



# THE HORNET

## The Newsletter of the 100 Squadron Association

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## Newsletter 98 - August 2012

Dear Colleagues,

Yet another milestone in the history of our great Squadron is upon us; 95 years and still going strongly! It is my great hope to still be around for the 100th! It was nice to see many of you at the Reunion, pity about the weather, still as 'Brits' we must be used to it by now!

In this issue, we must reluctantly say farewell to two of our most ardent supporters, firstly Keith Ellis, a committee stalwart for several years (see page 4), and our Liaison Officer Simon Kinnersley, posted to a much less peaceful environment. With only two more issues of this N/L planned before I stand down, we desperately need someone to take on the job! Inside you will find reports on the Reunion, the Bomber Command Memorial Dedication, the Jubilee Flypast and much more.

John

## **Subscription Reminder**

Annual subscriptions were due on 1 August, so those paying by Bank Standing Order should have seen £10 transferred on their latest statement. Can I please remind those few members **who pay by cheque** to send their £10 annual subscription to me at:

Knob Hall  
Mill Lane  
Barrowden  
Oakham  
Rutland  
LE15 8EH

Norman Bonnor

Acting Treasurer

## **Donations**

We have recently received donations from: Keith Garrett, and Colin and Jean Johnson. I thank these members for their generosity, which helps us keep going under increasing postal and other costs.

Norman Bonnor

Acting Treasurer

## **Change of Address**



Jack Cook has moved into Wexford House in Melton Mowbray, which is run by RAFA for like-minded people.

Jack's new address is:

Mr J Cook  
Wexford House  
70 Burton Road  
Melton Mowbray  
Leicestershire  
LE13 1DL

## **Obituary**

It is with deep regret I have to inform you that Alan Robert Gaffney (Chf Tech retired) passed away peacefully in his sleep at the grand age of 95 on the 4th of July 2012. He was born in June 1917, the penultimate year of WWI.

He served in the RAF from a young man until he reached 55 years old. He always spoke about his times in the Far East. His funeral was held on the 17th of July at Kingsdown Crematorium, Swindon.

Eric Gaffney

## **Holton le Clay - Remembrance Service** **11th November 2012**

Our Remembrance Day Service will take place at the main 100 Squadron Memorial site on Sunday, 11th November 2011. The usual timings will apply and those wishing to attend should assemble at the lay-by close to the A16 traffic lights from 11:30 onwards.

It is the intention of The Boss, to provide a fly past of 100 Squadron aircraft. This is, of course, subject to weather and other Squadron commitments.

Colin and Jean Johnson have again agreed to arrange lunch after the Service. Renovations of the new Holton le Clay Village Hall in Pinfold Lane (formerly The Etherington Arms) are unlikely to be complete, so lunch will probably be in the old hall we know so well. The cost of lunch will be £6:00 per head payable at the door. Catering is made so much simpler for Colin and Jean if those wishing to attend and partake of lunch let us know prior to the 11th November. So please inform Air Cdre Bonnor (01572 747658 or bonnors@gmail.com) that you will attend and come for lunch by no later than 2nd November. This information will be passed on to Colin and Jean in good time for them to purchase the necessary supplies.

## Letter from Dr Keith Ellis

Many of you will be aware that I have experienced a period of poor health starting back in 2008 and coming to a head in November 2011. Subsequent surgery in March 2012 has corrected the problem. Recovery punctuated, by "gremlin attacks" is proceeding, albeit not as smoothly and quickly as I would have wished. I have decided to resign my membership of 100 Squadron Association for very personal reasons. The reasons are not, **IN ANYWAY**, related to my health problems. I have been privileged to have served the Association for over eight years in a variety of roles. Initially, I re-designed and re-launched a moribund Website and maintained that site for over two years. Then I, along with a great deal of help from Greg Harrison, Norman Bonnor and others, initiated, researched and produced our DVD "One Hundred at Ninety" as part of our 90th Birthday Reunion celebrations. This DVD not only produced an audio-visual history of our distinguished squadron, but also contributed more than £1,000 to Association funds. I also served as Association Secretary for four years and more recently as Treasurer for the past year.

I leave 100 Squadron Association with regret and sadness. It has been my good fortune to have met many distinguished and brave gentlemen during the past eight years, and I value such meetings and conversations. In bidding you all 'farewell' I wish you peace, good health, and happiness.

Yours Aye,

Dr Keith Ellis

The Committee, and I, can't thank Keith enough for all his valiant efforts on our behalf over the last eight years, and we wish him and Laura all the very best for the future.

## **Does anyone remember Griff?**

Can any of our WWII veterans remember a pilot named Oscar Griffiths? He was killed on Christmas Eve 1944 during a raid on Cologne. If you do, could you please contact member Bill Evans of 11, Oakfield Street, Pontardulais, Swansea SA4 1LN 01792-882090



He is enquiring on behalf of Mrs May Chatten, who was Oscar's fiancé in those days and would like to be put in touch with any of his family who may still be around.

May and her daughter Barbara Huxley have joined us as Associate members.

Sgt (later Flying Officer) 'Griff' Griffiths



'Griff' with most of his crew

# **Reunion 2012**

## **and 95th Anniversary Dinner**

The meet and greet held in the Solberge Hall Hotel at Newby Wiske went off very well with most members finding the venue straight away, unlike me who drove passed the place for a couple of miles and had to ask the way! After coffee and biscuits, the AGM and Remembrance Service took place in an adjoining room (see separate report on page 18), after which we had a most welcome buffet before returning to our accommodation.

Saturday arrived with a very poor weather outlook; the station Families Day Air Show did start off dry, but very soon became very wet! Most of the show went off very well in spite of the rain, although the BBMF flypast had to be cancelled, and some of our ladies spent the afternoon in the comfort of the Officers' Mess and who could blame them?

The 95th Anniversary Dinner started with a welcoming drink just inside the hanger doors while the rain was pouring down just outside. Many of us wondering if The Main Guest would be able to come, but we need not have worried; we heard the mighty roar of four Merlins as The Phantom emerged from the gloom followed by a Spitfire, and both made several passes before the Lanc landed and taxied right up to our door to be in floodlit view for the rest of the evening! The whole event went extremely well; the food was excellent; what a difference to the 90th! The Band was very good, and the dance floor was much used. A fireworks display lit up The Phantom just before midnight, but many of those present carried on the party for a couple more hours.

I, for one, was very pleased with the way it went, and I believe well worth the large subsidy provided from the Association funds for those who attended.

John





The Phantom arrives in the rain



Association attendees





Ron Clark and Doc Watson swop memories



Is it fireworks or flak?



## **Change of Squadron Liaison Officer**

We are saying goodbye to Flt Lt 'Kinno' Kinnersley, our Liaison Officer for the past six years! Kinno is off to work with the Army as Air Staff Officer with No.1 Mechanised Brigade at Tidworth Barracks in Wiltshire. His posting will include six months service in Afghanistan on Herrick 18 from April 2013. Kinno has been a special friend of the Association and its members, and we marked his outstanding service by electing him as an honorary member at the AGM.

Kinno is replaced as our Liaison Officer by Flt Lt Jonathan 'Jonny' Mulhall who joined 100 in April. Jonny grew up in Nottinghamshire and read Chemistry at Nottingham Trent University where he was a member of the East Midlands UAS. He joined the RAF in Feb 2002 and, on graduation from fast jet training in 2005, was posted to 617 Squadron flying the Tornado GR4 in August 2006. In 2009, he moved to Valley as a QFI on 208 Squadron. He lives on the patch at Leeming with his wife Sidonie and two young children. When not at work or changing nappies or walking his two dogs, he likes to be outside either walking, running or fishing and is an active scuba diver.



## **Queen's Diamond Jubilee Parade and Muster**

OC 100 Squadron, faced one of the toughest flying jobs of his career when he was the lead pilot for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee display over Windsor. The Boss represented RAF Leeming as part of the 2,500 personnel Armed Forces Parade and Muster through Windsor in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh. While all three Services were represented on the ground, the day culminated in a spectacular tri-service flypast of historic and current aircraft. The Royal Navy and Royal Air Force Hawk jet E II R formation was the show stopper. As a former member of the Red Arrows, the Boss is used to difficult close formation flying; however, the flypast fell into a whole new category of technical difficulty. He said: "It was the biggest formation I have ever been in - and I think it was probably the biggest ever Hawk formation with 27 jets."

The formation took three-and-a-half months to prepare, and three weeks of flying practice to perfect. The three Hawks from Leeming made up one of the columns of the 'II' with the other element from the Royal Navy at RNAS Yeovilton. The rest of the formation was split into the 'E' from 4 Squadron and the 'R' which was made of aircraft from 208 Squadron at RAF Valley.



On the day itself, all the Hawks were parked on the same ASP at Yeovilton, which was an impressive sight with the mass start of jets enough to get anybody's nerves going. After take-off, the 27 Hawks formed their display off the south coast, and held in position for 50 miles before flying overhead Windsor.



## **The Dedication and Unveiling of the Bomber Command Memorial**

On Thursday 28th June 2012, Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness, The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh attended the Dedication and Unveiling of the Bomber Command Memorial in Green Park opposite the RAF Club in Piccadilly. After a welcome address by Air Commodore Malcolm White, Chairman of the Bomber Command Association, Her Majesty unveiled the Memorial Statues which were sculpted by Philip Jackson and represent the seven-man crew of a heavy bomber returning from an operation. There followed a dedication service during which the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Dalton, gave a very moving address. Other members of The Royal Family attended in RAF uniform including HRH, The Prince of Wales, who spent a long time talking to veterans after the ceremony.



The Memorial is dedicated to the 55,573 airmen of RAF Bomber Command who died in World War II; its unveiling marks the end of a long battle by survivors and other supporters to achieve national recognition for the bomber crews' role in winning the war. More than 1,000 veterans who survived the conflict and the years since attended the event, along with relatives of the fallen, serving members of the RAF, and political leaders. It was a sunny and warm day but fortunately a large number of University Air Squadron cadets were on hand to help the older veterans and hand out water to those attending this very special event.

As the service came to a close, five Tornado GR4s flew past in tribute, but all present were waiting for the BBMF Lancaster in the guise of 'The Phantom of The Ruhr', EE139 which completed 30 operations as HW-R with 'C' Flight of 100 Squadron at RAF Grimsby, Lincolnshire and, when the Flight broke away to form the new 550 Squadron at RAF North Killingholme, was re-assigned as BQ-B and flew another 91 operations to become a centurion. 'The Phantom' had arrived on 100 Squadron in 1943 in the hands of Sergeant Ron Clark (later Flight Lieutenant Clark DFC), who was invited to fly with the BBMF on the 28th June and release the poppy petals over the Memorial site. While Ron flew past above us, the 100 Squadron Association was well represented on the ground by his wife Molly and daughter Nina, Colin Bell, Brian Hulme, Mike and Damien English and myself. The Squadron Standard was on parade together with the RAF Colour and nine other standards from serving squadrons that flew with Bomber Command.

Fund raising for the Memorial was headed by The Bomber Command Association and, apart from the survivors and serving RAF personnel, was supported by many famous personalities including the singer Robin Gibb, who unfortunately died only a month before its unveiling. The RAF Benevolent Fund has taken on the responsibility for care and maintenance of the Portland stone structure and its aluminium roof, the metal for which was donated by Canada but includes some remains of a Halifax recovered from a swamp in Belgium. The architect of the Memorial itself and the landscaping nearby is Liam O' Connor.

Norman Bonnor



Her Majesty unveils the Memorial



Ron Clark releases the Poppies

## **Gelderland, The Netherlands - 4th May 2012**

With a day that started grey, we assembled at the Terwolde Cemetery at 2pm. Unfortunately, 'The Phantom of the Ruhr' was delayed taking off due to bad weather in England. By 3pm the heavens had opened and many of the 50/60 villagers who had assembled were very wet! And, although we tried to pass the word that the Lancaster would be there by 4:10pm, some just could not wait any longer, so when at last it arrived we heard it long before we saw it appear just above the trees. It did two circuits and passed not just over us but also the village of Twello and the crash site at Teauge. It was, like last year, a wonderful spectacle. Many thanks must go to the crew and the organisation by the BBMF.

At 7.30pm, we assembled again at the Terwolde cemetery and were joined by seven children from the local middle school, two representatives from the "Oranje" committee and between 250-300 villagers. The evening ceremony was as usual with the trumpeter and drummer leading the way around the village graves and onto our 6 graves of those lost from the Lancaster shot down over Teauge. (The rear gunner, being the only survivor in 1943.) Along with us was the representative from Canada and three other Canadians. At 8pm, the two minute silence was observed and then we all dispersed. As always, we were welcomed by those organising the ceremony but were humbled by the parents and children of the village who came up to us to say how pleased they were to see us again, and one lady, that we have come to know on the last five visits we have made, took photos from her album that she took last year and gave them to us.

We are honoured to have yet again represented the Squadron and Association in this very appreciative community.

Lyndy and James 'Trevor' Watson.

Thanks to you both for your efforts on our behalf,

Norman and John!







## **News from Grashoek**

Some years back, a group of friends decided to write a book of the history of their Village of Grashoek, so in 2010 "Waar de Groote Molenbeek ontspringt" (the source of the millstream) was published. In 288 pages, beautifully illustrated reports, photos and documents give fascinating glimpses into the past 100 years of a small Dutch rural community. Of course, no history of Grashoek would be complete without telling of the loss of 100 Squadron's Lancaster ED937 on the night of 15th June 1943. The story is there to be found complete with a photograph of the crew and of the monument made by Wim Van Ophoven and unveiled on a glorious day 59 years to the day of the crash. (A wonderful Ceremony with hundreds of people from miles around, with government, and civic dignitaries, a convoy of WWII vehicles, a flypast by a local aero club, and of course a group of Association members, Ed.) The book is a marvellous achievement by Theo Engelen, Huub Kluijtmans, Henk Steeghs Piet Madou, and editor Wim Cruysbergh and won this year's award of the County Culture Prize, a fitting reward for many years work!

Pip Kay

Monument Work Group

Thanks for the article Pip. Honorary Member - Huub Kluijtmans presented a copy of this book to the Squadron at the AGM!

Thanks Huub.



## **A New Memorial in The Netherlands**

On the 26th of May 2012, a new memorial was unveiled at Melderslo, The Netherlands in commemoration of the crash of the 100 Squadron Lancaster, W-4998, HW-J. On the 26th May 1943, the aircraft was on a raid from Waltham to Dusseldorf. On the return, HW-J was probably hit so badly by "Flak" that it crashed near the crossroads Vlasvenweg, Meldersloseweg/ Lottumseweg en Boomsweg. Five crewmembers were killed:

RNZAF Flight Sergeant A T M Moore (pilot)

RAFVR Sergeant D C Stone (navigator)

RNZAF Sergeant L C Maunsell (air gunner)

RAFVR Flight Sergeant J C Wood (wireless operator/gunner)

RAFVR Sergeant M Keogh (gunner)

All are buried at the Commonwealth War Cemetery 'Jonkerbos' Nijmegen. Two crew members: Sergeant E S C Wilkins (flight engineer), and Sergeant Coventry (rear gunner), were able to bale out by parachute just before the crash.

The monument is a private initiative, and we thank our Dutch friends for remembering these brave men.





## **The 28th Annual General Meeting**

The 28th AGM was held at the Solberge Hall Hotel on 8th June 2012. 30 members attended. The minutes of the 27th AGM were approved without change.

Air Cdre Bonnor, as Acting Secretary, reported that the Association had lost several long serving Members, and that he would read out the list of 'Absent Friends' during the Service to be held after the AGM. We had gained several new Associate Members but had lost contact with a number of older members who had not renewed their subscriptions either by bank Standing Order (SO) or by cheque.

Air Cdre Bonnor, as Acting Treasurer, reported that the 2011 Accounts had been prepared by Keith Ellis and audited in line with our Constitution. Association finances are healthy with the year-end reserves of £6,356 (compared to £5,673 at the end of 2010.) The Reunion and Anniversary dinner was being subsidised from Association funds by more than 50% of the true cost to the members attending.

Damien English reported that the revised website now includes a 'Members Area'. This is to allow members to access the latest issue of The Hornet online together with previous issues. This area is fully secure and cannot be accessed by anyone who is not a registered member. See Page 20 for how to register for the 'Members Area'.

John Holford, reported that approximately 250 copies of 'The Hornet' are distributed to members. Production costs remain largely static, but postage costs had risen significantly this year and now total more than the printing cost. Therefore, it becomes ever more important that members who have the means to receive electronic copies register their wish to do so as soon as possible.

Possible dates and venues for the 2013 Reunion will be discussed at a future Committee Meeting and published in The Hornet when confirmed. Air Cdre Bonnor said that it is becoming increasingly difficult to book an RAF station as the Defence cuts bite and more RAF stations close. Hotels near to aviation museums of interest may now be competitively priced.

## **The Passing of Common Sense**

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as: knowing when to come in out of the rain; why the early bird gets the worm; life isn't always fair; and maybe it was my fault.

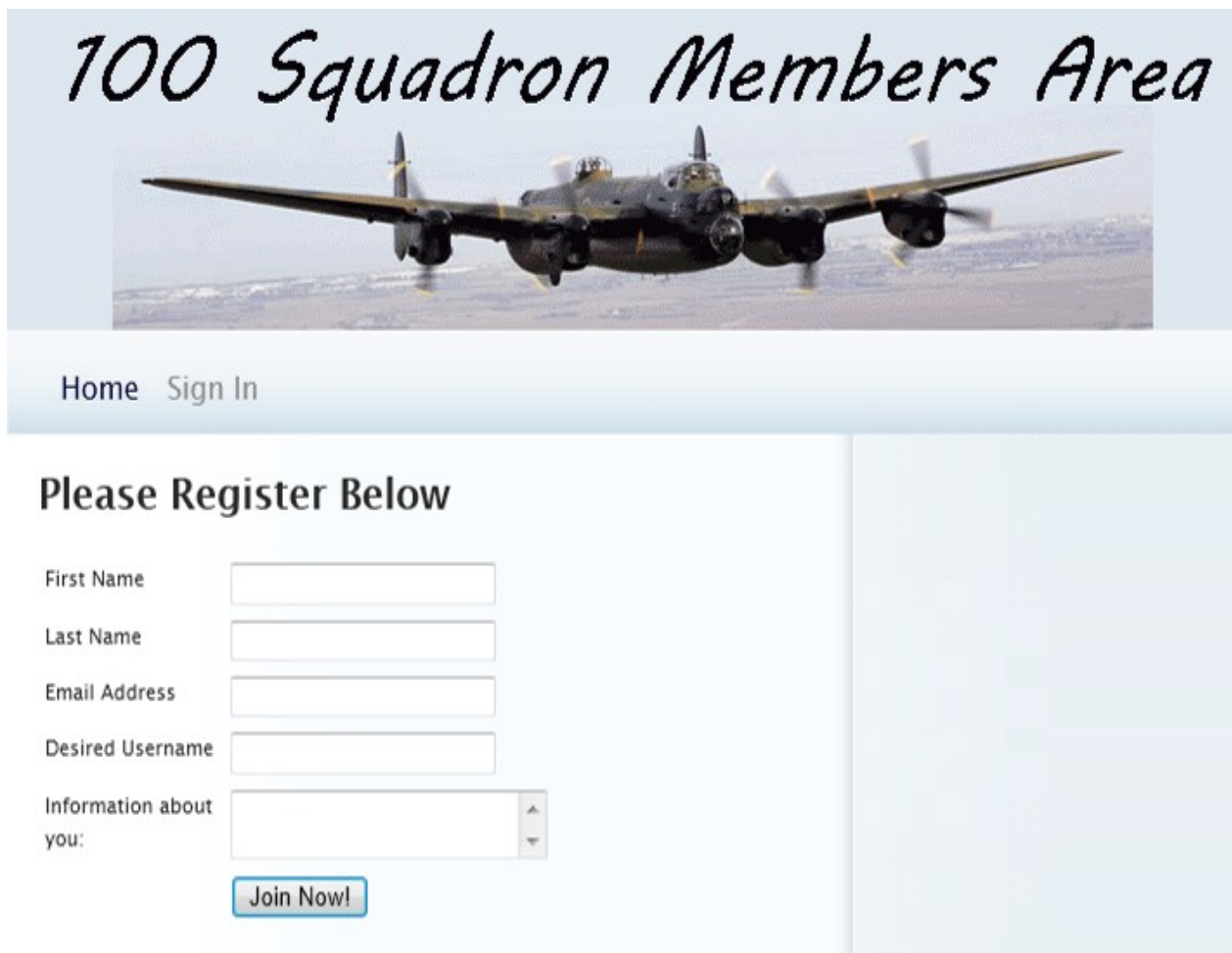
Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies - don't spend more than you can earn and adults, not children, are in charge. His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using a mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition. Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. He declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion. Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims. He took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home, and the burglar could sue you for assault. He finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realise that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death, by his parents, Truth and Trust, by his wife Discretion, his daughter Responsibility, and his son, Reason. He is survived by his four stepbrothers; I Know My Rights, I Want It Now, Someone Else Is To Blame and I'm A Victim. Not many attended his funeral because so few realised he had gone. If you still remember him, remind others.

## The 100 Squadron Association Website

The website now contains a 'Members Area' that gives access to electronic versions of The Hornet. To register, do the following:

- Log into the internet.
- In your browser address bar, type the following and press 'Enter':  
www.100squadronassociation.org.uk/members/join\_form.php
- You will arrive at a 'Registration Page'; enter your details, and note the 'Username' you wish to use. When you have registered, click 'Join Now.'



100 Squadron Members Area

Home Sign In

**Please Register Below**

First Name

Last Name

Email Address

Desired Username

Information about you:

- This will take you to a 'Log In Page' but first check your e-mail inbox for the 'Activation Message' which, apart from activating on the special link, will include a password to use with your Username to login.
- To Login, simply enter your Username and Password noting that this is case sensitive.
- Click the 'Submit' button and you will arrive in the 'Members Area' and will have access to The Hornet and past copies in colour.