



Nightjar

February 2014

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Chairman's Letter

As ever, time seems to pass with increasing speed and, as I write this, it is already four months since our 2013 Reunion at the Hallmark Hotel in Derby on 5 October. As you will see from the Minutes elsewhere in this edition of *Nightjar*, the Annual General Meeting passed off without any surprises. It was followed by a pleasant dinner in the Edale Room, which we had used on some previous occasions and is an ideal size for our reduced numbers. On the Sunday morning, we gathered at our Squadron Memorial in the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas to lay a wreath in memory of all those who served on the Squadron, and especially those who lost their lives while serving on the Squadron in both peace and war.

My thanks go to all of the members of the Committee, who do the donkey work to keep the membership in touch through the medium of the *Nightjar* and to ensure the smooth running of the Reunion. My thanks also go to the loyal members and their partners who made the effort to come to the Reunion; without them all our efforts would be in vain. Although nearly all of those present were post-war members of the Squadron, we were pleased to welcome one wartime member, Paul Henry. I should also admit to an error in my Chairman's Letter in the Spring 2013 *Nightjar*, in which I stated that there were no wartime members of the Squadron present at the 2012 Reunion in Norwich. I had, of course, forgotten that John Gilpin had made the not inconsiderable effort to attend. I can only put this error down to my advancing years and hope that John will forgive me!

You will all have noticed the increasing attention being given in the media to the approaching anniversary of the start of the Great or First World War. The years 1914 to 1918 saw the aeroplane develop from something akin to a novelty, suitable only for artillery spotting and reconnaissance, to aeroplanes like the Handley Page O/100 and O/400 heavy bombers, of which the latter were capable of dropping a 1650 lb bomb. It was the Handley Page O/100 that equipped No 7A Squadron of the Royal Naval Air Service, the direct antecedent of No 214 Squadron Royal Air Force. No 7A Squadron was formed on 28 July 1917 by splitting eight aircraft from No 7 Squadron Royal Naval Air Service. No 7A Squadron was re-numbered No 14 Squadron Royal Naval Air Service on 9 December 1917, subsequently becoming No 214 Squadron Royal Air Force on 1 April 1918. In June 1918 it re-equipped with the more capable O/400, from one of which Sergeant Dell dropped the first 1650 lb 'SN' bomb on Middelkerke on the night of 24/25 July 1918.

I mention this history because, bearing in mind that each year there are fewer members able to attend the Reunion, we all need to consider the future of the Association and whether we should make plans to wind it up at an appropriate moment. Given that we are now only three and a half years from the 100th anniversary of the formation of the Squadron in July 2017, I should like to think that we will be able to keep the Association in existence at least until then. Indeed, this event might also offer an appropriate moment to wind up the Association. I should welcome members' views on the subject.

In the meantime, please make a note of the date of the next Reunion, which will be held at the Maids Head Hotel in Norwich on Saturday 4 October 2014. I strongly urge you to make the effort to attend if at all possible – we need you!

Alan Mawby

In Memoriam

Fred Hitchcock: Aged 98 - Lived in Paris. Fred was a Halton Apprentice and joined 214 at RAF Scampton in 1936/7 where he was a ground engineer and also flew as a gunner on the Vickers Virginia.

Colin Haigh: January 2014 - Aged 70. Colin was a Nav Radar on the Victor K1. He was on the second crew to be trained on the Victor K1 when it took over the tanking role after the Valiant was withdrawn from service following structural failures in 1965.

V-Force Reunion

17/18 May 2014

Newark Air Museum - Nottinghamshire

See www.vforcereunion.co.uk for details

Limited numbers for the evening function

Book now to avoid disappointment

214 Squadron Association Lunch

We will be holding another lunch with our President on 7th May at the Hare Arms in Stow Bardolph, Norfolk (PE34 3HT). Peter Walker will be contacting those of you that normally come, but if you have not been before, and would like to attend, then please give Peter a ring.

The Nightjar

I apologize that some of you received copies of the last issue of Nightjar that were below the standard that I would expect to produce. This was due to issues with the toner cartridges and wear and tear on the printer, which has now been consigned to the recycling bin at my local facility. I now have a new shiny office laser printer which I trust will serve me well for a number of years, and I hope that you will find this copy of a superior quality. My thanks go to the contributors for this edition, and especially to Gerry for his excellent article about his time as a Co-Pilot on the Squadron.

John Gulliver

Subscriptions - Still £10 per annum

A polite reminder to those of you who do not pay your subscription by Direct Debit that payment becomes due on 2 Jan. If you are not sure about your payments then please get in touch and I will be pleased to bring you up to date. For those of you who I have not heard from for a while, I shall be writing to confirm that you wish to continue receiving the Nightjar. With postage and production cost increasing yearly I regret that I will not be able to send hard copy in the future to those who do not pay subs as it is not fair on the other members who have to subsidize them.

The Treasurer

No 214 (FMS) SQUARON ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT THE HALLMARK HOTEL, DERBY,
ON SATURDAY 5 OCTOBER 2013

Committee Present:	Wing Commander Alan Mawby	Chairman
	John Gulliver	Treasurer
	Jock Whitehouse	Historian
	Shaun Broaders	
	Vic Pheasant	
	Peter Walker	Secretary

and nine members.

1. Chairman's Welcome. The Chairman welcomed all the members attending. This was the twenty-fifth Reunion since the Association was formed and twenty-six members and guests were booked for that evening's dinner, a similar number to the previous year.
2. Apologies. Apologies for absence had been received from: MRAF Sir Michael Beetham, ACM Sir David Parry-Evans, Gp Capt Peter Hill, Wg Cdr Tommy Tucker, Wg Cdr John Wynne, Gerry Crombie, Peter Crook, Maurice and Sylvia Harding (Australia), Gerhard and Sissie Heilig (Vienna), Barry Ireland, Peter Jowett, Roy Monk, Sidney Pike, Stu Waring.
3. In Memoriam. The names of former members of the Association and others connected to the Squadron whose deaths had been reported since the last reunion in October 2012 were read out:

George Fisher 25 Sep 2012 Age 88
Paul Gausden Sep 2013 (Victor pilot)
Mrs Peggy Henry Mar 2013 (wife of Paul Henry)
Mrs Barbara Robinson 5 May 2013 (friend of Jack Dixon)
4. Minutes of the 2012 Annual General Meeting. The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Maids Head Hotel, Norwich on 6 Oct 2012 were published in the Spring 2013 edition of *Nightjar*. No comments had been received. Acceptance of the Minutes was proposed by Shaun Broaders and seconded by Geoff Barrell and passed unanimously.
5. Matters Arising. There were no matters arising that were not covered by Agenda Items.
6. Chairman's Report. The Chairman reported that the main happenings during the past year were the production of the *Nightjar* newsletter, the Historian's activities, which would be reported separately, and the arrangement of this year's Reunion here in Derby. Although we had lost some members over the past twelve months, numbers were holding up well, especially considering that the Squadron was last operational in 1977. A few more people from the Victor era had come on board, so we were hopeful that we could keep going for a few more years. Thanks to John Gulliver's efforts and contributions from members, the *Nightjar* newsletter remained popular and was much appreciated by our older members, especially those who could no longer attend reunions. In addition to the Reunion, in May some seventeen members and wives, including Sir Michael Beetham, had attended a No 214 Squadron luncheon at the Hare Arms in Stow Bardolph, just north of Downham Market. Similar lunches had been held in the two previous years, primarily so that Sir Michael could attend without having to travel far from his home in Norfolk. Although those attending came mainly from the Norfolk area, a few had come from further afield and stayed in the area for a Spring break. We were planning a similar gathering next year, probably in April or early May. No date had yet been arranged, but if any members would like to attend, they should contact Peter Walker in Spring 2014 for details. Lastly, the Chairman thanked members for attending the Reunion and reminded them that we would be gathering at our Squadron Memorial in the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas at midday next day for the laying of a Squadron wreath.
7. Treasurer's Report. The Treasurer summarised the income and expenditure for the year to the end of 2012 as set out in the accounts (see separate sheet). He reported that the current financial situation was sound and that the annual subscription of £10 would be adequate for the foreseeable future. Thanks were

given to Vic Pheasant for once again auditing the accounts. Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Shaun Broaders and seconded by 'Moff' Moffatt and passed unanimously.

8. Secretary's Report. The Secretary reported that he had dealt with a few family enquiries over the past year and, with the help of Jock Whitehouse, had found most of the answers to the questions raised. Some of this information would be included in the Historian's report in the next *Nightjar*.

9. Historian's Report. The Historian gave a brief outline of activities over the past year relating to the Squadron's history. An updated and expanded report would appear in the next edition of *Nightjar*, due out in early Spring 2014.

10. Election of Officers. It was stated that the current six members of the Committee were all prepared to serve for a further twelve months. In the absence of any other proposals for membership of the Committee, the re-election of the current six members was proposed by Tony Banfield, seconded by John Brown, and passed unanimously.

11. The 2014 Reunion. Consistent with decisions taken at the previous three reunions, the general consensus was that reunions should be held in alternate years at Norwich and Derby. Thus, subject to the hotel being available, the 2014 Reunion would be held at the Maids Head Hotel, Norwich, on Saturday 4 October 2014 [*Note: this date has since been booked with the Maids Head Hotel*].

12. Any Other Business. There being no other business, the Chairman thanked all those attending and declared the Meeting closed.

2013 Reunion Photographs
Courtesy of John Brown and Jock Whitehouse



HISTORIAN'S REPORT

This is an updated and enlarged version of my report given at the October Reunion at Derby.

1. Association wreaths have been laid at the Squadron Memorial Stone at the National Arboretum (October), the RAF Stradishall Memorial, (a good turnout including two members of the Bury St. Edmunds Branch of RAFA and Ron Pearson carrying the Standard of the Bomber Command Association) and at the RAF Chedburgh Memorial (both in November).

As might be expected from the trend of recent years, actual member contacts and/or request queries continue to decline although the unexpected can still keep things 'active'.

2. A Mr Coates asked for any details of the three operations flown by his brother whilst on 214 Squadron in 1941 prior to his being taken off 'ops' for health reasons. This I was able to do, using copies of the relevant Form 540 (ORB), albeit in the form of a very long roll of film!

3. We had an enquiry regarding the operational career of F/Sgt Frank Ellison Gatland, a New Zealand Stirling pilot flying from Chedburgh on 214 in late 1942, in fact one of the earliest arrivals at the new base. F/Sgt. Gatland proved to be an exceptional pilot being awarded an immediate DFM after only his 12th operation for, according to his citation:

"Attacking industrial targets at Genoa from 100 feet" and from Chedburgh's Operational Report: "Leaving the target area below the level of skyscrapers". His luck finally ran out on 28th November when his Stirling, R9194, badly damaged by flak, came down in northern France. Sadly two crew lost their lives, the pilot and three others eventually becoming PoWs, but Sgt Cyril Penna the air-bomber (listed as 'missing') landed some way away and was to begin a remarkable journey. His initial aim was to get to Calais, and hopefully get back across the Channel. In fact it was to end at Gibraltar in April 1943 and after time in hospital, Cyril arrived at Liverpool on 2 May. He was awarded the DFM, and finally retired as a Squadron Leader, then ultimately wrote a book on his experiences. Peter now holds copies of the official documents relating to Cyril's escape, which apart from the actual details of the journey, list the amazing number of 'departments' who needed to read the information! The experiences of such a journey and the help given were of course of vital importance.

4. Sylvia Harding sent Peter an article from an Australian newspaper detailing a new exhibition in the Australian War Memorial in Canberra covering the military contributions made by local Canberrans. One poignant story concerns the Eddison family who lost three sons in World War Two. Keith, the youngest, flew with the RAAF excelling in low-level operations over Japanese-held territory, but was lost when his aircraft was shot down over Lae on 27 May 1943. Jack, the middle son joined the army and with the 2/20th Battalion was posted to Singapore and after being captured when the Island fell in February 1942, was ultimately sent to Japan. News was scarce, but the family's hopes were finally dashed at the end of the war when they learned that Jack had died of pneumonia on 7 June 1943 just two weeks after his brother Keith. Tom, the eldest, had left Australia in 1934 and after serving in the Palestine Police, joined the RAF for pilot training. Pre-war, he flew Harrows at RAF Feltwell with No.214 Squadron, later converting to the Wellington and becoming operational at Stradishall. By May 1941 he held the DFC, had been promoted to Squadron Leader to join another unit as Flight Commander and to hand over his crew to Mervyn Leyshon. Tragically, on his last sortie, Tom and his crew were shot down over Holland and killed, and today lie together in Bergen-Op-Zoom War Cemetery. A highly respected leader and larger than life character, Tom's real names were Frank Leslie Herbert. At Stradishall he was 'Harry'.

5. Being 'Black Country' born and bred, I keep in touch with my 'roots' via the 'Black Country Bugle', a local publication packed full of historical information. A recent edition covered the refurbishment of a WWI war memorial in St. Giles' churchyard, Rowley Regis (between Dudley and Birmingham). From a photograph of the work, I detected the surname 'RUSTON', doubtless a soldier from a local family and a

name that I knew. In the churchyard is to be found an impressive grave which, in addition to other family members' names, carries that John Benjamin Ruston. 26 year-old Plt Off 'Johnnie' Ruston RCAF was a top class navigator who died on 21 September 1941 when his Wellington (W5452) crashed on approach when trying to make an emergency landing at Manston returning from operations to Berlin killing Sgt. Laurie Kissack and four of his crew. The Wellington was one of two from No. 214 Squadron lost in similar circumstances that night. 'Johnnie' Ruston had flown 22 operations, mostly with his friend the late Sgt Ray Glass (a long-time member of our Association), before joining Sgt Kissack's crew, and his burial in the Midlands is relatively easy to understand as many years before, his own relatives had emigrated to settle in Canada / USA. However, there is a second military headstone close by, this one marking the resting place of Sgt I J Green, a wireless operator who had also died on 21 September 1941, and during my Stradishall work I had found that Sgt Green was a member of the same crew. But why? There was no message on the headstone and CWGC had no details of home or next of kin. My initial thought was that he could have been an American who came over 'on his own initiative' before America came into the war, as of the many who did, not all had personal details on record, and it would have been quite possible that Johnnie and Ivan knew each other 'over the water'. However, the 'Bugle' article prompted me to delve a little further, so I wrote asking if anyone had any thoughts on 'Sgt Ivan Green'. The response was quite remarkable. Ivan was a local lad growing up close to the church and his life and death were well remembered (I was even sent photographs of his funeral procession). But how did these two aircrew, (one from Rowley Regis, and one from America, but with Rowley connections) come to fly in the same crew? Johnnie had flown 22 operations, Ivan was on only his third trip with the crew, but whether he had come in from another squadron is unclear. Was there contact between the two families suggesting the two men should try and make contact, did they already know each other, or was it just one huge coincidence? We may never know but perhaps the answer is out there. All that we can be sure of sure of is that they flew together, they died together, and now lie together - at home.

There is yet another story concerning a No 214 Squadron member and my 'Black Country' roots. The next 'Nightjar' perhaps.

6. STRADISHALL / STIRLING HOUSE

Modern Stradishall. In addition to its well-known role (HMP Highpoint), part of the old RAF Stradishall has now taken another step into the modern world as the location of a large solar-farm. Historically, the 150 acre Broxted Solar Farm covers the site of Broxted Lodge Farm, whose few buildings were the only ones demolished when the original airfield was laid down in 1937. The solar farm (now owned by Santander) is planned to supply enough power for 8,000 homes whilst also eliminating a huge potential output of 'orrible chemicals! Agriculture (probably grazing) 60 acres of woodland (some already established) and public access areas are planned with the hope that a varied range of wildlife will thrive. An unexpected, piece of grim history came to light during deep excavations to replace old field drains. Pieces of decorative tiles found amongst the spoil were initially thought to have come from the old farmhouse, but this were soon dispelled by the numbers of yellow London bricks present in the general rubble. This particular work area coincided with the 1942 main runway extension laid down to facilitate heavy bomber operations and 'the hardcore of the time' was likely to be rubble from the London 'blitz' much of which was available for use in numerous wartime runway constructions. (eg. RAF Castle Camps). A sobering thought is to realize that the terrible damage inflicted by the Luftwaffe was later used to help speed up the expansion of Bomber Command in undertaking its main offensive. A busy Stirling House has now added to the various pieces of aviation memorabilia gracing its walls with two very impressive panels depicting all the badges of squadron and other units (including army) which served at RAF Stradishall. Thoughts are now being given to creating a memorial garden adjacent to the main memorial which itself, after ten years of 'service' is now due a little minor TLC.

7. RAF MARHAM

The station's history room has now been re-established in a building 'outside the wire', a welcome move for those interested in East Anglia's aviation history. After a long anxious wait the station's own future now looks to be secure with the news that it will remain the only RAF base in East Anglia being selected to house the new F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, which will be operated by No 617 Squadron.

8. DON WALTER

Don, who was a Valiant AEO (Sqn Ldr Slessor's crew) is not enjoying good health. He attended the 2009 unveiling weekend and for a number of years was present at the Stradishall Remembrance wreath laying, and took over the duty on behalf of our Association after the late Eddie Wheeler.

9. TWO RECENT BOOKS

A worthwhile read is 'Flying among Heroes' by Simon Mugglestone and Norman Franks which traces the career of Sqn Ldr T C S (Tom) Cooke DFC APC DFM AB, who, after a tour with No.15 Squadron, was a Stirling Flight Commander on No 214 Squadron at Chedburgh. Tom also flew Whitley and Wellington operations and later Halifax SOE details from Tempsford from where he was shot down. He got back after successfully evading with his crew. An interesting story well incorporated with other material. There are two errors however, one being that: 'Ultor in Umbris' translates as 'Active at Night' and the other, that Fg Off Bill Cooper's Stirling was badly damaged after colliding with a 15 Squadron machine: 'somewhere over Suffolk' when in fact the collision was with Jack Dixon's Stirling virtually over Chedburgh itself. Although the second book has nothing to do with No 214 Squadron, Bomber Command or even the Royal Air Force. 'A 'Higher Call' is a 'MUST' for anyone interested in unusual events in wartime aviation. A true story involving a very badly damaged B 17 struggling to get home and a Bf 109 whose pilot, rather than delivering the final blow, took up station alongside the bomber and flew with them for some considerable time. Why? This is a remarkable story, which also incorporates a fascinating insight into life on Luftwaffe fighter units both in the Western Desert, and in the final desperate days of the war. The final outcome itself is worth the read. Authors: Adam Makos and Larry Alexander.

10. At the reunion, Gail Elliott (daughter of the late Bob Butler) told me that she had managed to get a reasonably priced copy of 'Avenging in the Shadows' via a network, sourced from France and in mint condition, but as it lacked any publishing data was unsure as to whether it was one of the original 275 copies published by Ron James. Gail's description of the book: hardback, white dust jacket with a photograph of a Wellington on the front said that it was, but the lack of data seemed a little odd. I suggested a closer look and was pleased to hear from Gail that she had 'found' the vital inner-page still lightly attached to its neighbour which made it look as if the book had been little used, if at all! So there it was: No 196, a mint condition, signed, first edition of 'Shadows'. How lucky can one get? Keep looking.

12 IT'S THAT NUMBER AGAIN!

Whilst waiting for the bus in Melton Mowbray (as one does, but I was back in old haunts for our annual meeting of a few ancient dog-handlers from Singapore days, and returning to the hotel after a wander around town, and using my bus-pass!) when amongst the local traffic I spotted one car registered V214 followed by one coded: BU. Target unknown.

13 GUILD OF AVIATION ARTISTS ANNUAL LONDON EXHIBITION

This event draws work from some of the leading aviation artists in the country and was, as expected, of a very high standard. Although 'Dambusters' was obviously a favourite choice there was good selection of other types and historic moments on display, including a smattering of Victors, Valiants and Stirlings.

One Lancaster work would have pleased our President Sir Michael Beetham, namely a study of the white Lancasters of No.35 Squadron during their 1946 goodwill tour of the USA.

14 'DAMBUSTERS'

The media may well have covered the 70th anniversary of the famous raid from virtually every angle, but there is one small unusual piece of data, unknown to most but specific to No 214 Squadron. On 23/24 May 1943, 23 of Chedburgh's Stirlings set out on an operation against Dortmund, but on this occasion it was far from routine as two war correspondents were visiting the station to record the scene. The well known Raymond Glendenning of the BBC, accompanied by an American Art Feldmand, spent time interviewing both air and ground crews as they prepared for the operation. On their return, there was a summing up by the Station Commander. When being asked 'How it had gone' one man replied that it had "gone well, beating Lubeck hollow" (old memories of the 1942 raid which had left the old German city in flames) adding that "they will need all the water in those dams" an obvious reference to the dams raid of just a few days earlier. Although the interviews seemed relatively relaxed, no mention was made of the three Stirlings of the Squadron which had failed to return. The original recording (78 rpm shellac disc later transferred to tape), may not be high quality resolution, that fact being part of its true value, but is quite decipherable and remains a unique piece of squadron, WW2, and aviation history.

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Look Carefully:

Although perhaps familiar with any particular 'image' it is always likely that when viewing it again one will notice something additional or different. I first experienced this in the early Stradishall work after being given some rare non-official photographs of an investiture parade held in No.5 hangar at RAF Stradishall in January 1941. Over time, it was believed that everything of significance had been gleaned from the prints: Pictured were Their Majesties, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, Air Vice Marshal J E A 'Jackie' Baldwin, Group Captain S M Park, the five recipients of their awards, and other RAF personnel, including a WAAF contingent. Our attention had always focused on people present, and it was some time afterwards that my late associate, Spence Adams, identified an aircraft front profile in the background -namely that classic wing shape of one of the black Lysanders of 1419 Flight(SD) used in its clandestine SOE role. It is therefore likely that, until proved otherwise, the rather vague but recognizable image is the only one known showing such a machine at STRADISHALL and thus far, having repeated the story many times I have not had it disputed.

Move on to Christmas week 2013. 'The Dambusters' was yet again 'on the box' and prior to the actual flying I was mentally comparing the interior layout of Scampton's Officers' Mess with that of Stradishall, but whilst watching the 'free for all' in the ante-room when 617 responded to the jibes of 57 Squadron, and just for a brief moment, above the entangled men, there appeared just the corner piece of a large painting, which although in black and white was recognisable as part of 'The Briefing' by Frank Salisbury. When Scampton closed some years later, the then Group Captain Lewis Hodges, on being posted to Marham, decided to 'rescue' the picture and bring it with him. Today it is still to be seen in the dining room (its minor film role unrecorded). The painting depicts a briefing of No 83 Squadron, a Hampden unit at Scampton, and its tall fair-haired commander standing on the right of the group is Wing Commander Dermot Boyle, who in 1942 as Station Commander of Stradishall, flew several operations with either No.214 Squadron(Stirlings) or No. 101 Squadron (Wellingtons) - a very high risk period.

Jock M Whitehouse

Everything But The Responsibility

A Co-pilot's View of Life on 214 Squadron

Following the Chairman's comments at the last AGM, I have been tempted to go to print and give my view of what it was like to be a co-pilot on 214 Sqn in the late 1960's. These memories are based upon my RAF Log Book, a scrap-book, photograph album, Tanker Training Flight (TTF) notes and finally, and possibly, the most unreliable source, my memory!

It is possible that some readers of Nightjar may not be familiar with the mighty Victor K1 so, as some of the anecdotes/stories that follow require some detail of this aircraft's performance, or perhaps more pointedly - lack of it, I have included a few technical details.

OCU and TTF

After flying training on the Jet Provost and the Varsity and a short period of "holding" I arrived at No 230 OCU, RAF Finningley at the end of June 1968 for the ground-school phase of the Victor conversion course. Two crews were going through the course, the 2 co-pilots, a nav plotter and a nav radar were destined for 214 and, having completed the bookwork, we moved to Marham a month later and the Tanker Training Flight to learn about the Air to Air Refuelling aspect of the job and to complete the flying phase of the conversion. A check of my log-book reveals that I completed 7 sorties during the flying phase as well as a number of air-tests and delivery flights to/from St Athan, and a trip to St Mawgan for the Battle of Britain Air Show.

I cannot fail to mention here an event which brought home to me at a very early stage in my RAF career that flying was not without its dangers. I refer to the mid-air collision in late August between a Victor and a Canberra near Holt which resulted in the deaths of the crews of both aircraft. The Victor crew came from 214; I had only met them a matter of days before this sad event but I can still remember the sombre atmosphere on the Station the morning after the crash and for the following days which affected every section; I was a member of the crew which flew the climb-out from Marham in order to gain information to aid the Board of Inquiry.

The flying phase of the OCU consisted of 8 sorties in the Simulator and 7 in the air. The Simulator was nothing like anything in use to-day although the instruments all worked there was no movement associated with operation of the controls nor was there any view from the cockpit; it can best be described as a systems trainer which enabled crews to learn check-lists and emergency drills. Before describing squadron life this is probably a suitable place to include a short description of the Victor and give some idea of the co-pilot's responsibilities.

The aircraft was originally a bomber; a graceful-looking aircraft with 4 Sapphire engines which each developed 11000 pounds of static thrust, and fuel was stored in tanks in each wing, the fuselage and the bomb-bay. Most of the aircraft had been kept at Radlett for many months prior to being converted for AAR - the most obvious modifications



Victor K1 in Akrotiri

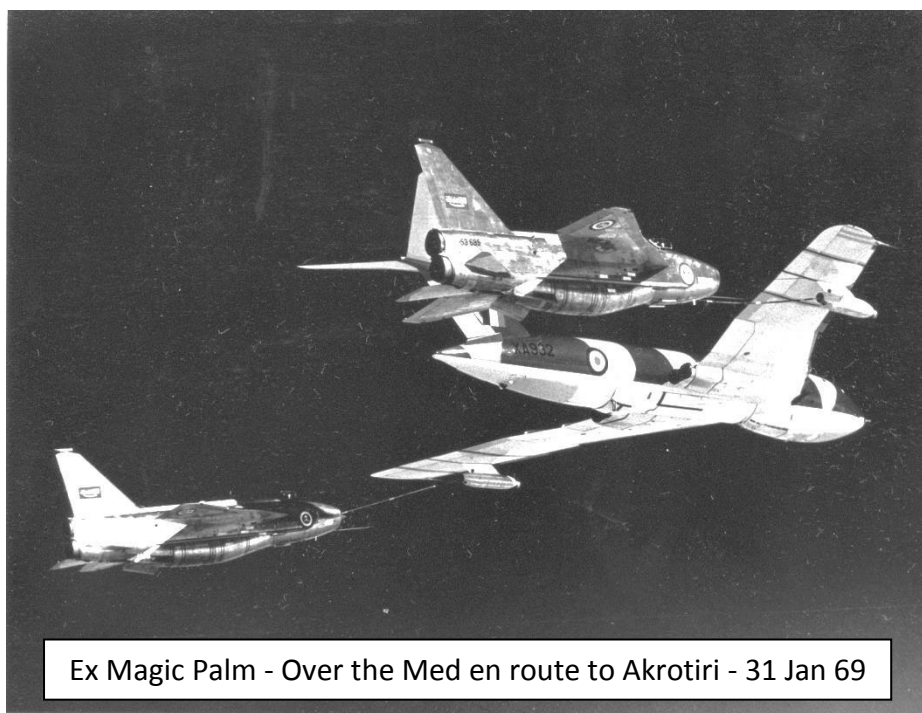
being the alteration to the bomb bay to take out the original fuel tank and build in two larger fuel tanks, add a hose-drum unit at the rear of the bomb-bay, and add a flight-refuelling pod under each wing. The tanker aircraft had capacity for some 101000lbs of fuel (approx. 20000 lbs more than the bomber version) but if fuelled to capacity would exceed the maximum all-up weight for take-off; however the aircraft could be refuelled in the air to full.

In reality the usual load would be in the region of 85000 lbs depending on the take-off conditions (temperature, pressure, wind-speed/direction, runway slope). Virtually all the fuel could be used by the tanker or transferred to a receiver aircraft. The engines consumed about 25000 lbs in the first 2 hours of flight and about 10000 lbs/hr thereafter. This technical information is given because, quite simply, to look after the fuel and the engines was the main purpose of the co-pilot's life. A large "tray" was located between the two pilots' seats on which the fuel system was depicted in diagram form with circuit breakers controlling the pumps for each tank, switches to operate various fuel cocks to allow the fuel to be moved around to keep the aircraft in balance, the engines running and customers supplied. Just above the forward end of the tray on the centre console below the engine instruments were four red warning lights indicating failure of the low pressure fuel supply to each engine. If any of these lights illuminated the co-pilot had probably got it wrong by failing to put the correct pumps on or open/close a fuel cock in the correct sequence! Although the engines would not necessarily fail in these circumstances the situation would need to be dealt with.

Every co-pilot had a nav-bag which contained: - Pilots Notes, Flight Reference Cards. Operating Data Manual, a Centre of Gravity Computer (similar to a slide-rule), "Howgozit" (graph of fuel consumption), En-route Charts/ Documents, Terminal Approach Procedures for most major airfields in UK, and likely diversions abroad, and a Pencil Box. In addition most of us carried a note-book with details of the fuel systems of our frequent customers - Lightning, Phantom, Buccaneer etc. All these documents had to be kept fully amended. This "kit" was used by the co-pilot to calculate the take-off performance, keep the aircraft balanced and by regular checks plot the fuel consumption and calculate fuel available for transfer. It will require little imagination to realise that all these items, some of which were rarely used, made for quite a heavy bag - I seem to recall that as a jolly jape post a lunch time in the Ship in Narborough a house-brick was added to the bottom of a co-pilot's bag and not noticed for some days!

Everyday Life on the Squadron.

Armed with a new nav-bag, all this freshly acquired knowledge and 38 hrs on type I arrived on 214 at the start of October 1968, had a check flight with a training captain, another with the Flight Commander, and joined my crew. The next month I had a flight with the Boss and then was off on my first trip abroad, to Cyprus for an exercise Levant Litex to provide AAR training for 56, the resident Lightning squadron. Normally we would have operated from Akrotiri but our luck was in and the runway was under repair so we had to go to Nicosia!



Ex Magic Palm - Over the Med en route to Akrotiri - 31 Jan 69

At this time British Aircraft Corporation was supplying Mk53 Lightnings to the Royal Saudi Air Force and so, whilst deploying to Cyprus, we tanked 2 aircraft from UK to the eastern end of the Mediterranean where we cast them off with a full fuel load towards Jeddah and we landed at Nicosia. This Exercise was called "Magic Palm" - 3 tankers would take off from Marham and rendezvous with the Lightnings near Clacton, one would refuel them over France and return to Marham, the second Victor would top-up the third and land at Luqa in Malta leaving one tanker to accompany the Lightnings.

On arrival at Nicosia we refuelled, repacked the brake-chute and "put the aircraft to bed" before proceeding to Accounts Flight to draw our allowances for 5 nights. The Imprest Holder (me) drew Rate One's for the 6 crew (we carried a crew chief on overseas trips) and off we went down town Nicosia and the Regina Palace Hotel. I noticed that my two Navs kept a very close eye on me from the moment I collected the cash until the "share-out" at the hotel - furthermore they ensured that I settled the hotel bill on arrival. In truth they had many years' experience between them and for much of the next few months ensured that I didn't come to too much harm! We had arrived on a Friday so the weekend was spent visiting John Odgers Bar, Kyrenia etc. We flew sorties for 56 on the Monday and Tuesday before flying back to UK on the Wednesday.

A glance through my log-book might give the reader the impression that my life over the next two and a half years consisted of one exercise after another interspersed with visits to exotic locations around the world but this was not exactly so.

With the approach of winter shortly after my arrival on the squadron I found that junior co-pilots had a vital role to play in Op. Black Top, the Station Snow & Ice Clearance Plan. No, we were not given shovels and sent out to move snow manually - it might have been more pleasant if that had been so; we were tasked to move snow mechanically! Two jet engines, pointing forwards, mounted either side of what looked like a small hut a similar size to a portaloos and with minimal soundproofing, were mounted on the front of a refuelling bowser; the angle of the jet efflux from the engines could be altered up and down depending on the depth/condition of the ice or snow to be moved as directed by Black Top Control and co-pilots were obviously perfectly qualified to sit and control this equipment! After one session down at MT I was signed up as competent to operate this lethal kit and at the start of the winter I was on the rota whenever a Snow/Ice state was declared. Fortunately I was never called upon otherwise my hearing might well have deteriorated long before it did!

Whilst the flying was what we all signed up to do it filled a relatively small part of the job. All aircrew had to be able to carry out First Line Servicing and have a RAF Form 4124 - Certificate of Competence inserted in their Log Books. A morning on the flight line with a crew chief making sure we knew which liquid (fuel, oil, hydraulic fluid) went where and how to pack the brake parachute saw the completed paperwork on its way to OC Eng Wg for signature and another tick in the box for a year.

Other ground training included 18 hours in the Victor Simulator every 6 months, crew drills - abandon aircraft training in an old cockpit, dinghy drills, ground training and a 24 hour survival exercise. The severity of the latter largely depended on the enthusiasm of the Squadron Combat Survival and Rescue Officer - I recall a very cold night under an old piece of parachute followed by an escape and evasion exercise involving the army on part of the Thetford training area one year, and a long hike involving a pub another! Also included in the annual round of events was a visit by the Group Standardisation Unit, affectionately known as 'Trappers', from which there was minimal chance of escape and preparation for which involved a week of lectures on aircraft systems, meteorology and anything else loosely allied to flying culminating with an exhortation from one of the squadron execs which included a warning not to argue with the trappers and take any criticism on the chin!

Probably the most tedious chore was that of Duty Pilot, this only fell to captains and those co-pilots who had completed their ICC so it didn't immediately affect me. After doing the Intermediate Co-pilot's Course,

co-pilots could fly in the left hand seat if the a/c captain was suitably qualified; having done this course in November 1969 I can only recall one occasion when, as Duty Pilot, I attempted to assist Air Traffic by prompting the Local Controller to remind a rather inexperienced captain on another squadron about a particularly vicious crosswind to which the reply from the aircraft was "...I'll stream the chute if I want to!" - he did and the result was most interesting - fortunately he jettisoned it in a nanosecond and, I hope, 'learnt about flying from that'.

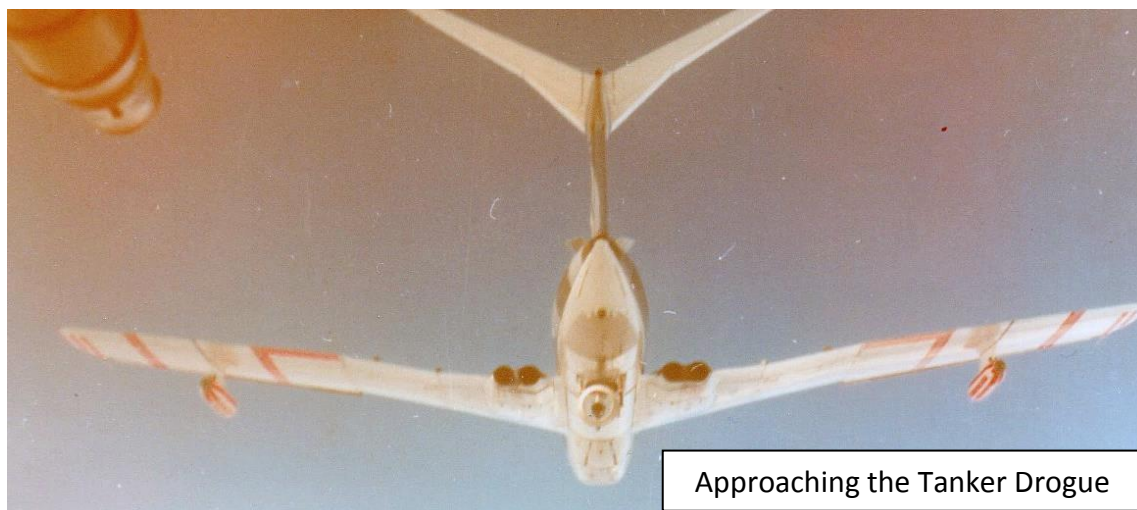
There were of course other things, not all connected with flying, which filled some of our time; we all had secondary duties either on the Squadron or the Station (or both) and many of us played sport. At that time there was a Group inter-squadron sports competition summer and winter which was keenly contested as well as Station sports which included an annual sports day.

So, when everything was taken into account, our time was pretty well filled although there was the occasional spare moment for a game of 'Uckers' and a cup of coffee in the crew room.

Flight Routine.

Preparation for every sortie followed a similar pattern and we would usually gather in Wing Operations 3 hours before take-off; each crew member had a set of responsibilities and the co-pilot would visit the Met. Office to obtain the airfield conditions in order to calculate the take-off performance. In UK where ambient temperatures were relatively cool there would not usually be any problem in getting airborne at maximum all-up weight, however in the Mediterranean, Middle and Far East where temperatures were high the fuel load would have to be reduced quite considerably if Stop speed was not to be reached before Go speed! For example it might work out that in certain conditions it would be better to opt for take-off on a runway with a downhill slope and slight tailwind.

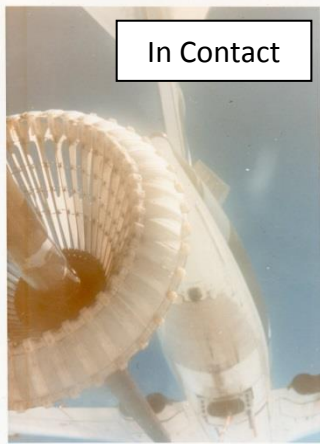
When planning was complete and the flight authorised the crew would have a pre-flight meal, change into flying clothing and take a crew coach to the flight line. In those days flying clothing was not permitted to be worn around RAF Stations, a circumstance that was the source of frequent problems often leading to frayed tempers which I could probably write a complete chapter about! Having signed out in the F700 we proceeded to the aircraft; all of us carried a spare inner helmet along with nav. bags and, most important, the in-flight ration box.



The routine sorties were mainly towlines for various receiver types including Vulcans and other Victors usually over the North Sea and navigation exercises. If a major deployment was coming up there would be specially tailored training - for example just prior to the non-stop Phantom flight to Singapore there was an exercise 'Longflight' where a Phantom was refuelled several times as it flew around UK to simulate the period of time it would be in the air on the way to the Far East; we had also flown with Harriers in tow prior to the Trans-Atlantic Air Race.

Around the World with 214

Over the next two and a half years I was fortunate enough to travel as far west as Offutt near Omaha in Nebraska and as far east as Darwin, Australia with 214 along with regular trips to the Med and Germany. As this article is not intended to be a travel-log it is only worth mentioning some of the more interesting Ops/Exs.



In 1969 the Daily Mail sponsored a race across the Atlantic from London to New York and vice-versa. There were three British Military entries: RAF Harriers and RN Phantoms both supported by RAF Victor tankers, and RAF Victor SR2s. Most of the Victor Force was based at Goose Bay in Newfoundland with 214 escorting the Harrier and 55 Sqn tanking the Phantom. Our aircraft were modified with a new high speed drogue on the centre hose-drum unit and operated with the wing refuelling pods removed, as shown in these photographs which show the Victors lined up at Goose Bay, so that we could tank the Harrier at higher speeds than normal.

Having deployed to Goose Bay on 1 May we flew 2 sorties. On the second one, with the Harrier on its way to London, the No. 3 engine wound down just as the fighter joined the formation; we were unable to keep up and retired back to Goose whilst the reserve tanker took over! Two days later with the HP pump fixed we recovered to Marham. All was well as far as the Harrier was concerned as it won its class.



Caravan/Tiger Path August/September 1969

To enable the Lightning Sqn (74) based at RAF Tengah in Singapore to deploy as part of its commitment to the defence of the Far East area, tanker aircraft were detached as necessary from UK; hence our arrival with 2 aircraft in theatre at the end of August 1969 to tank 4 Lightnings to Darwin in northern Australia. We deployed via Akrotiri accompanied by 2 Lightnings because as well as supplying these aircraft to Saudi Arabia BAC sold a squadron of them to Kuwait and they were tanked out (Ex. Gulf Caravan) via Akrotiri (night stop) and then over Turkey to be "cast off" in the Gulf as the 2 tankers continued for further night stops at Masirah and Gan en route to Tengah. I took the above photo just before the aircraft descended into Kuwait.



The approach to Gan was quite interesting mainly because it showed up one of the failings of the Victor's cockpit systems. After a long flight in the cold at high altitude a rapid descent into an area with high temperatures resulted in the windscreen misting up regardless of any efforts made to prevent it; in order to alleviate this problem some of us carried a sponge attached to something suitable such as an unwound wire coat-hanger to enable us to reach forward and achieve some sort of visibility by wiping clear the moisture. It is worth mentioning here that the windscreen wipers were not that good either and had the habit when they failed of doing so in mid-travel across the screen hence further limiting the view!

Arriving at Tengah we were greeted by a tropical downpour which kept us in a sweaty cockpit for several minutes. A downpour of a different kind greeted us at the Mess - Tiger Beer! - it being Friday and Happy Hour. During the next nine days each crew flew two towlines for 74 before deploying 4 Lightnings to Darwin for a week.

On arrival at Darwin the inside of the cockpit was sprayed, with us in it and, having put the aircraft to bed, we were shown our accommodation - a tin hut with 14 beds in it, a door at either end and a slightly sloped concrete floor. One of the navs innocently asked our RAAF liaison officer what hanging space was available for clothes and was shown two wires just above head height strung across the hut! As we were left to settle in our host had a final word of advice for our added comfort - not to leave our shoes or anything on the floor because at 0600hrs the floors were cleaned by way of a hose directed by an aborigine through the door and the slope of the floor would carry the water and your shoes out the other end! After a single night in the ghastly hut - accompanied by numerous unpleasant flying insects which made the cockpit spraying seem rather pointless as anything we might have brought with us from Singapore could hardly be worse than what was already in Northern Territories - we were moved downtown and to the Sea Breeze Hotel which, whilst not luxurious, was at least comfortable. At the end of the week we tanked 3 of the Lightnings back to Tengah - the fourth had a spectacular engine malfunction on start-up. After a weekend in Singapore the 2 tankers returned to UK; at the last night stop, Akrotiri, we were fortunate to be accommodated in a Limassol hotel as the Mess was full and yes, the wine festival was on!

Ex. Ultimacy - December 1969

For every major exercise a suitable system of reserves, both aircraft and crews, were used to cover almost every possible hiccup. For example a deployment from UK to Cyprus of 6 Lightnings would be completed in 3 "waves" at 30 minute intervals; there would be a ground reserve tanker for each wave which would be the lead aircraft for the next - there would also be reserves for reserves! The deployments started from UK before dawn and so if your crew was a "reserve reserve" you could do a heck of a lot of sitting around and end up going nowhere.

Our crew was required to position at Masirah to cover for any crew sickness on Ex Ultimacy deploying Lightnings to Singapore. So very early on a December morning in 1969 crew 54 was to be found on Thetford railway station short of sleep and humour and a train, which was late, complete with all our flying kit to be flown out by Transport Command. After the train ride a VC10 took us to Bahrain, where we were joined by "Hope and Keen and The Viva Dancers" (Forces Entertainment Show) for an Argosy flight to Masirah via Sharjah. Our sense of humour was not improved when we found we were not expected at Masirah for another 3 days!

We were well acclimatised, at least to the bar, when first a Shackleton (providing SAR cover) and then Victors and Lightnings eventually arrived. The Lightnings flew on from Masirah over successive days; the Shack got airborne each day in the very early hours to position half way to Gan by the time the formation reached the same spot and it would then return to Masirah when all a/c were on the ground at Gan - the Shack crew were not best pleased to find out on one of the days that the wave was cancelled just as they arrived "on station" - the bar was heaving by the time they got back at lunchtime!

During this exercise the medics decided to complete an investigation into crew sleep patterns; there was some minor concern on the Flight Safety side about the potential lack of sleep crews might get on deployments to the Far East due to the clock changes and the early take-off times required in order to get the Victor airborne with a worthwhile fuel load due to the higher temperatures. Accordingly we all had little booklets to fill in, recording times that we went to bed, fell asleep, woke-up, number of hours sleep, started work, finished work etc. The Doc didn't seem amused to note that one day I had apparently recorded that I had fallen asleep prior to going to bed - the explanation being that I had fallen asleep in the bar, been carried to bed and my crew, being particularly conscientious, had completed my chart for me! I should mention that the Victor take-off performance could be marginally improved by uprating the engines to give 101.5% and this was generally done for these type of detachments; all time at this setting had to be recorded as it affected the engine life and was dependent upon there being no acceptable defects with the engine. I flew 2 sorties from Masirah during this detachment; on the first we were allocated an a/c without the uprated engines due to a technical problem necessitating a slightly closer than usual look at the graphs to ensure our safe departure - by leading the formation of 3 Victors we would be able to gain the benefit of every inch of what was a relatively short runway. At some ungodly hour of the morning we taxied out and lined up as close to the runway threshold as was possible; just as we reached Go speed I was aware that it had suddenly gone very dark - all the runway lights failed for what seemed an age but was probably only a second or so and all we could see were the lights of the 2 Lightnings at the holding point for the reciprocal runway. That was about as exciting as the sortie got and after a few more days we were on our way home for Christmas courtesy of the last VC10 inbound UK before the seasonal holiday.

I flew many more Operations/Exercises during my time on 214, some more exciting/interesting than others. Our crew Western Ranger to Offutt via Goose Bay at the end of May 1970 was made more interesting by the forecast of snow for Goose on 1 June - a significant date for that location as the station rig for summer, KD, started; we would have been back in UK by then had I not been grounded for 24hrs at Offutt with a cold. Consequently as we crewed out at Goose in a blizzard I witnessed the station personnel going about their business in KD and Greatcoats!

Included in the less exciting would be Op Dragonfly which involved Victors being detached to RAF Leuchars for several days at Operational Readiness to scramble in support of the resident Lightnings so that their range could be extended to intercept Russian "Bears" way out to the north-east of Scotland.

Ceremonial / Publicity



Before finishing I should mention that we flew a large number of Fly-pasts as well as providing aircraft for static displays. Fly-pasts were usually done with the 2 wing hoses extended and a pair of fighters "in tow" and would be done for Air Shows or Press Days publicising a big deployment; we flew past Waddington on 2 April 1970 with 2 Phantoms prior to Ex Bersatu Padu having done 2 rehearsals on 20 and 25 March when the photo above was taken. These events were potential "banana skins" for a number of reasons, apart from the obvious possibility of missing the location! Weather factors could also help to spoil your day; low level turbulence would make things exciting for the Lightnings, Buccaneers etc flying behind and a long straight and steady run giving time for them to settle might not always be possible.

In the summer of 1971 I completed my tour with a ranger to Gutersloh and moved on for another 28 years which included 3 tours on various marks of Canberra and 2 on SAR Wessex as well as 2 ground tours in ATC; I learnt a tremendous amount about the RAF from my experience with 214 which greatly helped me during those years, I don't think I realised quite how much until some while later. The co-pilots were, with the possible exception of some of the Nav Rads, the youngest members of the outfit by quite a few years and sometimes our antics must have been hard on our seniors, and I take this rather belated opportunity to acknowledge their tolerance and thank them for it.

Gerry Crombie

RAF Bomber Command Status Board For 1945

NORTH CREAKE	171	HALIFAX	24	20	15
	199	..	24	19	14
OULTON	214	FORTRESS	20	22	15
	223	..	16	2	0
		LIBERATOR		16	12
SWANNINGTON	85	MOSQUITO	18	17	9

This board can be seen at the RAF Museum in Hendon. It shows the details of the numbers and types of aircraft on charge and available for 100 Group, including No 214 Squadron.

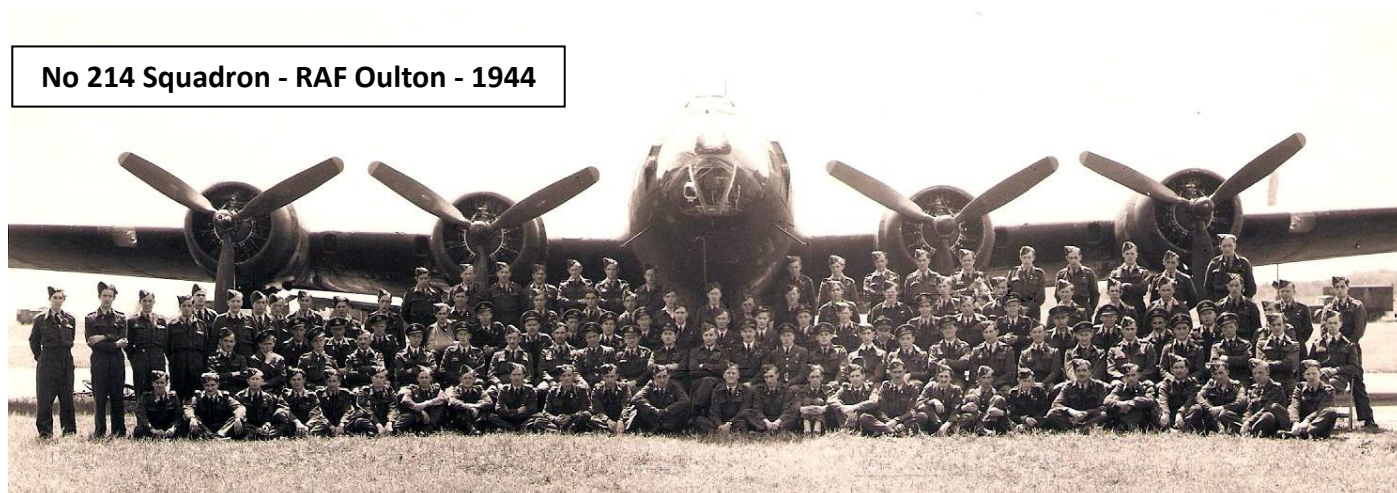
Photo: P Houghton

Reports of the finding of a number of significant lengths of wing box sections identified as coming from a Hanley Page 0/400, and which had been serving as roof supports in a Welsh garage due for demolition, have appeared in numerous publications. The staff from the RAF Museum - Cosford were involved in recovering the parts which are now safe and in store at RAF Stafford with other parts of this aircraft type held by the Museum. (Further information is available at www.rafmuseum.org.uk).

Jock M Whitehouse

Arthur Carr - Flight Engineer - B17 Fortress

These photographs have been sent to the editor by Arthur's son David. David's mother is still a member of our Association.



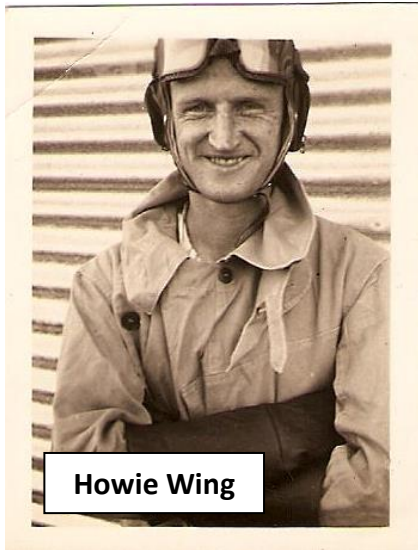


Arthur in the centre of beer drinkers including Dicky Mael, Bull Finch, and Pee Wee



Arthur's Aircraft

Howie Wing complained that when Arthur flew the aircraft across the Channel it was so low that he got wet in the rear turret



Howie Wing



Back Row - Left to Right:

Hordon Hiron Wing (Howie) - Rear Gunner
Atholl Thompson RAAF (Bluey) - Wireless Operator
James Mitchell (Cockatoo) - Navigator
Arthur Carr (Arthur) - Flight Engineer
American Friend of Crew (Tex)

Front Row:

Canadian Friend of Crew (Doc Lyon)
Richard Mael (Dickie) - Waist Gunner
Richard Hembrow RAAF (Peewee) - Special Operator
Bertram Finch (Bull) - Waist Gunner/ Bomb Aimer
Edward Dutton (Slash) - Top Gunner



Oulton Mess 31 December 1944

Includes Flt Lt J E Morrison - top left

Other individuals identified in this photo:
Slash Dutton Dickie Mael Howie Wing
Jimmy Logan Bull Finch

Captain - Flt Lt Eric Morrison (Chunky) considered it unlucky to be photographed with his crew - not uncommon in those days.

Thanks go to David Carr for supplying these photographs.

**Can you identify any others in them?
Please let us know if you can.**

Those of our Members who are 90 years of age and more!

When our oldest known member, Fred Hitchcock, died at the age of 98, at the end of 2013, it made me wonder just how many others had reached the great age of 90, or more. I decided to contact, by telephone or e-mail, some members that I suspected could be in that age group.

The list below confirms 18 members, but with around 160 on our mailing list I feel that there are some I have missed, so if I have, then please let me know. Just out of interest, Fred Hitchcock was a Halton apprentice, who was trained as a ground engineer, and posted to 214 Sqn at RAF Scampton in 1936/7, where he often flew in the gunner's position of the Vickers Virginia biplane bomber of the period.

MRAF Sir Michael Beetham	91 next May	Pilot - Valiant OC 214 Sqn Feb 58 - May 60
Wg Cdr John Wynne DFC	93 next May	Pilot - Fortress & Valiant
Tom Tate	97	John Wynne's Special Operator
Mrs Eunice Davies	93	Widow of Bob Davies
Wg Cdr Bill Wilkinson	90	Bomb Aimer - Stirling - Bob Mackett's crew
John Gilpin	92 next July	Air gunner - Stirling & Fortress
Sylvia Harding	90	WAAF on Mess Staff at RAF Chedburgh
Maurice Harding	90	Groundcrew on another Sqn
Sqn Ldr Mervyn Leyshon AFC	95	Pilot - Wellington
Vern Scantelon DFC RAAF	93 in July	Pilot - Stirling & Fortress
Sidney Pike	91	Navigator - Fortress
Tony Craven	90	Bomb Aimer - Fortress
H P (Peter) Jowett	92	Flight Engineer - Fortress
Murray Peden QC DFC RCAF	91 next Oct	Pilot - Stirling & Fortress
Gp Capt Peter Hill	92 next March	Pilot - Valiant OC 214 Sqn May 60 - Nov 62
Ian Hawkins BSc	92	Pilot - Stirling
Steve Nessner RCAF	90 next August	Special Operator - Stirling
Abe Levine RCAF	90 next July	Special Operator
George Mackie	94	Pilot - Stirling - Fortress

George is not a member of the Association but is in touch and is well known to many such as Mess'rs Peden, Scantelon, Wynne, Nessner, and Gilpin. He is 94 and in quite good health. He was a bit of a legend at the end of the war, having more hours in the Stirling than any other pilot. He flew on 2 Stirling Squadrons, and then as an instructor at an HCU. Next followed a tour on 214 Squadron on the B17 Fortress, and then back onto the Stirling on 46 Squadron within Transport Command.

Peter M Walker

Some Interesting Photographs



Crew Transport? - Before my time!

Duxford 'Animals in War' exhibition with B17 in the background.

Things you see from your front garden

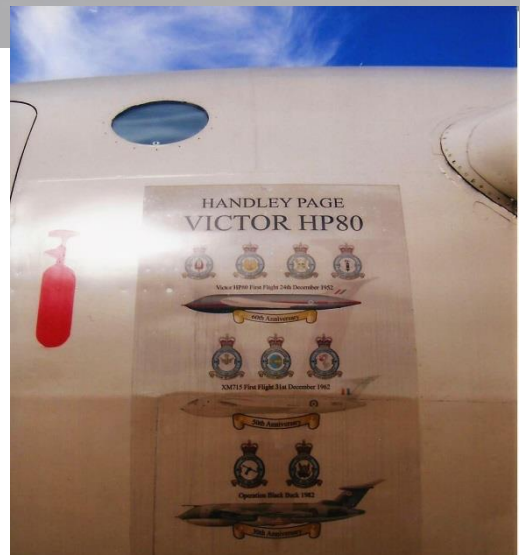
Jock took these photos from his front garden with not a lot of zoom on his camera.



Interesting artwork on an old Jeep somewhere in Norfolk

Right:

Victor K2 ('Teasin' Tina') on display at Bruntinhorpe. It was this aircraft that Bob Prothero got airborne for 100ft to claim the last flight of the Victor.



Thanks Jock for these photographs.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Treasurer	John Gulliver Chucky's, Swains Lane, Bembridge, Isle of Wight, PO35 5ST Phone: 01983 873248 j-gulli@supanet.com
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Historian	Jock Whitehouse

Committee

Shaun P Broaders MBE MSM

Sqn Ldr V A Pheasant MBE

Squadron Website

www.214squadron.org.uk

Limited activity at the moment because the site is being updated - large backlog!

Web Site Managers

John & Carol Edwards

raf214squadron@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries on Association matters please feel free to contact, by telephone, letter, or email, any member of the Committee.

The Nightjar has been compiled, and proof-read by your committee. It has converted to a computerised format, printed, assembled, and distributed by the Association Treasurer - John Gulliver.

If you would like to receive your copy of Nightjar electronically, which will save us over £1:50 per copy; please e-mail the Treasurer.

No 214 (FMS) Squadron Association Reunion 2014

The Maid's Head Hotel - Norwich

The Costs:

Room & Breakfast: **Double / Twin - £65 per person per night**
Single - £85

Dinner Menu:

Broccoli and binham blue soup
Tian of crab and prawn, sweet chilli dressing
Duo of melon fruit compote

Spinach and ricotta stuffed chicken breast, parmentier potatoes and cream sauce
Roast topside of beef, vegetables, Yorkshire pudding, red wine sauce
Pan fried sea bass fillet provençal, vegetables and pesto dressing

White chocolate and cardamon cheesecake
Wild berry mille feuille fruit coulis
Apple bread and butter pudding, calvados anglaise

Cost: £35 per person including Coffee

The Maid's Head Hotel has reserved 15 rooms, **so book early to avoid disappointment.**
There are 2 booking forms included with your Nightjar. The first should be returned to the Maid's Head Hotel by 31st August if possible, **but no later than 14th September.**
(A credit card is required to confirm your reservation - no money will be taken at time of booking).

The second should be sent to the **Secretary** so that he can check that the hotel has received all the bookings, and to give us time to prepare place cards etc.

Timings: 4th October 2014

AGM: Saturday - 1500 hrs
Dinner: Saturday - 1900 for 1930

Sunday: We are looking to organize a local visit for the Sunday, possibly to the Norwich Air Museum - details to follow.