



# The Hornet

## The Newsletter of 100 Squadron Association

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## Newsletter 63 - November 2003

I write this editorial at the beginning of November just as we reach once more the time when we turn our thoughts and prayers towards all those who perished in defence of our nation **We will remember them.** We were unable to join you all at the Memorial in Holton–Le-Clay this year; however, I marched with my local RAFA branch to the Remembrance service in Wimborne Minster.

Talking of memories, my wife and I found ourselves in Cardiff where we met up with Greg Harrison, whose grandfather served with 100 at Waltham. Greg has devoted years of research into the records of 100 Squadron and is willing to pass on any info he has details of, for instance every Lancaster flown by us in WW2 and their crews, operations records from 1919 to 1945 and even photos of headstones from all over Europe of those who did not return, and much more. Greg's phone no is 02920 394030. Finally, one of our members went to an air show at Shepway, Folkestone in August where he saw a fly past by of one of the Squadron's Hawks. Please could we have notice of such participation in future.

Best wishes for the coming festive season.

John

# Correspondence

Thanks to Jim Berry for pointing out a glaring error in NL 62: we reported that Flt Lt Dave Harvey did a fly past on 9th June over the memorial ceremony on 6th June. 'Had he overslept?' asks Jim. Sorry!

Also apologies to John Fray for spelling his name wrongly. He and Bill Harrison are still working on their list of names from Wittering, and John also refers to the September edition of Aeroplane Monthly about the Beauforts of 71 Wing RAAF of which 100 Squadron RAAF was part.

Tony Davey writes from Aix les Bains in France asking for help from the Lancaster boys. He wonders whether the Lake Le Bourget (the largest lake in France) was perhaps used as turning point when the raids on Turin and Milan were carried out?

Miss Honor Redshaw wrote to thank Arthur White for the obituary he wrote for her Dad Eric. She and her sister are hoping to research his RAF career and to write a further article for the newsletter.

Mrs Ruth E Cooper is seeking information about her late brother 913763 Sgt Peter H R Hunt of 100 Squadron who lost his life while flying in Lancaster ED653 HW-E on an operation against Stuttgart. The aircraft crashed at Bohain.

Greg Harrison has available a most comprehensive record of 100 Squadron ops, including aircraft records and in many cases photographs of headstones of lost aircrew. He was able to assist Alan Barrow with his search for details of Fg Off Gerald Hood as requested in NL 62.

Colin Johnson sent us a copy of the Grimsby Telegraph of September 22nd featuring a report of the flypast by City of Lincoln in remembrance of those who served at RAF Grimsby. Stamper Metcalfe and Arthur White are quoted among others, including new Association member Katie Reid who had travelled from Devon to be there.

Alastair McQuaid wrote to bring the following to members' attention. 'Until recently I was unaware that warrants for Warrant Officers and commissions for Commissioned Officers were actual documents. Then

a former colleague of my father showed me his warrant and subsequent commission parchment scrolls and I thought they were very attractive and decided to obtain Dad's. They are provided free to the individual or next of kin. You will need to provide name, service number (before and after promotion) and dates of service.' Apply to:

Royal Air Force Personnel Management Agency  
PMA 8b (2) RAF  
RAF Innsworth  
Gloucester GL3 1EZ

## **RAF Grimsby Memorial Day** **Saturday, 20th September**

On a glorious sunny day 60 or 70 supporters of Jon Moore's RAF Grimsby Exhibition joined a number of local residents at the Waltham Windmill Museum of Rural Life where they mingled for an hour or so renewing old acquaintances from previous occasions. As ever, great interest was shown in the exhibits which are regularly updated by Roger Stephenson with discoveries he has unearthed from the wreckage of the crashed Lancaster at Hatcliffe Top. It is also an experience to browse around the Rural Life Museum trying to identify 1920's washers, flat irons, posers and a vast array of utensils, now mysteries, but in regular use 80 years ago. According to the Secretary, if you can identify six you are eligible for inclusion as an exhibit!

At noon, the party was taken by coaches to the RAFA Club at Cleethorpes for an excellent buffet lunch, a few jars and a good natter. It was good to see Stamper in action again after a gruelling three months getting his new knee joint; 'Jimmy' Johnson though badly affected by eyesight problems managed to make it along with Jack Riddell, Bob Pierson, Katie Reid (flying control), Mrs Grey and Mrs Joan Hightfield (MT).

There was an hour or so for us to stroll along the seafront while checking the time for the arrival of the star of the show, the BBMF Lancaster 'City of Lincoln'. At 14.45 precisely, to cries of 'She's coming!' we heard that SOUND as she appeared flying north over the promenade in that stately, majestic yet determined manner which only a Lancaster

can achieve.

As the sound diminished she banked and turned over the Humber for another pass over the promenade, then all too soon, headed west to delight the watchers at Waltham Windmill, and that was it. Just two minutes but every second treasured. There was time for the onlookers to wipe their eyes, have a glass of wine at the RAFA Club and then board the coaches for a drive around the airfield followed by a short remembrance service at the Squadron Memorial conducted by the Rev. Alan Hundleby, Vicar of All Saints Church, Waltham.

Jon Moore outlined the history of RAF Grimsby and the roles and casualties of 142, 100 and 550 Squadrons, then came the short service followed by the laying of wreaths led by Wg Cdr Mike Simpson O/C 100 Sqn, LAC Willoughby (142 Sqn), Audrey Kelly and Phil Masson (RAFA), Peter Rae (Grimsby and Cleethorpes Paras Assoc.), Jack Riddell (550 Sqn) and Jon Moore (RAF Grimsby Exhibition).

A two minutes silence was observed for our fallen comrades after which Stamper Metcalfe recited the Dedication. Rev. Hundleby then read the poem 'The sky over Holland' written by an unknown Dutch lady in 1945, which was sent by Greta Overmeen. Following the closing hymn, 'Oh God our help in ages past', Stamper paid tribute to Jon Moore for all his efforts in organising the event, and Wg Cdr Simpson was also thanked for joining us from RAF Leeming.

The day ended with the return to the Windmill although there was an opportunity to return to the RAFA Club in the evening for a video and slide show.

Our thanks to Jon for setting up the day so successfully and to Roger Stephenson for his work behind the scenes and his excavations at Hatcliffe Top; to Audrey Kelly who is Treasurer to the Waltham Windmill, and to the Committee of the RAFA Club for their generous hospitality and excellent lunch.

Arthur White.

# **Remembrance Service 2003**

In contrast to the wet and windy day in 2002, the weather this Remembrance Sunday was mild with nary a cloud in the sky. About 100 people gathered at the Squadron Memorial situated by the A16 road to the NW of Holton le Clay, near to the airfield RAF Waltham.

It was good to see the stalwarts of yesteryear attending; Arthur White, Stamper Metcalfe, Frank Ockerby, Jim Berry, Jimmy Johnson, George Charles, 'Ginger' Stevens and Colin Bell among others.

This year the Squadron paraded the Squadron Standard which added greatly to the sense of occasion. Wing Commander Mike Simpson, OC 100 Squadron headed a party of 11 officers, NCO's and airmen. The Standard Bearer was Flt Lt Dave Clark, flanked by two senior NCO's, Flt Sgt Binns and Sgt Barnes. The attendance of No 195 (Grimsby) Sqn of the ATC with their Standard, under the command of Flt Lt Fish added to the spectacle.

In spite of the traffic noise, the words spoken by Rev. Chris Woadden and Stamper Metcalfe could be heard clearly over the loudspeakers. Stamper recited the Act of Remembrance and then there followed the Last Post played by Holly Smith. Precisely, as Wg Cdr Simpson laid his wreath, with Stamper counting down the seconds to minute 13, the Hawk, piloted by Flt Lts Colin Brough and Colin Ballantyne flew overhead at 250 ft and then climbed steeply towards Grimsby.

Wreaths were then laid by Air Cdre Bonnor for the Association, Bob White for the Parish Council, Ray Whitely for the ROC, Jon Moore for RAFA, Ian Reid for Waltham Airfield Research and WO Boon for the ATC Squadron. The short service ended with the singing of 'O God our help in ages past'.

Most of the congregation then repaired to the Church Hall for a splendid meal provided by Jean and Colin Johnson and their two daughters. We are indebted to Colin for providing this meal at little cost to the diners and also for caring for the memorial.

Alex Wedderburn

## **New Members**

Mrs Kathryn (Katie 'Half - pint') Reid  
10 Rathlin Palermo Road, Babbacombe  
Torquay Devon TQ1 3NW  
Tel: 01803 312721

Katie was at Waltham in 1943.  
She is a life member of Equity and was a LAMDA (Hons)

Mr James Paton  
6, North Street, Montrose, Angus DD10 8NG  
Tel: 01674 474348  
James was an LAC Instrument assistant at RAF Hemswell,  
on Lincolns, 1048 – 50.

Mrs Joan (Dizzy) Highfield, nee Morgan  
11, Station Road, Burton Joyce  
Nottingham NG1 4AN  
Tel: 01158 419099

## **Change of Addresses**

Mr Michael J Reed  
Flat 30 Regal Court, Bythesea,  
Trowbridge  
Wilts BA14 8HJ  
Tel: 01225 755954 e.mail  
reedmjreed@aol.com

Mr P R Bond  
50 Cathedral View Court  
Cabourne Avenue  
Lincoln  
LN2 2GF  
Tel: 01547 560473

E B F Ferris  
6, Rockbridge Park  
Presteigne  
Powys  
LD8 2NF

James G Mc Mahon  
Flat 6, 3 Dryburgh Avenue  
Rutherglen  
Glasgow  
G73 3EF  
Tel: 01416 430908

# **You don't have to worry about flak**

This is an edited version of an article by Allan McDougall, sent to us by Bill Chisholm of the Canadian association.

This is the story of one op. that I took part in as a member of 100 Squadron RAF. Our skipper, Harold C Smith was known as Moose on account of the excellent Canadian moose call he would give forth after several pints of English ale. We were a typical Lancaster crew, Canadian and English with a Scottish flight engineer known as Jock.

On the morning of 23rd March 1945, we were awakened at 0400 and ordered to report to the briefing room at once. It was a typical Lincolnshire morning, cold, damp and foggy. The briefing officer arrived, and we learnt that our target was to be bridge over the Weser near Bremen, a bridge essential to the German supply operation.

We collected our gear and were airborne by 0720 hrs. We were the third wave. The bridge was heavily defended by anti-aircraft units. The flak was so heavy that the sky was black. As we turned on to our cross run I saw that the bridge had gone!

At this point our starboard engine's oil temperature began to rise alarmingly with a corresponding pressure drop. Now we were running on three engines. Y-Yoke was a very old bird and we began to drop back in the stream. We gunned our remaining engines in an effort to maintain our position. The bomb aimer took over, and we made our run. I don't know whether we hit our target as by now all the engine temperatures were rising. There should have been an escort to get us home, but as far as we were concerned, we were on our own.

Suddenly three flak bursts appeared about 100 yards away. Moose proceeded to take evasive action. Three more bursts appeared just where we had been. After several of these bursts we were out of range and cruising over North Germany. I noticed we were flying over an airfield. I saw three aircraft taking off and in no time at all they were alongside. Our mid upper gunner thought they were Mustangs. "No way!" I said. At that point they peeled off and came in to attack us in line astern from the rear. Soon our turrets were blazing. The first fighter was so fast that he overshot, the second flew directly into fire

from six Brownings and just blew up in a gigantic fireball, and the third peeled off and did not press his attack. All this took place in a matter of seconds. We never did see our Mustang escort and returned to base nursing our engines.

At the interrogation, we identified our attackers as ME262 jet fighters. We were eventually credited with shooting down an ME 262 outside Bremen and as far as I am aware, the only Lancaster credited with the destruction of a German jet in combat. We did go on to complete our tour.

Every year since 1945, Allan has received a Christmas card from Moose saying "Remember March 23rd, you don't have to worry about flak."

This crew of B Flight 100 Squadron were: Jock McDougall FE, Evan Greenley AG, Harold Smith pilot, Jim McMichael BA, Warren Merral navigator, Pat Kenny AG and Jack Smith WOp.

## **Obituaries**

### **Arthur "Poker" Gamble**

It is with deep regret we announce the death of Arthur in hospital in Stranraer on 9th September aged 81. Arthur enlisted in the RAF in 1940 and served as a fitter in Singapore until the Japanese invasion when he managed to escape to Ceylon. He re-mustered as a flight engineer in Sqn Ldr Robb's crew at Waltham. His exploits both in Singapore and with 100 Squadron are vividly recounted in his book "An Itinerant Airman". After the war he returned to his trade as an engineer until his retirement in the early '80s. With his wife Annie he left his Yorkshire home and moved to the Scottish village of Dalry where, as he put it, "there was peace".

The funeral took place on 12th September at the Church of St John's Dalry. Floral tributes were sent on behalf of the Association.

To Dorothea, his sons Robbie, Roy and Kevin and their families we send our deepest condolences.



## **Mr Ron Sedgewick**

Ron died on 4th August and his funeral took place on 12th at Rawdon Crematorium, Leeds. Kevin Webster attended on behalf of the Association. A letter of sympathy was sent to his wife, and his daughter has requested a donation be made in his name to Wheatfields Hospice at Headingley.

## **Mr Ted E Geldard**

From the obituary column in "Airmail" we learn that Ted died recently at his home in Shotton after a long illness. Ted was a fitter at Seletar and is pictured in "The Hornets' Nest" standing on the wing of a Beaufort of "Q" Flight shortly after the Beauforts arrived at Seletar. Following the Japanese invasion, he was taken prisoner to Fukuora No 2 POW camp near Nagasaki along with Bill Rafter. Part of his story is recounted in "The Hornets' Nest". He and his group worked in the Nagasaki shipyards and were among the few Europeans to survive the atomic bomb. Following instructions from American leaflets, the group took over the installations.

Ted was a widower, and to the best of our knowledge had no children. His death, following so closely after Eric Redshaw and Roy Mager will be regretted by all of us and particularly by our few surviving members from the Singapore days.

## **Remembrance**

Following the death of Eric Redshaw, we received the following lines from his daughters Honor and Marguerite, written thinking not only of their father but also of all who were connected by the shared experiences of wartime and by peacetime reunions.

The lights do not go out  
Remembrance is a flame  
Forever shining, each memory  
A lamp, carried steadily  
With pride and love  
Towards the future.

## **Derrick (Ric) Orchard MBE, KSS**

Derrick died in June after a mercifully short illness. We are grateful to his daughter Susanna for the following obituary, and extend our condolences to his widow Joan and children Susanna and Vaughn.

Safety and the welfare of others were recurring themes through Ric's RAF career, while humour, charm and generosity defined his personality. As a flight engineer with 100 Squadron ('U' for Uncle) he completed 20 missions over Germany during WW2 and never lost the sense of wonder whenever he saw a Lancaster fly overhead. Not one for sharing the more dangerous aspects of his service life, he occasionally let slip tales of being strapped to other crew members in order to control the aircraft and having to manually release bombs from the bay. Dangerous though the war years were, he nevertheless had enormous fun and met some wonderful people. If one day he hadn't chosen to wear a clean collar he would not have caught the eye of a lovely young WRAF driver named Joan, whom he later married and spent 59 years with.

Commissioned in 1944, Derrick remained in the RAF, opting for a career in air traffic control and earning his MBE for the development of safety procedures that are still in operation today. He was instrumental in the development of pilot simulators and considered it a great privilege to be invited by the Captain of Ark Royal to steer this great ship while on board to advise on landing procedures.

He retired from the RAF as a Group Captain in 1977 and began his second career as Bursar of Westminster Cathedral under Cardinal Basil Hume. During 15 years at the Cathedral, he was responsible for the organisation of two VIP visits: the Queen in her Jubilee year and Pope John Paul 2nd in 1982. His tireless fundraising and financial management skills resulted in him receiving the Catholic equivalent of a Knighthood, the Order of St Sylvester. In testimony to the high esteem in which the priesthood held this bright, wonderful (Anglican) man, they held a requiem mass celebrating his life earlier this year.

His family and colleagues mourn his death. Thank you Derrick for enriching all our lives.

Susanna Orchard

Thursday 13th November 2003

## **E-mail from Len Park**

Len writes to point out that his name and address appear differently on five entries on the website. His current details are as follows:

Leonard Park  
70/2 Hungerford Avenue  
Halls Head  
Mandurah  
Western Australia  
(08)9586 10031  
len-park@dodo.com.au

He comments that he operated from September 43 to 20th February 44 from Waltham. The reference to the Gathering of the Eagles was a flop and was cancelled due to lack of support. He hopes that this entry will attract some of the oldies, and finally points out that he was in the RAF and not the RAAF.

Hope this sets the record straight, Len.

## **From NL62**



The Squadron at Tengah (Singapore) in 1950.

# **Veterans' Agency**

We have received a leaflet from the Veterans' Agency full of information. The term 'veteran' is used to mean all those who have served in the UK armed forces - regardless of whether they served in war or during peacetime, or were volunteers, reservists or National Servicemen.

In March of this year, the MoD produced a Strategy for Veterans. Its aim is to ensure that the nation recognises and understands the commitment made by our veterans, that we commemorate that commitment and care for those veterans who require it. To obtain a copy of this document or for any further information, write to:

Customer Services Manager

Veterans' Agency

Norcross

Blackpool

FY5 3WP

or phone 0800 169 2277

[www.veteransagency.mod.uk/vasec/strategy.pdf](http://www.veteransagency.mod.uk/vasec/strategy.pdf)

# **Mother's Jokes**

Paul Revere's Mother: "I don't care where you think you have to go young man, midnight is past your curfew."

Columbus' Mother: " I don't care what you've discovered, you could still have written!"

Thomas Edison's Mother: "Of course I'm proud you invented the electric light bulb. Now turn it off and get into bed."

## Latest Blonde Joke

Once upon a time there was a blonde who worked in the air force, training to be a helicopter pilot. After several days of training she was doing so well that that the instructor let her go out on her own.

Five minutes later she was back, battered and bruised and without the helicopter.

"What on earth happened?" exclaimed the instructor.

"It was getting cold" said the blonde "so I turned off the fan."

In the beginning, God created earth and rested. Then God created man and rested. Then He created woman and since then neither God nor man has rested!

## From The Daily Telegraph letters page;

Sir,

Father Christmas is alive and well and spotted at Heathrow having his annual flying assessment.

Our skies are crowded enough. With this low-level rooftop flying, it was good to see the Civil Aviation Authority examiner doing his stuff.

They were sitting there in the sleigh, reindeer chomping at the bit, waiting for their slot among all the other air traffic. Suddenly I noticed that the examiner had a rifle beside him. "What's that all about?" I asked someone in a peaked hat.

"What? Oh that" he replied. "Father Christmas doesn't know it yet, but to keep him on his toes, he is going to lose an engine on take-off!"

Peter Smailes  
Dorset.



## **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 "The Hornet's Nest": £4.50 inc p&p

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

Black Baseball caps: £7.00 inc p&p

From Chris Bulteel (Fund Manager) or Sgt Higginbottom. 100 Squadron. Leeming. Cheques payable to 100 Squadron Aircrew Fund please.

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

Cheques payable to Arthur White please.