunion in the last newsletter. She felt that her version of the day might help others to understand the life that she and John led. She also writes of the welcome given to everyone by Newark Air Museum, and hopes that next time there'll be a bigger turn out from the Association.

That was the sign, that memorable day in May  
It saluted more than a shape, more than a few.  
Those who once looked into Armageddon's eye  
Now meeting at last on a day brilliantly blue.  
With mission completed and final dispersal,  
Searching again for old comrades and crew.  
Older and greyer now as they stride anew.

No toasts no speeches, no razzmatazz here,  
Business to do. Record we must the size of the task.  
In one empty hangar, lined with desks, they encore  
Where some clever soul had devised a plan:  
Give each one a badge with name and more.  
Colour coded spots reveal his part in the game!  
Those without spots are obviously not the same.

Mere bystanders, we, who had watched the game.  
What was your story? They ask of each one.  
Ah, GROUND crew, that's GREEN for you then:  
And another spot for type, and we start to know  
The story of one man's life so long ago.  
Now we have OCU, that's a BLUE one for you.  
The rainbow of colours the journey proclaims.

Hangar humming with noise and purpose again.  
At the VALIANT desk, and PURPLE they nod:  
Xmas Island? Some sniffing, and once hot?  
Then on to the VULCAN, where RED they say:  
Home or abroad, how long did you do?  
And so to the VICTOR, it's YELLOW for you:  
High or low? Tanking, where did you go?

Then on to the museum, with aircraft surrounded.  
Eureka! There's a Blue Steel, now silently grounded.  
'Bing' would have smiled - deterrence prevailed!  
A cup of tea, then all eyes on the skies,  
A Dakota heralds the airshow we all love.  
Out of the sun with a roar the young come  
As the Red Arrows swoop over with pride.  
And so the day ends. To the Golf Club adjourn,  
Where welcome awaits and an evening of old  
Hey have you seen? How's life treating you now?  
Glad you're here. It was worth it, we won in the end.  
Glasses now raised for loved ones and friends.  
For those who didn't make it: the spirit survives,  
Still steadfast and bold.

Cherry Herrington.

## **From Basil Gotto**

I did my ab initio training at Sywell in Oxfordshire in the summer of 1935. That year they started the first airmail service between Luton and Birmingham, and its rhumb line took it over the small village near Sywell.

One summer morning, the lady of the manor was out picking flowers with her sunhat and wicker basket under her arm, and she stopped to have a few words with her old gardener.

As they were talking a plane approached from slightly west of south heading east of north, and her ladyship remarked "I wonder if that's a mail plane". The gardener replied "I wouldn't rightly know that, ma'am" and he paused, thinking how best to put it, then he said, "that I do know, ma'am, that they things hanging down be wheels!"

# Future of The Squadron

Wing Commander Wayne White has written to the President of the Association about the future of 100 Squadron and Norman has asked us to publish the letter.

Dear Air Commander Bonnor,

After the recent announcement by the Secretary of State in the House of Commons, I am extremely pleased to be able to inform you that No. 100 Squadron not only has a future, but will also grow slightly.

Although there will be many changes at RAF Leeming over the next few years (it will cease as a Tornado F3 base in 2008), and the Defence Airfield Review Team will not report until 2005, I quote from the briefing pack on the S of S's decisions:

"The future role of RAF Leeming will be considered as part of a wider review of the Defence Estate by the Defence Airfield Review Team. This work is expected to be completed and announcements made in 2005. However, the Hawks of 100 Squadron will remain".

This quote is reinforced later in the Q and A section when discussing what happens to Leeming once the Tornados depart:

"However, I expect 100 Squadron Hawk training aircraft to remain at the station."

While nothing is certain in this ever changing world, I believe that our value in improving the output capability of the RAF's front line squadrons is clearly recognised. I have asked for, and have been given approval from the C-in-C, to increase the number of pilots on the squadron by an extra four. We appear to be one of the few growth sectors in the RAF!

With very best wishes,

Yours aye,

Wayne.

**Roy Wallis** sent us this poem back in early June. He went to a fly past in memory of some American pilots who served from that particular airfield. In the programme was the poem, written by a twelve year-old girl in 1966.

## Who Are These Men?

Who are these men who march so proud  
Who quietly weep, eyes closed, head bowed.  
These are the men who once were boys  
Who missed out on youth and all its joys.

Who are these men with aged faces  
Who silently count the empty spaces?  
These are the men who gave their all,  
Who fought for their country, for freedom for all.

Who are these men with a sorrowful look  
Who can still remember the lives that were took.  
These are the men who saw young men die  
The price of peace is always high.

These are the men in the midst of pain  
Whispered comfort to those they would not see again.  
These are the men whose hands held tomorrow  
Who brought back our future with blood, tears and sorrow.

Who are these men who promise to keep  
Alive in their hearts the ones God holds asleep?  
These are the men to whom I promise again:  
Veterans, my friends.....**I will remember them.**

We received the following from Fred Inglis in August recalling his service on the Isle of Wight.

## **Cowes IOW Revisited**

My wife and I spent a short holiday at Ryde in the spring of this year, so while there I decided to indulge in reminiscence as I had spent a short period of my service on the Island.

I'm sure you'll be aware that air crews had breaks between tours of Ops, but how many know just how the boys were occupied?

This was my experience for about six months while off flying duties. I was sent to No.2 Embarkation Unit at Southampton and from there to Cowes IOW. So far as I knew there was no RAF station on the Island, and I was the only airman there! I was in civvies digs on full board and collected my pay at the Post Office every two weeks. Passage to and from the Island was restricted in those days and travel was via the IOW Steam Packet Co. ferry from Southampton to West Cowes. My duties were to report daily to Uffa Fox's boatyard at East Cowes and, if my services were not required there, I would report to the RTO on the pier at West Cowes and assist with security checking of service personnel travelling to and from the Island.

The RTO was manned by army RMP's. There were not many ferries each day so the time between was spent sunning on the pier or in the bar of a nearby hotel. I also did a bit of office work on the side for the ferry company - a nice little earner with an occasional bottle of whisky thrown in!

For those who don't know the Island, East and West Cowes are directly opposite each other on the River Medina which runs from Newport out to sea. There was a quaint old chain ferry across the river, or a five mile road trip via Newport. The ferry was free for pedestrians, and I used it daily for my trips to the boat yard.

What on earth did an RAF WOP/AG do in a boat yard? Mr Uffa Fox, an international yachtsman and boatbuilder, was building Airborne Lifeboats in his yard for the Government. They were lightweight, made of thin laminated wood and there were two types, one slightly larger than the



other, about 20 - 25 feet long. The idea was to drop the boat by parachute to aircrews downed at sea, mainly fighter pilots in the Channel. The boats were on the secret list and referred to by the code names Apples or Pears according to size. From the moment a boat left the yard, it was shrouded over and secured by a tarpaulin and under armed guard - me! My job was to keep in touch with the yard to check on progress. It would take about 7 - 10 days to make a boat, then I would arrange secure transport, a Foden Steam wagon, to take it over to Freshwater Bay for sea trials. Then it would return to the yard to be fitted out with various survival stores. In due course, I would prepare the shipping documents for its transportation via the IOW Steam Packet ferry to whichever air station it was going to. I would escort the boat to Southampton and pick up an armed guard for the rest of the journey (one airman with a bayonet and scabbard but no rifle.)

I had an unusual arrangement regarding medical and dental requirements. I would get the ferry across the Solent and, when we reached Calshot Spit, they would flash the unit and a pinnace would come and take me off - and vice versa for the return journey - it worked well.

Sixty years on I arrived at East Cowes not knowing what to expect. The boatyard was no longer there but, to my surprise, the old chain ferry was still running and still free to pedestrians. In West Cowes, I found my old lodgings in Hill Street and even my old office. Over the years, the pier has been developed into a busy marina. There's a small museum (closed at time of visit) which tells the history of Uffa Fox and the Airborne Lifeboats. He was well known in Royal circles and is buried in the churchyard of Osborne House. His headstone bears an image of a boat being dropped by an open parachute.

Now aged 86, I have recalled this detail after sixty years, but I can't remember my own phone and car numbers!!!!

# **RAF Grimsby Exhibition Memorial Day**

## **Saturday, 25th September**

70 or so visitors assembled at the Waltham Windmill Museum on this occasion despite the cold wind. After drinks at the Windmill, the party was taken by coach to Hatcliff Top to view the memorial to the crew of JB596 which crashed there on 'Black Thursday' after returning from Berlin. This was erected by Roger Stevenson who over the years collected many items of wreckage from the crashed Lancaster as he worked the surrounding farmland. There was a short service conducted by Rev. Alan Hundleby, after which the party was conveyed to the airfield at Waltham.

Today it is barely recognisable, but the party assembled on the remains of the old runway, now cracked and fragmented and overgrown, where a four-man honour guard from RAF Brize Norton lined up to greet the BBMF Lancaster "City of Lincoln."

At exactly 12.45, this wonderful plane appeared from the South, the Merlins reaching a crescendo as she passed overhead for the first time in 59 years, at 200 ft as the Honour Guard saluted. After a steep banking turn, she returned for another pass and a after final turn came in from the West at 125ft! There wasn't a dry eye among the watchers. The party then went to lunch at the Royal Oak, Holton le Clay and then to the Squadron Memorial where again Rev. Humbleby conducted the service.

Wreaths were laid as follows:

142 Sqn      Capt. M Wright (USAF)

100 Sqn      Arthur White

550 Sqn      Mrs M Grey (WAAF Waltham)

RAFA Grimsby and Cleethorpes      Mr P Massen (RAF Rtd)

467/463 RAAF Sqn Association      SAC M Willoughby RAF

624 Sqn Assoc      Plt Off P Dorwood RAF

Battle of Britain Fighter Assoc      Sqn Ldr D Nicholls DFC (RAF Rtd)

RAF Grimsby Exhibition      Jon R Moore

Commonwealth War Graves Commission      Miss M Choules

A floral tribute to Flt Lt Ken Fraser who died in August was laid by Mrs Shirley Hebden on behalf of her brother Jack Riddell who was Ken's

W/Op. Arthur White paid a personal tribute to Ken.

It was a wonderful day, and our thanks to Jon Moore and Roger Stevenson and also to Colin Johnson for all he does throughout the year to keep the memorial and its surroundings in pristine condition. Well done!

We are grateful to Arthur for this account, and also for the obituary to Ken Fraser.

John Castle has contacted us by e-mail explaining that his health doesn't allow him to attend the reunions. He would however like us to pass on his good wishes to the rest of the Association.

## **Publicising the Association**

As a result of last year's publicity, three new members were recruited. It was decided that the Secretary would advertise in the Aircrew Association quarterly magazine "Intercom", "Flypast" magazine, the RAF News, Saga Magazine and the RAFA "Airmail", in the hope of raising awareness of our Association's activities and recruiting even more.

## **National Memorial Arboretum**

With reference to the photograph of the Association's plaque on page 19; anyone wanting to visit the arboretum it's situated at Alrewas near Lichfield, Staffs. We have dedicated one tree in the RAF Bomber Command wing and another in the Far East section. At the moment these trees are only very small, but we have high hopes of them.

# Obituaries

By coincidence, three of the deaths we have heard about lately were all members of the Squadron at some time, although not of the Association.

**Flt Lt Lawrence William John Coulton "Flo"** was one of the members of the crew of the Canberra that crashed at Marham recently. Aged 40, he served with 100 Squadron from the Canberra at Wyton period until April 1994, by which time he had converted to the Hawk. Subsequently he was selected as a qualified flying instructor on the Tucano which led to an exchange with the French Air Force. Returning to RAF Marham in 2000, he was posted to 39 Squadron, from where he flew many operational missions and in 2003 he was selected to become the Squadron Qualified Flying Instructor. The Squadron performed a flypast at the funeral in the Norfolk village of Stoke Holy Cross on Friday 17th September. The formation was led by Sqn Ldr Eric "Welly" Wealldens, Wg Cdr Wayne White was No. 2, Flt Lt Dave Harvey No. 3 and Sqn Ldr Dick Edwards No. 4. Welly and Harve were on the Squadron at the same time as Flo, and Dick knew him as a friend. They approached the cemetery at 500ft in Finger 4 formation and one mile to overflight Harvs symbolically pulled up to "Heaven" leaving three remaining aircraft to overfly the graveside in "Missing Man." This coincided with Catherine placing flowers on the coffin as it was lowered into the grave. There were 200 - 300 people in the cemetery, many wearing RAF blue uniforms, a very moving experience for those in the air. We extend our sympathy to Catherine and his two young children.

**Flt Sgt John Charles Michael Haggerty RCAF** completed a tour of 32 operations at Waltham between October 1944 and May 1945 before returning to his home in Vancouver. He died in February having expressed a wish to have his ashes scattered over the runway at Waltham. His wife Daphne made contact with the Association through SSAFA, and Colin Johnson got permission for the little ceremony. On 11th August, Mrs Haggerty and her daughter met with Arthur White and Paddy, Ian Reid and Colin. They drove to the N.E. runway where Art said a few words and recited the Dedication, after which the ashes were scattered as he had requested. Thanks to Colin for arranging the

ceremony and to Ian who provided a copy of Michael's operational record, together with photographs and anecdotes from the Waltham days.

**Wing Commander Basil Templeton-Rooke** began his career as a sergeant bomber pilot in April 1943 on 100 Squadron, flying Lancasters from Waltham. He was awarded the DFC following raids on Hamburg and Turin, when severe icing conditions forced him to fly through the Alps rather than over them. Around this time, he discovered that empty beer bottles made a haunting screech as they fell through the air, and he made it a regular practice to drop them over the German countryside. By May 1944, he was serving with 576 Squadron as a flight commander. He was awarded a bar to his DFC for 'pressing home his attacks with utmost determination and accuracy' and 'outstanding leadership, sustained courage and initiative', and the DSO in March 1945. In April, he led one of the first sorties of Operation Manna, and by the end of May he was leading his squadron in Operation Exodus. He stayed in the RAF after the war, specialising in maritime operations. In 1951, he was awarded the AFC. He died in July a few weeks after the death of his second wife Joan.

**Flt Lt Kenneth V Fraser DFC RCAF.** It is with deep regret that we announce the passing of Ken in Ottawa in August aged 81. The news came from Bob Gibson in Canada and Colin Johnson at Holton le Clay. Ken was a popular skipper, and he and his crew completed a full tour of operations at Waltham. Many a crew will recall a cheerful wave or thumbs up from Ken as the planes neared each other. His exploits, antics and sense of fun, in the air or on the ground, were legendary. On one occasion his navigator, deeply engrossed in calculations on a long haul to Germany, was startled by a tap on his shoulder. Ken stood behind him asking "Do you know where we are?" In post war years, he flew on aerial survey work. A floral tribute has been laid at the Squadron Memorial. We send our deepest sympathy to his widow Mary and the family, and assure them that those of us who knew Ken will remember him with affection and a smile.

**Mr H Doughty** - From his son Dr Stewart Doughty, we have learnt of the recent death of Harry Doughty at the age of 89. He served with 100

Squadron at Elsham Wolds. We would like to extend our sympathy to the family on behalf of the Association.

**Mrs Betty Mager** - We were sorry to learn of Betty's death so soon after that of her husband Roy.

## **Food for Thought**

If people from Poland are called Poles, why aren't people from Holland called Holes?

If a pig loses its voice, is it disgruntled?

If horrific means to make horrible, why doesn't terrific mean to make terrible?

Why is the man who invests all your money called a broker?

If a person who plays the piano is a pianist, why is someone who drives a racing car not called a racist?

Why is it that if someone tells you that there are a billion stars in the universe you will believe them, but if they tell you that a wall has wet paint you will have to touch it to be sure?

If love is blind, why is lingerie so popular?

## **Christmas Island** **The British Thermo-Nuclear Bomb Tests** **(H-Bombs) in 1957**

This article was written by J A Clubb in 2001 for Tony Ross DFC, author of "Through Eyes of Blue" and published in November 2002.

8th November 1975 was one of the high spots of my life so far when at precisely 1747 GMT, the equivalent of several million tons of high explosives went off about 25 miles from where we were orbiting. This was the fourth air-dropped H-Bomb in the series of tests flown from Christmas Island in the late 1950s, and we were flying at 43,000 ft in a Canberra PR7 in a predetermined orbit waiting to photograph the

development of the nuclear fireball. The occasion was Operation "Grapple X", which followed the series named "Grapple" in May and June of the same year. I had been on this operation too, but the visual impact for me was unspectacular because the three bombs of that series had been dropped off Malden Island - 400 miles south of Christmas Island. My part in "Grapple" with my pilot Frank Stokes, had been to obtain high level wind and weather information post-burst and to photograph the nuclear cloud, which was considerably dispersed by the time we reached it. So we missed the really spectacular part. However, "Grapple X" being a drop just one mile off the tip of Christmas Island, was very much more personal and impressive. However, "Grapple" was unique and the first British H-Bomb was dropped on my birthday, 15th May 1957. The experience of being involved in such a vital operation was quite unforgettable.

For me, the story began late in 1956 at RAF Wyton when 82 Squadron disbanded and overnight its crews and Canberra PR7 aircraft became No 100 Squadron Reconnaissance Detachment. All crews were volunteers for the operation and the aircraft were extensively modified with navigation equipment ("Green Satin" Doppler radar, ground position indicator and the Marconi Radio Compass) to help us navigate over long stretches of water and over the United States where we had to be able to fly airways using radio compass reporting points. Long range high frequency voice radio equipment (HFRT) was also fitted to allow us to pass position reports and - our main role during the tests - weather information to the forecasters. We also had a side facing camera for cloud (normal and nuclear) photography.

Most of our flying from Wyton during the winter of 56 and the spring of 57 was to test our new equipment and to practise navigating over long sea legs, wind finding and the use of HFRT. In those days, flights across the Atlantic by operational aircraft were rare and few of us on the Squadron had had this experience in any aircraft - let alone a jet. Consequently, it was with not a little trepidation that I donned my immersion suit (another first) on the 24th April 57 for the first leg from Wyton to Aldergrove to top up with fuel then to Goose Bay in Labrador en route to Christmas Island. Incidentally, after that first leg, we never wore the immersion suits again; too uncomfortable, and we didn't have much confidence in its life saving qualities.

From Goose we flew to Travis AFB in California via Namao (Edmonton Canada) then the Pacific crossing to Hickam AFB near Honolulu - 2100 miles against the wind - which often turned in to a 100 mph plus jetstream, about which little was known in those days. No problem crossing the Pacific the first time, but for "Grapple X" we had a fairly dramatic flight, arriving at Hickam short of fuel and virtually out of oxygen to a very relieved welcome from the met staff. They weren't half so relieved as we were after a flight lasting 6 hrs and 40 mins. - over an hour more than our flight plan time based on forecast winds.

The flight from Honolulu to Christmas was nice and short, just under three hours, and we arrived on 1st May 1957. The radio beacon was pretty weak on our first visit, as was the VHF radio reception, so navigation had to be accurate. On first sight from the air, I was impressed with the size of the island - around 26 miles long and about ten miles across at its widest. A typical tropical lagoon and white beaches galore. From the ground, very much as I had expected, except no grass skirts! Hot, very hot, but not too humid. A fair number of coconut palms but not much else seemed to grow there. The whiteness of the coral was impressive, and could cause serious sunburn to the unwary. Over a two month stay, most of us became acclimatised but even late in the detachment there were some cases of severe sunburn for people who stayed out too long in the sun.

The most obvious animal life were the frigate birds and the rather ugly land crabs. The latter seemed to take great pleasure in crawling into our tents and waving their claws from close range at the person sleeping just above ground on the wire and canvas safari beds. Those more sensitive souls who wanted to put a little distance between themselves and the crabs raised their beds by putting them on beer crates, but unhappily this destabilised the beds and the occupant then fell out, meeting the crabs at even closer quarters. People became unreasonably afraid of these creatures - which after all did a good cleaning up job on the island overnight - and never lost an opportunity of killing them by driving over them. This created another lasting impression - the smell of crushed crabs, particularly during the drive to briefing early in the morning after a greasy egg breakfast.

We slept, worked, ate and drank in tents - although despite frequent



showers during the initial operation - I don't recall getting uncomfortably wet. There were occasions when the runway was unusable after a tropical downpour, but the water cleared quickly and we were diverted only once for that reason.

The day after we arrived, we were off on a five hour weather sortie which entailed cruise climbing to 45,000 feet and starting a twelve minute wind - finding cycle, reporting the wind, temperature and visual assessment of cloud cover to joint operations centre at Christmas Island. Often we would use the few tiny islands in the area as turning points and, when visibility allowed, we took vertical photographs of the islands of Malden, Jarvis, Starbuck, Palmyra, Fanning etc. to prove that we had managed to be on track at least part of the time. What a difference satellite navigation system would have made! Generally the work-up flights went well, with a few snags caused by the Doppler equipment's inability to lock on when the surface wind speed was insufficient to roughen up the sea. Our ground crews worked all hours to keep us serviceable and seemed to work miracles with the Green Satin at times.

Intervals between sorties were filled with the almost daily operational briefings. So frequent and so detailed that by the time the day of the first drop came, each crew had a clear idea of what the others roles were, what time they would take off and where they would be at any given time. We knew that "Sniff Boss" and "Sniffs 1, 2 and 3" were the Canberra B6's which would fly through the cloud and obtain samples which the courier Canberra PR7's from our squadron or 58 Squadron would ferry back to the UK within 24 hours of the drop. We knew that the "Search and Lookout" call signs belonged to the Shackletons which were searching the danger area for ships unaware that history was about to be made (they found one during Grapple X) also obtaining weather information at low level and taking post-burst photographs. We also knew that the search and rescue Whirlwind helicopters and the Transport Command Hastings and Dakotas and the DDT spraying Austers would also be performing their important support roles before, during and after the tests. And of course we knew off by heart our "weather tasks" in the days and hours before and after the drop "photo tasks" during the minutes following the explosion.

We will continue this fascinating account in the next issue. Ed.

Reunion  
June 2004  
RAF Leeming

Photographs  
from  
Hon. Member  
Hendrick  
Cazemier







100 Squadron  
Plaque at the  
National Memorial  
Arboretum

and

Victor XL231  
"Lusty Linda"  
at  
The Yorkshire Air  
Museum, Elvington



## **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.

=====

Black baseball caps: £7.00 inc. p&p

Flt Lt Higginbottom.  
100 Squadron, RAF Leeming.

Cheques payable to 100 Squadron Aircrew Fund.

=====

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

=====

"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

### **And finally**

A number of Primary schools were doing a project about "The Sea". Children were asked to write about their experiences. Here are a few of them:

If you are surrounded by sea you are an island. If you don't have sea all around you, you are in continent. (Wayne aged 7.)

My mum has fish nets but she doesn't catch any fish. (Laura aged 5.)

My goldfish died. Why? (Katie aged 5.)

I don't like the sea. It makes me sick on the ferry. (Peter aged 6.)

This is a picture of an octopus. It has eight testicles. (Kelly aged 6)

## **Postscript**

### **Remembrance Sunday - 14th November**

On a bright and breezy morning, around 100 people, the young and the not-so-young, gathered to remember. It was good to see that 14 airmen from the Squadron had volunteered to make the Journey down from Leeming to Holton le Clay, including our namesake, Dan Holford, who bore the Squadron Colours. The local ATC was well represented, as indeed was the Squadron Association. Promptly at noon we were welcomed by the Rev. Chris Woaden, who gave a Bible reading and a short address and prayer. Stamper Metcalfe then recited the Act of Remembrance before the Silence. As Wing Commander Wayne White, OC 100 Squadron moved to lay the Squadron's wreath on the Memorial, a Squadron Hawk flew overhead, timed to the second, piloted by Bob Simpson flying with a student Navigator (thank goodness he plotted the correct course!) Bill Banks was next to lay a wreath on behalf of the Association, followed by little Courtney Steer with her father representing the RAFA, then WO Rhodes for the Air Cadets and Bob White on behalf of the local Parish Council. Holly Smith played the Last Post and the short service ended with prayers and the singing of 'Oh God our help in ages past.' About fifty people then adjourned to the Village Hall to partake of a delicious lunch, prepared and served as usual by Jean Johnson and her family. Colin and Jean and the helpers were thanked formally by Air Commodore Norman Bonnor on behalf of us all. The Committee then met in the home of Colin Johnson for a short meeting to finalise arrangements for the 2005 Reunion and the setting up of the proposed new Squadron Association website. It is hoped this will be in place early next year, watched over by Keith Ellis. I would like to add my own thanks to Colin and Jean for all that they do, taking care of the Memorial throughout the year. It was a long way to travel, but worth every mile.

**John Holford**

#### **Greta Overmeen.**

We regret to tell you that Honorary Member Greta died in hospital at the end of October. A full Obituary will appear in February's NL. In the meantime, we extend our sympathy to her family in Holland.

## **The Jug and Bottle**

Thanks to the prompt action of Roger Stevenson, the unique sign outside the Inn has been rescued from a skip! This is the price we pay for modernisation! There are other items of great intrinsic value to the Squadron and your Committee has agreed that these should be placed in the Museum at the Waltham Windmill for safe keeping if the Brewery decides there is no longer a place for them in the pub. We'll have more on this in February.

## **And finally**

Many Happy Returns to John 'Ginger' Stevens.