

142

"NIGHTJAR"

NEWSLETTER

of

No.214(FMS) SQUADRON ASSOCIATION

President:

Marshal of the Royal Air Force
Sir Michael Beetham GCB CBE DFC AFC FRAeS

Chairman:

Squadron Leader G W Moffatt RAF (Ret'd)



SUMMER/AUTUMN 2004

214 (FMS)Sqn. Ass'n.

Committee meeting held at the Victory Services Club ,Seymour Street, London, on Monday March 15th. 2004.

Committee members attending ;	Sqn.Ldr.G.W.Moffatt	Chairman
	Wng.Cdr. W.A.Wilkinson	Retiring Treasurer
	Sqn.Ldr.V.A.Pheasant	New Treasurer
	Peter M.Walker	Secretary
	Roy Monk	
	John Gulliver	
	David J. Parsons	
	Sqn.Ldr. B.D.Davies	

The first item on the agenda was the Treasurer's report. This is a brief summary of that report.

The Treasurer reported that our income received in 2003 amounted to £1,735.40. This amount was partly due to the "slip" in the summer Nightjar which invited members who wished to continue receiving future editions to return the slip together with their annual payment. This was especially aimed at those who had not paid for some years.

As a result of this exhortation quite a few members paid in arrears, some in advance and others for 2003.

The outcome of this is that our income for 2003 was considerably higher than in past years and not likely to be repeated in the future.

Of our 269 members , 65 long term bad payers did not return the slip, they therefore were not sent a copy of the Winter/Spring edition and will not be sent future copies.

Our bank balances as at March 14th. 2004 were as follows ;

No. 1 Account ---- £2,446...23

No. 2 Account ---- £ 300...24

Copies of the full Treasurer's Report are available on request. Please contact the Secretary, Peter Walker.

Having discussed the Treasurer's report the Committee agreed that our current financial situation is now in a much improved state and that the annual subs can be kept at £5--00 for perhaps the next two to three years.

If the need arises we can fund any reasonable expenditure from our reserves. However looking three to five years ahead we may eventually have to increase the subs if the bi-annual Nightjar is to continue to be produced to the present standard, or possibly even better.

The cost of producing the Nightjar newsletter.

This twice yearly production involves our biggest cost. The last edition (Winter/Spring 2004) cost £1---287p per copy ,including printing,postage and envelope. Copies sent to 21 overseas members cost an average of almost £2--00 each.

These are direct costs and do not take account of ongoing expenses throughout the year.(Photocopying , members letters,enquiries,telephone etc.)

The feedback from members has proved favourable, the "new, improved " Nightjar has been well received.

One or two more pages are possible in the future , however the limiting factor is weight, a few grammes heavier and a higher postage rate applies.(43p instead of 34p).

The 2003 Reunion Dinner

As reported in the Winter/Spring Nightjar we were badly let down by the Maids Head Hotel.

Nonetheless having had successful Reunions here in past years we have decided to give them another chance.

The price remains the same as in 2003 with sherry and table wine provided by the hotel as a gesture of apology for last year's let down. However,don't get too excited, it is unlikely that you will have a bottle of Chateau -Grillet on your table. (That is reserved for the Chairman ?)

Donations

Only one donation was made in 2003 , this being £20 to the RAFBF.

The Committee discussed making another donation to the "Sally B" Fund, (£214 donated in 2002). For those members not aware the "Sally B" is a B17 Fortress kept at and flown from Duxford.

This aircraft costs about £300,000 per annum to fly and keep it airworthy and we understand that they are in desperate need of funds. She is flown and maintained by a dedicated group of enthusiasts and is not a rich man's play thing.

One member of the Committee asked if by making another donation would we be throwing good money at a cause that may not have a viable future.

Bob Davies and Roy Monk know some of the people involved and will try to find out more about the Sally B Group's current financial situation.

No decision will be made on a donation and this item will be put to the members at the AGM on September 25th. 2004.

Peter M. Walker

Secretary. March 23rd. 2004

A small reminder

If you are coming to the Reunion don't forget to bring your clip-on identity card. If you have not had one previously or have mislaid it please let me know at least a couple of weeks before Sept. 25th. when one will be made up for you and issued at the Reunion.

Please let me know the name required on the card . ie J.R.Neilson, John Neilson or Fl.Lt. J.R.Neilson. or Mrs. Joan Neilson , Joan Neilson . If you want any orders or decorations after your name please let me know the main ones, there is not the space for more than one or two.

NEWS SINCE THE WINTER/ SPRING NEWSLETTER

February 22nd. 2004 . George and Eileen Cox , Wendover, Bucks. celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary. On behalf of 214 Sqn. Ass'n. I sent them a card of congratulations. They also received a card from Her Majesty the Queen. Well done George and Eileen.

March 4th. 2004 . A new Associate member .

Mrs. Margaret Craig of Hindhead , Surrey.

Her uncle, Sgt. D.O.Dowson , was lost on a 214 Sqn. Stirling BK612 BU-Z on April 11th. 1943, minelaying over the area of the Gironde Estuary. The skipper was W/Off. G A.Davie.

In Memoriam . (information received since the last newsletter)

Flt.Lt. Ralph Fellows , Winchester, Hants. Died on Jan. 10th. 2004 age 86. Ralph was a Navigator at Stradishall , Oct. 1941 to March 1942 (Wellingtons)

Correction In the last Nightjar we published a photo of a Lincoln crew at Upwood being introduced to the Maharaja of Johore. We have since been informed that the "Maharaja" was in fact the Sultan of Johore. Apologies for this oversight.

Our new Treasurer Please note that Vic Pheasant is acting as temporary Treasurer until the end of December 2004 ; from January 2005 John Gulliver will take over. Any subscriptions due after that date should be sent to John. Both names and addresses are in the inside front cover of this newsletter.

March 26th. Australian members coming to the 2004 Reunion .

Sylvia and Maurice Harding are coming all the way from Balgownie, NSW to attend the Reunion in Norwich on Sept. 25th. Sylvia served as a WAAF at Chedburgh and Oulton, her husband, Maurice served in the RAF but not on 214 Sqn. We look forward to meeting and welcoming them both.

A note from Mrs. Vi Holden (ex LACW Vi Lancashire) April 14th.

I am an ex WAAF (Sgt's Mess) who joined 214 Sqn. at Sculthorpe and then went by wagon train to Oulton . (Anyone remember that trip ?) Here I stayed until my demob in 1946.

Serving meals daily we got to know most station personnel , ground staff as well as aircrew , so I would be very pleased if Nightjar would occasionally mention these Sections.

My next bit is regarding the "Nightjar" itself, could it be brightened up a little with some cheery items ? , it was'nt all doom and gloom , many of you must have had some funny incidents during your "Holiday" at Oulton.

So come on you old Assn. members , put pen to paper and lets have your stories of the lighter and amusing moments .

Working in the Mess, I have quite a few , so I may begin in the next newsletter.

Best wishes to all members from an ex WAAF who was once your personal chef.

News since the Winter / Spring Newsletter ---- continued

April 24th Another member of Norman Rix's crew found.

Those of you who have read the little booklet , "Hoffnung" the Rocking Horse, will know that on March 14/15th. 1945 Norman and his nine crew bailed out of Fortress HB802 and all became pows.

Within the past two years four of this crew have been traced ; Ray Gamble in England, "Doug" Douglas and Joe Cuttance in New Zealand and Ray Irvine an Australian living in Canada. Ray Gamble and Doug Douglas write to and 'phone each other fairly regularly.

Now , thanks to the efforts of one of our Australian members , John Lyall , another crew member has been "found".

He is H.T. "Bob" Sargeant , the navigator on the Rix crew . Bob lives near Melbourne ,is now age 85 and in reasonable health .

John Lyall has spoken to him by telephone and told him that Norman died in 1998.

I have written to Bob Sargeant , sent him a copy of our last Nightjar and a copy of Hoffnung the Rocking Horse, also a photocopy of a Christmas 1944 Sargeant's mess menu (Oulton), the original of which all the Rix crew had signed all those years ago.

He will probably be amazed to read the story of what happened to John Wynne and Norman Rix and their crews and what has happened with the friendship process between Huchenfeld and Llanbedr in recent years.

I now await his reply .

April 22nd. A party of children and adults arrived from Huchenfeld (Pforzheim) to spend a week in Llanbedr as guests of the people of that Welsh village. No doubt John and Pip Wynne's Spring lambs were the centre of attention.

Continuing the Huchenfeld story , Tom Tate was a guest of the city of Pforzheim for a week in February. The occasion was the 59th. anniversary , on the 23rd., of the bombing of Pforzheim when almost 18,000 people died and about 85% of the city was reduced to rubble, all in about 20 minutes.

Tom has become something of a celebrity in Huchenfeld (Pforzheim) and is always made very welcome, which is more than he received in March 1945 when he was extremely fortunate to have survived a Nazi murder squad.

During his visit he addressed a large group of citizens in German and received a big round of applause for the content and the clarity of his speech.

May 4th. John Lyall has also traced , via a new veteran's magazine in Australia , two more people who served on 214 Sqn.

The first is John V. Mathews RAAF , the W/Op. in Fortress KJ106 BU-G, (Skipper F/Off. George Stewart RNZAF), shot down on the night of March 7/8th. 1945.

The second "find" is Jock Woods, who served on the Squadron at Feltwell in 1937 and went on to serve as an RAF ground crew member for 22 years before emigrating to Australia.

I have written to both, sending a copy of our last newsletter and now await a reply.

News since the Winter / Spring Newsletter ---continued.

In Memorium May 2004 . O.C. (JOHN) Brush , Sp. W/Op. Oulton 1944/45 . Robin Murray attended the funeral on Wed. May 12th.

100 Group Reunion , Norwich . Weekend of May 14-16th. 2004

A good sprinkling of 214 members attended the weekend. On the Friday visits were made to Oulton and Blickling . As in past years Chris Lambert and the ladies of the village welcomed us with coffee, teas , soft drinks and a selection of cakes and other delicacies. The weather was superb and most of us sat outside in a large and beautiful garden.

Afterwards we all walked down the road to the Oulton memorial where a poem was read, a wreath laid by Martin Staunton, and we all then observed a minutes silence in memory of those lost from Oulton in 1940 to 1945.

On Saturday we met up again at the City of Norwich Aviation Museum where we enjoyed a buffet lunch provided by our hosts. After lunch we were taken by coach to RAF Coltishall where 6 Sqn. were celebrating 90 years of continuous service. This was not a public day and we thank RAF Coltishall and the good people at the 100 Group Museum for arranging this visit.

On the Saturday evening a dinner was held at the Aylsham Lodge Hotel and although I did not attend I am sure that our members enjoyed themselves.

On the Sunday morning some of the members attended a church service in the parish church at Horsham St. Faiths near Norwich.

Good weather , good company and a good weekend. Thank you to all who helped to arrange it .

May 22nd. 2004 . Received a telephone call from a gentleman in Chorley, Lancs. who had seen my notice on Service Pals , Channel 4 TV.

He is former F/Sgt. Douglas Parkington who flew as Flt. Eng. on the crew of Fl./Lt. Carl Puterbough from Sept. 1943 to Sept. 1944 (Stirlings and then Fortresses). During his time on 214 Sqn. Douglas was known as " Pinky " to many of his comrades.

If anyone who remembers him would like to get in touch he lives at ;

1, Sackville St., Chorley, Lancs. PR6 OLF . Tel. 01257 275824

A copy of the last Nightjar has been sent to him , hoping that he may be interested in joining the Association.

May 28th. Hartley (Bob) Sargeant , Norman Rix's navigator has made contact with me, "Doug Douglas" in New Zealand and Ray Gamble in Staffordshire. This is the first time in almost sixty years that Ray and Doug have been in contact with Hartley who they only knew as "Bob" Sargeant.

I have also heard from Jock Woods (see earlier news item, May 4th.) He has telephoned me on two occasions, half an hour each time, and was delighted to tell me about the people he knew and flew with on Harrows, including the time when Percy Pickard burst a tyre on landing at Feltwell. Jock is now 85 and in good health. He may decide to join the Association.

News since the Winter/Spring Newsletter ---- continued

June 1st John Mathews RAAF (see news item May 4th.) has sent me a long and very interesting letter relating what happened to him when he bailed out on the night of March 7/8th. 1945.

Since taking early retirement at the age of 54, due to an injury he received after he bailed out, he has worked at the Sydney Botanic Gardens and a judge of the Sydney Royal Horticultural Society. As a result of his expertise in this field he has, over the past few years, given talks in Denmark, Poland, USA, New Zealand and the UK.

John had no idea that the Association existed , was delighted to receive a copy of the last Nightjar and "Hoffnung the Rocking Horse", and would like to join as a member. This is being arranged.

If any members remember John I am sure that he would be delighted to hear from them. His address is 24, Calantha Drive, Wyoming, N.S.W. 2250 ,Australia.

Martin Staunton would like to thank all those who sent messages and get well cards during the period of his hospitalisation earlier in the year. He is now much better and was able to attend the 100 Group Reunion in Norwich in May.

John Gulliver, recently retired as a navigator from Brize Norton , where he had spent some years in the tanker force. As from July 7th. 2004 John and Lesley are moving to "Chucky's , Swains Lane, Bembridge, Isle of Wight. PO35 5ST . Tel. and Fax : 01983 873248 . e-mail : J-gulli @lineone . net

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you have not paid your annual subscription (£5 --00) for this year please do so as soon as possible. Those of you who pay at the Reunion , by direct debit, or have already paid in advance will OK.

If you are not sure when you last paid please write to or telephone the Treasurer whose details are inside the front cover of this newsletter.

At the end of the year we will carry out a review of member's payments and those who have not paid for twelve months or more will not be sent the Nightjar newsletter in the Spring of 2005 (The special tanker edition).

Sorry , but we must be realistic if we are to have a good , twice a year edition, we must cover our production costs.

Last year , as a result of some members not returning their payment or the payment slip as requested , about sixty members were not sent the Spring Nightjar.

These were mainly long term bad payers .

214 SQN. AIRCRAFT FROM THE PAST



Handley Page O/400 , probably at Coudekerque in France , late 1918 .



Vickers Virginia Mk. X , probably at Andover 1935-36.
We have one member , Fred Hitchcock , who worked on and flew in these aircraft during this period.

214 SQN. MACHINES , PAST AND PRESENT .



Vickers Wellington Mk. I's at Methwold in Sept. 1939. Note the squadron codes UX carried from the period of the Munich crisis in Sept. 1938 until Sept. 1939. Shortly after this photo was taken the codes were changed to BU .



That number gets everywhere ! . Having been carried on vehicles in Canada, Australia , USA and deepest Suffolk (Jock Whitehouse) it has now appeared on Gerhard Heilig's car in Vienna, Austria . .

HISTORIAN'S REPORT

1. Brian Walker , Arnold , Nottingham .

Brian holds a vast amount of material on the life of Sqn.Ldr. Bill Clarke (kia from Chedburgh in 1943). Bill, a talented young man (Oxford University) who pre-war, not only financed the famous Vincent Motor Cycle Company, but also tested many of the bikes and proved himself a superb racing motorcyclist, would without doubt, have become a noted sports personality.

Brian has offered us as much material as we need for the archive which would also provide the basis for an excellent article in the " Nightjar ".

2. Bob Mackett, Toronto (with help from Bill Wilkinson)

Bob sent an excellent article by Linda Diebel of the Toronto Star detailing the loss of a Chedburgh Stirling (F/O Simpson RAAF). Linda's late father and four other crew survived but Bob lost his rear gunner (F/Sgt. Houghton RAAF) who stood in for the regular gunner who was sick.

The story appears in this edition of "Nightjar".

3. Bob Tagg . Nottingham .

An original Methwold man, and one of our oldest members, Bob has informed us that he was the donor of the "Outspan" newspaper (which contained the O'Connor article, see previous Newsletter) sending it to Harold Bidmead when he set up the Association. Bob knew F/Lt. O'Conner at Stradishall in 1940 and on seeing the newspaper article when later serving in Rhodesia (there to help set up the EFTS) fortuitously decided to keep it and offered it to Harold all those years later.

4. Sheila Byrne. Oswego , NY . USA .

Sheila continues to research her father's (Sgt. Doig) career which included time as an air gunner at Stradishall and although Sheila's latest request for help concerns the OTU at Moreton-in-the-Marsh she found that her father had flown with F/Lt. Filleul at Stradishall and thought that this might be of interest to Dave French (Richard Filleul's nephew - see previous newsletter). I passed on the information to Dave who was most grateful.

5. Kate Brettell . Stilton , York (and 6 , Mr. Emrys Hughes.

Kate continues her dedicated research into the loss of her uncle's Stirling and crew (F/Lt. Reg Turtle DFC) from Stradishall in June 1942.

Contact was made with Mrs. Penny Lang (daughter of Sir Dermot Boyle) for permission to use the Cologne "1000" Bomber Raids Operations Room Board photograph in any write up. (Sir Dermot's family hold the original).

Penny and her brother were delighted to know that such work still goes on and gave permission both to Kate and to Emrys Hughes of Haverhill, (via JMW) who is researching the career of Sgt. Bunning (see previous Nightjar).

HISTORIAN'S REPORT (continued)

7. Mr. Billy Stubbs (asking via the " Net" , which enabled my daughter to prime me!) Help given to Billy who is researching those buried in his local churchyard at Handsworth in Birmingham including P/O Rafter, killed in a flying accident at Stradishall in October 1940 and his elder brother, shot down and wounded in the Battle of Britain. It was believed that this brother died of his injuries but recent evidence suggests that he returned to his squadron (603) in November 1940 and was killed later. More work for Billy !
8. Mr. Chris Lamb .
Information (including a photograph) passed to Chris who was seeking any information on F/Lt. E.E. (Ted) Youseman, a 214 Stirling captain at Chedburgh, who was lost later in 1943 flying with 617 Sqn. Chris lives near to the former home of Ted , in Ashford , Middlesex , and is building up the story (which includes a local recollection of a very low level run "up the road").Grateful thanks received.
- 9.Brian Hedon , Bristol.
Help and information given ref. the loss of Sgt. George Marsh Robinson , kia on January 28th. 1942 from Stradishall.
10. Ms. Cathy Horton .
Replied to a request for information reference the loss of a relative, Sgt. Derek Dowson lost from Chedburgh in 1943. Awaiting to hear what help is actually required.

Jock M. Whitehouse



Field Marshal Montgomery being introduced to a 214 Sqn. crew , but where, when , and who are the crew members. Note the Valiant refuelling probe above the heads of the crew.

The crewman third from the right appears to have the badge of Master Aircrew on his sleeve, or is he a Warrant Officer ?

Details to Peter Walker or Jock Whitehouse.

The Boys of B-Baker

This story was first published in the Toronto Sunday Star on November 7th. 1999. It was written by Linda Diebel, a staff journalist, assisted by Linda Turner who carried out much of the in depth research.

Linda's father was Sgt. Harold M. Diebel who was the navigator on Stirling EE970 lost from 214 Sqn. on the night of Aug. 31st/Sept. 1st. 1943. Harold was one of five crew members to have bailed out and taken pow.

Shortly after this article was published Harold "Mel" Diebel was taken into hospital and died a few days later.

Thanks are due to Bob Mackett in Toronto for sending this article, via Jock Whitehouse, with the suggestion that we publish it in the Nightjar.

Bob was a pilot on the Squadron in 1943/44, his navigator was Alan Deadman, and his bomb aimer was Bill Wilkinson, both Association members.

Bob Mackett's rear gunner was Douglas Houghton, a 22 year old Australian. Because the regular gunner on the crew of EE970 was sick, the pilot, Ken Simpson asked Doug to stand in for that night. They had been at the same school back home in Australia. Sadly these two lost their lives.

Thanks are due to the Toronto Sunday Star for allowing us to use this article.

Seven took off that fall night in 1943. Two didn't make it. Five spent the rest of the war behind barbed wire.

It's Tuesday night, August 31, 1943, and the crew of B-Baker is getting nervous. They're strapped into their big Stirling bomber, kitted up in flight suits, heavy jackets, parachute harnesses, Mae Wests and leather helmets with headphones; but it doesn't look as if they are going anywhere.

For more than 15 minutes, pilot Ken Simpson has been trying to get the plane off the ground from the Royal Air Force (RAF) base in Chedburgh, England. He's got three engines going, but the outer port engine refuses to start.

All around them, bombers are taxiing and taking off. B-Baker's crew can taste this mission. Everybody can. It's no ordinary bombing raid over Germany for RAF No. 214 Squadron.

"It's Berlin tonight, boys," Wing Commander D.J. McGlinn announced at the first of many "Ops" briefings that afternoon.

McGlinn pulled back the curtain covering the target map to reveal a red ribbon extending almost in a straight line, from their base in England, near Cambridge, to the German capital.

A mighty cheer erupted.

Tonight , Bomber Command is sending 622 heavy bombers -Stirlings,Halifaxes and Lancasters - from bases all over England in one of the first bombing raids of the war over the German capital. Flying weather is good ; there's a new moon, barely a sliver to illuminate the bombers and scattered cloud over the target.

B-Baker, serial No. EE970, has a crew that includes an Australian pilot and rear gunner, three Englishmen and two Canadians - Harold "Mel" Diebel and Bob Case - from the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). Both are Ontario boys.

Like thousands of Canadian fliers who sign up with the RCAF IN World War 11, they are posted to an RAF Bomber Command squadron in Britain. Diebel and Case, both 20, have known each other only a few months.

Aboard B-Baker tonight, Simpson, 22, from Manly, Australia, is in the cockpit. He was just commissioned Pilot Officer a few weeks ago and measured for his new uniform in London.

The rest of the crew are all Sergeants.

Londoner John Chisholm,19,bomb aimer, is in the front-gun turret, eyes fixed dead ahead. Diebel, from Copper Cliff, is navigator.

John "Lofty" Giblin, 19, from Kent, is Flight Engineer. George Daulby,23, from Liverpool, is wireless operator.

Case, from Aurora,mid-upper gunner, sits in his turret, a plastic bubble aft of the wings.

Rear gunner Douglas Houghton, 22, is a newcomer. Simpson chose him only a few hours ago when their regular gunner was diagnosed with tonsillitis.

Simpson and Houghton had gone to school together.

There's a bond aboard B-Baker and everyone trusts the skipper.

Simpson, the quiet Aussie, has proven himself. The first time they went up together as a crew on a practice run, an engine failed on take off and they couldn't get enough power to climb. They flew for over 160 kilometres before Simpson could get them 75 feet off the ground.

Now control wants B-Baker out of the bomber stream . A voice crackles over the intercom : " Get off the radio, scrub it "

At that moment , the outer port engine turns over and chugs to life.

Simpson alerts control.

" You can abort if you wish. Or carry on. Your call ", comes the reply.

" What do you think lads" Simpson asks.

Everybody wants to go. They all want the name-Berlin-in their flight logs.

B-Baker rumbles down the runway for take off.

It's no picnic in a Short Stirling. It's a tall, heavy bomber with spindly legs and a huge belly for radar equipment, and it was designed with a 110 -foot wingspan.

But wartime hangers aren't wide enough and the British Air Ministry has chopped the wings to 99 feet. Not much lift for a 44,000-lb. bomber. Add a 7,000-lb bomb load and 2,254-gallons of fuel and the crew will be lucky to get B-Baker up to 12,000 feet - nice and low for German ack-ack and dead under the bombs falling from their own higher flying Halifaxes and Lancasters.

The boys of B-Baker don't know it yet, but Bomber Command chief, Sir Arthur " Bomber " Harris has already decided to scrub the Stirling for it's lacklustre performance and high casualty rate.

At last, at 20-40 hours, Simpson lifts B-Baker into the darkening night and points her due east towards Berlin.

Over the North Sea, they come under fire from British naval vessels below. Wireless operator Daulby fires the colours of the day to show they're friendly.

So far so good.

Diebel has his maps spread out over the navigator's table, just behind the cockpit, and stares at the CRT (cathode ray tube) screen of his radar system, with it's flickering image of the Dutch coastline.

Giblin keeps an eye on fuel consumption in the Stirlings 14 tanks, 7 in each wing. The gunners scan the night skies, Houghton straining in his rear turret to see anything coming up under B-Baker's unprotected belly.

Over the Netherlands, Daulby begins to drop strips of metallic foil to confuse German radar. Over Nazi Germany, he's busy dropping propaganda leaflets as well.

A German Messerschmitt attacks, but Chisholm fires his front mounted Browning guns, and the plane breaks off.

" All's well ", signals Simpson. Tonight is only their second bombing mission.

It's almost 24-00 hours. They're on the run up to the target, maybe five or six kilometres away.

Suddenly, they're under heavy fire. The enemy is pumping up light and heavy flak so thick , you could walk on it. Exploding shells propel deadly shrapnel into their path, the noise practically blasting them out of the plane.

Searchlights form a huge, bright cone in the sky, crisscrossing everywhere, blinding pilots and rattling the crews. German chandelier flares descend on parachutes, lighting what sky is left untouched by the searchlights ; heavy bombs from Halifaxes and Lancasters spiral from above.

Flying on the outside of the lights, waiting for stragglers, are German night fighters, at 10,000 , 15,000 , and 20,000 feet.

Simpson must keep B-Baker straight and level. No evasive action ; Bomber Command has decreed it . In his orders to his Air Office Commanders, Harris says, " Violent evasive action makes it impossible for the gunners to either see or hit attacking fighters. Heavy bombers cannot outmanoeuvre properly handled

fighters ... Evasive action in the target area makes accurate bombing impossible and necessitates, therefore, repeat attacks".

Straight and level into Hell, boys.

Chisholm peers through the front turret. It's his job to try and hit the target assigned to B-Baker. They've been told they're going for German industry. Left-left, right-right-right, left-left, steady-steady-steady....he says, guiding Simpson. But he's not happy; he wants Simpson to take them round again. Simpson flies a loop, and B-Baker approaches the target. The plane is carrying a lot of 40-pound incendiaries, as well as the big stuff. Chisholm presses the bomb "tit" and shouts; "Bombs going down!", The photoflash goes off, illuminating B-Baker's photo record of the drop.

"Navigator, give me the course for home", Simpson says into the open mike.
"Change course to 270", comes Diebel's reply.

At that moment, flak hits the plane. It rips out part of Giblin's engineering table and blows out the intercom. Red lights come on all over the place. Gunners Chisholm, Case and Houghton are firing back at German fighters. An enemy Focke-Wulf 190, with a blinding headlight and prickling radar antennae, swoops in fast on the starboard side, firing tracer bullets and cannon shells.

These lone German pilots are the Luftwaffe's "Wild Boar" men, who stalk the British bomber stream without radar guidance from the ground.

There's an explosion. B-Baker has taken a bad hit.

Daulby is thrown to the floor. His ears ring like Big Ben from the cannon shots. He can see the sky out of a hole in the plane. Diebel sees the whole starboard wing streaming flames. It's incandescent. The outer engine is on fire, looks like it's going to fall off, if B-Baker doesn't explode first. They've still got half their fuel load.

"You've got a fire in your starboard wing", Diebel yells at Simpson.

Simpson throws the plane into a dive, straight down maybe a thousand feet. The fire goes out; he levels off; flames shoot up again. Simpson hits the fire extinguisher button to douse the flames. No good. B-Baker is burning like a bonfire.

"We're badly hit lads", Simpson shouts. "Bail out! Bail out!"

Daulby looks up and sees two 2,000-lb. bombs coming from above about 50 yards away, twisting and twirling. He turns his head and watches the outer starboard engine fall off, taking a chunk of the wing with it.

Simpson struggles to keep B-Baker in the air. He throws the stick over violently

to force down what's left of the starboard wing. Otherwise, with the weight of the two engines on the port side, the plane will be in a death spiral before anybody has a chance to bail out.

Simpson holds the stick. Nobody will ever understand how he was able to do it, especially when Giblin saw that Simpson's shoulder was shot up.

Chisholm rushes to the front escape hatch. He takes a fire axe to the jammed hatch but it won't budge. There's no way out of the burning plane in front and it's a long way back to the rear escape hatch for the five crewmen up front.

Diebel races up to tell Simpson the front escape hatch is useless.

" We've all got to go out the back ", Diebel yells.

" You go. I'll be right behind you ", Simpson replies.

Diebel gets to Daulby and tells him about the hatch. Everybody has to go to the rear.

" I've got to give Ken (Simpson) his chute," Daulby yells.

" He's already got it. I gave it to him," says Diebel. " I think he's hurt-but he's okay."

More explosions.

Daulby taps Giblin, still at his engineer's table, on the shoulder. Giblin doesn't respond. He puts his hand on Giblin's shoulder and turns him around to see his eyeballs aren't there. He smacks his face hard. Giblin's eyeballs roll back down and Daulby sees he's all right. He tells him about the front escape hatch.

From his gun turret in the tail, Houghton struggles to the rear escape hatch. His chute opens in the plane, streaming silk all over the floor. Maybe he pulled the cord, maybe it got caught in his fittings, maybe it was badly packed.

Whatever happened, it's useless now.

Case, scrambling to the rear escape hatch from the mid-upper gunner's turret, sees what's happened to Houghton. He's ready to bail out himself.

" Get on my back ! Get on my back !", shouts Case.

Houghton goes out on Case's back.

By this time, the altitude is around 8,000 feet, or less.

Moments later, through the din, Daulby hears a scream. It's Houghton.

The force of the chute opening pulls him off Case's back and whips him away into the darkness. Daulby knows Houghton's gone.

(Bob Case never received a medal for his heroism, not even after the war, back selling real estate in Aurora. He died in 1995. His buddies know, though. He could have left Houghton; he had no way of knowing if his chute was going to hold them both.)

Giblin scrambles back, flames from the burning wing licking his face. Before he goes, he sees Simpson. The pilot is still strapped in. The controls are funny angles

and he's fighting hard to keep B-Baker airborne. Giblin sees his right shoulder is ripped up.

Giblin makes it to the rear escape hatch. Chisholm is already there. He doesn't want to jump.

" You go," Chisholm shouts.

" No, you first," screams Giblin, and pushes Chisholm out.

Giblin bails out. "Your'e supposed to count to 10 and pull the cord. Giblin shouts " One " and pops it.

Daulby is at the rear hatch, holding on, his legs dangling. Diebel, coming up fast behind him, gives him a hard boot to the back, and out he goes.

As they descend, they try to twist around to see their Stirling, to spot that last chute billowing out. But they can't see B-Baker, skippered by a pilot who stays at the controls to give his crew precious seconds to get out.

There is no last chute from B-Baker.

Just after midnight, Sept. 1, Diebel , Case , Chisholm , Daulby and Giblin find themselves in a pine forest, near Charlottenfeld, south of Berlin. These five don't know it, but they are about to begin a journey that will bring them to a place called Stalag Luft 1VB, a German prison camp where they will spend the rest of the war. In these late summer days of 1943, men are moving inexorably, from their own particular missions of World War 11, over Mannheim, over Munich, over Peenemunde, over Berlin, toward their common destiny behind barbed wire in Stalag 1VB.

Diebel, a dark haired Northern Ontario farm boy, is still surprised he passed the Air Force medical at a mere 120 pounds. He quit his job in the office of the International Nickel Company to enlist, even though mining industry jobs are exempt from war service.

He didn't want to hide behind the smokestacks, as they say in Sudbury, Ontario.

Daulby is a bricklayer, and he, too, doesn't have to fight when Britain has to rebuild after the devastation of the Blitz. An officer offers him a pass.

" No thank you, sir," says Daulby, " I wouldn't know how to look my grandchildren in the face."

Funny how fate is.

Daulby is B-Baker's wireless operator because Ken Simpson picked him. They "crewed up" at Bamberly Cross (??), in Oxfordshire, where they'd all gone to train on four engine (???) Wellingtons before switching to Stirlings.

The RAF brass, with it's talent pool of British, Canadian, Australian, New Zealander, South African and other Commonwealth aircrew (plus a few American), just threw everybody together in a big room and let pilots wander around choosing their own crews.

Diebel, Case, Chisholm, Daulby and Giblin bury their parachutes in a German forest in the middle of the night.

By first light, they are captured and taken to a police station, one by a farmer at the end of a pitchfork, the others by villagers or members of the home guard. They wait.

" Everybody okay ?" asks Diebel.

" Jeez, I don't know, my back hurts like the devil," says Daulby, unaware of Diebels hard boot a few hours earlier.

Shortly before 8a.m. four Luftwaffe men arrive and single out Daulby. They cram him into a jeep and drive him five or six kilometres into the countryside where he is shown the wreckage of a Stirling bomber, with it's distinctive single rudder, scattered over two fields. The cockpit is relatively intact.

German soldiers scour the wreckage. A young sergeant who speaks English tells Daulby they think it's his plane. There is a farmhouse about 100 yards to the right and, pointing it out, the sergeant says people there could see the burning plane coming down. The way the pilot was flying, they were sure he was trying to land. But he couldn't make it and he crashed.

" The people pulled him out," the sergeant says, " and took him to the farmhouse." He lived a couple of hours before he died.

" Let me go and see the pilot's body," Daulby asks. The young sergeant seems to agree, but the Luftwaffe officer says no.

Daulby pleads with the Luftwaffe officer. The guy is nasty ; he doesn't waver. So Daulby will never know if the dead pilot was Ken Simpson.

It will haunt him the rest of his life.

" Judging by the distance," he says today, " I think it was our plane, but I never saw Ken.

Simpson's body was never officially recovered, never buried. Houghton is buried at the British War Cemetery in Berlin, Plot V1, Row D, Grave 4.

On the night B-Baker crashes, 47 bombers (39 RAF and 8 RCAF planes) are shot out of the skies over Berlin. Seventeen Stirlings are lost, each with a crew of seven. Almost 1 in 5 Stirlings fail to return to base in Britain. The overall loss rate for the bomber stream is more than 7 per cent.

" By the grace of God and the excellent piloting by a skipper who thought of his crew before himself, I'm safe," Diebel would soon write to his parents in Canada from a German prisoner-of-war camp.

" During my wildest dreams I never dreamed that some day my earthly existence would depend on a silken cord of a parachute. We abandoned the aircraft so fast that none of us had time to be frightened.

About the first recollection I had was of floating down with the 'chute above me. It opened, thank God."

" It really is a miracle that any of us got out of the flaming plane alive and my only regret is that my pilot gave his life in order that five of his crew might live.

He was one of the finest and best lads you could meet.

" One hundred per cent man, and more guts than enough."

" I think he gave his life for us, quite frankly," Giblin says 56 years later, almost to the day, at his home in Bromley, Kent, just south of London.

He looks out of a lovely back garden, and his eyes mist over.

" Ken was a charming man.... Iv'e been putting the question to myself : Why him and the other lad, with five of us getting out? You think about it, you take off shortly after 8 o'clock in the evening, all together, all happy, nothing is ever going to happen to us, and then 12 o'clock, two of you are virtually dead and five of us have gotten out, fortunately unscathed."

Daulby would name his first-born son after Simpson.

" Ken was great," he says, in the same, thick Liverpool accent of the Beatles.

" He was one of the finest men I ever met in me life. And that's the truth.

He was a great chap."

" Looking back on it now, he must have held on to the controls to let Mel and me and the two Johns go full length of the plane- it's quite a long plane, the Stirling, you know - to get to the rear hatch.

" He must have had hard rudder on the stick, real hard over. If Ken had let go of the controls, I don't think there'd have been much chance of us making it back. The plane would have gone into a dive."

And on a September morning in 1999, an ocean away in Chelmsford, near Sudbury in northern Ontario, Diebel, too, remembers.

" I don't know if Ken had been hit or not. Iv'e thought of it often. I didn't see. I just looked at his face. He was flying level," he says.

" He said, You go, I'll be right behind you". Those were his exact words.

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214 (FMS) Sqn. Association are grateful to the Toronto Sunday Star for giving us their written permission to use the article in our Newsletter, The Nightjar.

Since this story was first published in the Star two of the crew have died; Harold "Mel" Diebel in 1999 and John Giblin in 2001. John was a member of 214 Sqn. Assn.

Jock Whitehouse
Historian, 214 Sqn. Assn.

Peter M.Walker
Secretary, 214 Sqn. Assn.

March 2004

VISIT TO SINGAPORE AND AUSTRALIA .
JOCK WHITEHOUSE

AVIATION 'DOWN UNDER'

One might think that a major part of visiting Singapore and Queensland would be taken up with 'seeing the sights' or even shopping, but on a solo venture to visit family in both locations and discounting some nostalgic excursions in Singapore, 'things aviation' headed my list of 'things to do'.

The very smart new Republic of Singapore Air Force Museum located next to their base at Payer Leba houses past operational aircraft e.g Hunter, Strikemaster, A4 Skyhawk, T33, Huey, and a Bloodhound missile plus other excellent display areas. Well worth a visit. During evening drinks at my niece's, four F5s, in formation headed off into the tropical sunset. 'What a nice touch'.

Queensland (Brisbane) was something different, as my interest in aviation was well catered for. A visit to see 'Southern Cross', Sir Charles Kingsford-Smith's historic Fokker Tri-Motor now immaculately preserved in a custom built hangar close to Brisbane airport was followed by a family friend (retired 'Qantas captain with a Cessna 182 housed at the historic Archerfield) asking 'Would I like a trip?'. Thus began a memorable journey over the Q'land coastal area (stunning views of Brisbane City) landing first at Caboolture to find 'Snifty' a P51 Mustang (blue and yellow spinner) and a Wirraway tucked away in their hangars. Warrick, my pilot/ host then recognised a Chipmunk (WG357) on the flightline as one he had flown some forty years ago. 'Pilot's talk' commenced and as the Chipmunk was also heading for our next stop at Caloundra we were soon forming on him with yours truly detailed as unofficial air- to- air photographer! Caloundra airfield is also home of the impressive Queensland Air Museum whose collection of aircraft, engines and memorabilia detail Australian Aviation history and one can also admire several beautiful airworthy Tiger Moths and Harvards. Homeward bound saw us low-flying along the endless white beach of Bribie Island and around (if not between!) the remarkable volcanic peaks of the 'Glass House Mountains'. After 'guesting' at a meeting of a local Aviation Group which meets in the Hinkler Room at Archerfield, I joined this same Group to see the last airworthy Short 'Belfast', in at Brisbane for servicing. Still in 'Heavy Lift' livery it is sub-contracted to deliver supplies to Pacific islands. Forty years old, in fine fettle, totally reliable, lands anywhere and with a pilot from Gislingham! Long may she fly.

For a promised 'away-day' I ignored the temptations of the tourist trail and booked a flight to Canberra to visit the Australian War Memorial- a 1200-mile round-trip starting at 08.30 and finishing at 18.15 (courtesy of 'Qantas') Although understandably slanted toward Gallipoli and the Pacific War (no punches pulled as to the behaviour of the Japanese!) European air operations are covered with refurbished Lancaster 'G-George' now the centre-piece of a remarkable 'sound and light' performance, simulating a WW2 bomber sortie. Plenty of other interesting aircraft on display.

Australia boasts an active war-bird scene and actually on my departure day I visited the 'Beaufort' project whose aim is an airworthy 'Beaufort'. As 700 of these aircraft ('Pratt and Whitney' powered) were built in Australia during WW2 'parts and spares' are around and two airframes will provide the main construction. The work, by retired 'aero-men', is of a noticeably high standard. On entering the workshop one has to dodge between another 'Beaufort' nose section (for sale) and a Brewster 'Buffalo'. My declared proximity to Duxford, brought forth anguished cries of : " Duxford? you lucky pommie b-----d! " - a typical

Queensland reaction! I was also fortunate to briefly meet Ralph Cusack the 'boss' who was about to leave for the Wanaka air-show in New Zealand.

However, during an imposed 'cultural' visit to Brisbane City Museum I saw a number of historic aviation exhibits including Bert Hinkler's two tiny Avros (Avian and Baby) Mounted high on the wall is a Merlin engine from an Australian Air Force Lincoln - a nice exhibit but unfortunately with the propeller on 'back to front'! As I had been primed to look for this, I chose not to report it!

Apart from walks in the park and downing a number of cold 'stubbies' I spent some very enjoyable hours reading through the logbook and diaries of my relative's late father, a Wireless/Operator Air-Gunner in the RAAF, who after training in Canada and UK, helped ferry a new Wellington to Malta. He then flew two tours of operations, one with No.38 Sqn (torpedo, bombing and mining attacks) and a second with No.294 Sqn. Search and Rescue (land and sea). His diaries provide a wonderful insight into life behind the official facts.

On a more serious note, in Brisbane's Queens Park Square I came across the Royal Australian Air Force Memorial, which although of a straightforward design is worthy of closer attention as explanations are offered.

The column is surmounted by a wedge-tailed eagle, a local bird which soars effortlessly with hardly a movement from its huge wings. This indicates all branches of the RAAF and local men would have known it well. The column contains two types of granite: red signifying blood spilled, and black in honour of the dead. The textured surface of the granite indicates adversity and star motifs to strive for peace. At the base are compass points and the overall inscription reads: 'This memorial honours all men and women who served in the Royal Australian Air Force especially those who in so doing gave their lives or suffered lasting hurt.'

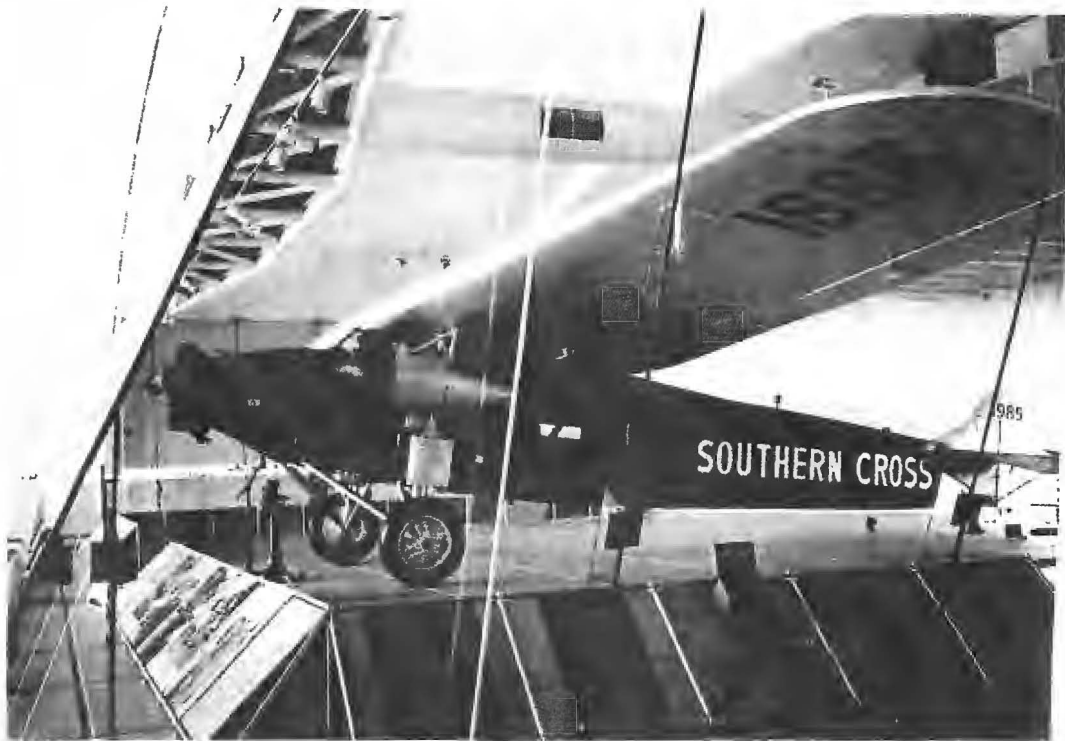
The memorial, right next to a busy walkway had its wreaths in place and undisturbed, but did the group of young Japanese tourists photographing it really understand?

I spent two days with George Duffy and his wife at Beerwah to the north of Brisbane. George was an Australian mid-upper gunner on No.90 Sqn whose Stirling blew up over my village of Hundon whilst gaining height after take-off from Wrattling Common on 22 September 1943. George was the only survivor falling to earth amidst the wreckage of his aircraft. He regained consciousness one month later and was eventually repatriated home. On my return to UK I called on Dr. Harry Bradford who amongst the carnage and as the 90 Sqn. MO, actually confirmed that George was 'still alive' and who as a result of our research long ago is still in contact with his 'Aussie patient'

I did in fact see koalas, 'roos, wallabies, snakes, possums, fruit-bats, crocs and loads of glorious birds (feathered), did a little of the tourist bit, shopped a little and dealt with a magnificent steak supper at the 'Brecky Creek Hotel' (the best in town)..

I must admit however, that in my case, the Eastern charm of the stunning flight attendants of Singapore Airlines in their national dress was far more likely to raise the blood pressure than DVT!

Jock Whitehouse



'Southern Cross'
Sir Charles Kingsford-Smith's
Fokker Tri-Motor (blue and silver)

Seen in The Australian War Memorial Building. Canberra

||
Small Town Memorials

Geoff Page

No matter how small
 Every town has one;
 Maybe just the obelisk,
 A few names inlaid;
 More often full-scale granite,
 Marble digger(arms reversed),
 Long descending lists of dead:
 Sometimes not even a town,
 A thickening of houses
 Or a few unlikely trees
 Glimpsed on a back-road
 Will have one.



**Royal Australian Air Force Memorial
Brisbane**
The colours of the different granites used can be seen



World War Two airman
One of four mosaic service figures of WW2 added to the
magnificent Memorial Building in Canberra,
originally built to commemorate The Great War.
A number of Australian aircrew lost their lives on No.214(FMS) Squadron.

Sqn.Ldr. Bob Anstee AFM AFC

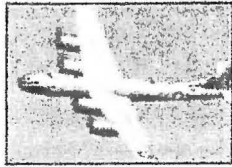
This item of Bob Anstee's RAF career should have appeared in the last newsletter, unfortunately it was left out.

Bob was born in Bristol on May 11th. 1924 and died in Kings Lynn on October 8th. 2003. Before joining the RAF he had trained as an engineer with Bristol Aircraft.

1942 ----Marshalls EFTS --Tiger Moth
AFS Little Rissington
Withdrawn to train as a Flight Engineer . Short course
1651 HCU RAF Waterbeach ----Stirlings
214 (FMS)Sqn. RAF Chedburgh----Stirlings
214 (FMS)Sqn. RAF Oulton --- Fortresses
Dec. 1944 --- Tour completed. 14 on Stirlings , 30 on Fortresses
1699 HCU , RAF Oulton Fortress and B24
RAF Warton, Radio School
Iris Inspector, Radio Services. Lancaster
1947 Transport Command . Avro Yorks
241 OCU, RAF Dishforth. Avro Yorks
59 Sqn. RAF Abingdon . Avro Yorks
40 Sqn. RAF Bassingbourn. Avro Yorks.
1950----- 115 Sqn. RAF Marham. Washington (B29 Superfortress)
1951----- Special Duty Flight. Barksdale AFB and Sculthorpe. RB45 Tornado
April 1952--- First Special Duty carried out. Reconnaissance over the Soviet Union.
Returned to 115 Sqn.
1953 HQ 3 Group. Valiant Performance Book
April 1954 Second Special Duty Flight carried out over the Soviet Union
Returned to HQ 3 Group
1956 RAE Farnborough , Victor,Valiant,Vulcan,Ashton, Lincoln et al.
1959----- 511 Sqn. RAF Lyneham. ETPS , Glider
Aug. 1963 OCTU
Oct. 1963 216 Sqn. RAF Lyneham . Comet
Dec. 1966 A & AE , Boscombe Down , E Sqn. Heavy Aircraft Nav. Division ;
Comet , Belfast , Hercules , VC10
April 1972 511 Sqn. RAF Brize Norton. Britannia
Sept. 1973 Left RAF service.

Oct. 1973 Joined Dan Air . 707 , 727 , BAC 111
April 1979 Pakistan International , 707 , 727
1980 Malaysia Airlines 707
1983 Air Lanka 707
1984 Air Djibouti 727
1985 Personal pilot to Prince Abanda Aturki Faisal. Boeing 727/200
1990 Retired .

Bob had gone from trainee pilot in 1942 , retrained and operated as a Flight Engineer, operated as a co-pilot from 1950 , and after leaving the RAF qualified to fly in the "left hand seat" which involved a new career as an airline pilot.



My 4 and ½ years in the R.A.F.

By Sylvia Harding nee Dribb us L.A.C. W.A.A.F.

In 1942 when the war was at it's height, I had reached the age when it was possible for me to be drafted into a factory, doing war work. Not wishing to do this type of work I felt I could do something more worth while, so I considered a life in the R.A.F. My brother had already joined the Navy so I enlisted in the air force and was accepted as a W.A.A.F.

I wanted to do a driving course, however that job was filled. As I wanted to do my bit in the war, I accepted any trade they offered. With a lot of other young girls, I caught a train to Blackpool (I quote young girls, as none of us were over 20 years old). Arriving at Blackpool, we were met by a very loud voiced Sergeant, who called us to "Get Fell In" we all thought it a strange request, as none of us had the faintest idea what he meant. After we were kitted out, a few words were had from the said Sarge, we soon found out what this "Get Fell In" was, in 6 weeks we became more like air force personal than civvies, and square bashing on the promenade at Blackpool with the ice cold wind blowing off the ocean wasn't a pleasant introduction to the service, however we all passed at our final parade and we looked very smart.

I was sent to my first camp at Chedburgh, where I was assigned to the air crew mess, here the kitchen staff served the meals, my job was to see to it that all drinks and cutlery were on the tables where we served all the pre-op and post-op meals.

This was a happy camp, but I feel my happiest times were spent at Oulton, with Squadron 214 I spent most of my service life at Oulton it was a great experience.

I was placed in the air crew mess again, only this time in the sergeants mess where I made a lot of friends, two of which I still correspond with, after all these years! also one crew member living in New Zealand, who was shot down and became a P.O.W, Doug Douglas.

There were many a time I shed tears when I saw an empty table at breakfast, knowing the crew had been shot down and hoping they had been picked up, and perhaps become prisoners

We W.A.A.F got to know a lot of crews as we saw them everyday, they were very friendly, courteous and respectful to our girls, this also applied to the Aussies, New Zealanders, oh yes, the Americans as well. It was just like one big happy family.

I can remember the once a month dances, we all looked forward to those evenings. Mind you it was all ballroom dancing, none of this rock and roll and no tape music, we had a live band every time and some of the lads had two left feet, but we all enjoyed the night.

Our billets were a couple of miles from the camp, we had bikes but when it snowed we couldn't ride so they sent us transport. One morning, going to work, a German fighter

followed one of our planes in, firing at it. We heard a crash; we were later told it was the German plane that had crashed, shot down by a Spitfire.

One thing we liked to do was walk up to the control tower and wave the planes off wishing them the best of luck on their mission. When the war had ended, the squadron was disbanded and the W.A.A.F's were all posted to other station. I went to Cosford only this time I worked in the officer's mess. Whilst at Cosford they were trying to organise a concert. I went along to see what was needed, I said I did Hula dancing and this is where I met my future husband, he was at this camp doing a fitters course, and he offered to play the guitar for me. The show was a great success, we toured around to the other camps, it was called "Erk's Wonders", this show business rehearsing helped to pass the time away.

My boyfriend asked me to meet his family, when I arrived, there were two raf bods, one was in the air-sea-rescue, the other a Flight Lieutenant who asked me which station I had been on, he had also been at Oulton, but on ~~22~~ 23 squadron. He often performed in the band, playing alto sax. He was a terrific chap, he did two tours of ops in his time, the other brother had been in the Far East for a long time...

I was demobbed on the 4-11-1946, married in 1947 and in 1950 we came out to Australia just for a look around, but we have stayed here now for 54 years, bringing up our son and daughter, both are married, so grand children have filled our lives. Hopefully we will be over this year for a holiday, also attending the 214 dinner on September the 25th, we have already booked our hotel room and I am looking forward to hopefully meeting some old squadron members, perhaps someone will remember that shy W.A.A.F who used to serve them

Some happy-times, some sad times, but wonderful memories for me.



Sylvia Dribbus in 1944

As reported in the news section , Sylvia and her husband , Maurice , have booked to come to the Reunion in Norwich on the weekend of Sept. 24/25th.

ROLL OF HONOUR 1942

As in previous Roll of Honour lists in the Nightjar I have continued backwards through the months, from August 1942 to April 1st. 1942

Stirling Mk.1 BF330 "H"

Aug. 17/18th. 1942

Sgt. A.Fleming RCAF	+
Sgt. A.Dewer	+
P/Off. K.P.Symes	+
Sgt. W.H.Jones	+
Sgt. G.W.Pickworth	+
Sgt. A.H.C. Gill RCAF	+
Sgt. R. Kerry	+

Stirling Mk. 1 N3729 "R"

Aug. 6/7th. 1942

S/Ldr. R.G.G.English	ok
P/Off. F.C.Hill	ok
P/Off. R.M.Dunkley	ok
Sgt. E.R.Rees	ok
P.Off. K.A.Needleson	ok
Sgt. R. Florence RNZAF	ok
Sgt. R.G. Warwick	ok
Sgt. C. Passingham	ok

Note. T/Off. 01-15, returned early and crashed while trying to land at base.

Stirling Mk.1 W7560 "C"

July 26/27th. 1942

F/Lt. G.R. Simich RNZAF	pow
Sgt. D.L. Knibb	pow
F/Sgt. D.W.Attwood RNZAF	pow
Sgt. C.L. De Freitas	pow
Sgt. R.G.Cartwright	pow
Sgt. A.T.B.Jackson RNZAF	pow
P/Off. B.M.Sheppard RNZAF	pow

Stirling Mk. 1 W7567 "S"

July 23/24th. 1942

✓ P/Off. J.D.Peel	+
✓ Sgt. D.F. Dobson	+
✓ F/Sgt. P.J.Withers	+
✓ Sgt. H.C. Fairhall	pow
✓ Sgt. E.H. Cooper	+
✓ Sgt. J.B. Fleming RCAF	+
✓ Sgt. F.A.W. Thorne	+

Stirling Mk.1 BF313 "T"

July 2/3rd. 1942

W/Cdr. K.D. Knocker	+
Sgt. T.E.L.Palmer	+
Sgt. J.W.C. Underwood	+
P/Off. D.Malofie RCAF	+
Sgt. P.F.Inman	+
F/Sgt. R.H.Ritchie	+
Sgt. R.Fairhurst	+
F/Sgt. E.G.Wilson RCAF	+

Stirling Mk.1 N3751 "P"

June 27/28th. 1942

Sgt. F.M. Griggs RAAF	ok
Sgt. T.N.C. Prosser	ok
Sgt. A.R. O'Hara	ok
Sgt. W. Wildey	inj.
Sgt. R. Watson	ok
F/Sgt. J.I.C. Waddicar	ok
Sgt. H.A.W. Sewell	+

Note. Damaged by flak and fighters, crashed at base with wheels retracted

Stirling Mk.1 W7538 " T "

June 25/26th. 1942

P/Off. Smith	ok
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Badly shot about by night fighters , this Stirling crashlanded at Coltishall and was written off. Two members of the crew were wounded during the fighter engagements.

Stirling Mk.1 DJ973 " A "

June 24/25th. 1942

F/Sgt. W.N. Craig	+
Sgt. H.S. Barker	+
Sgt. G.J. Mugford	+
Sgt. P.G. Brothers	+
Sgt. D.E. Shrimpton	+
Sgt. E.H. Brown RCAF	+
Sgt. R.B. Appleby	ok

Note: Returned with engine problems,
crashed at Hundon at 03-49hrs.

Stirling Mk.1 R9319 " S "

June 20/21st. 1942

Sgt. R. Lewis	ok
Sgt. Nicholl	ok
Sgt. Holland	ok
Sgt. Gray	ok
Sgt. Shrimpton	ok
P/Off. Findlay	ok
Sgt. Thompson	ok

Note: Port inner failed, turned back,
landed at high speed and hit a parked
Stirling.

Stirling Mk.1 N3762 " C "

June 19/20th. 1942

S/Ldr. P. Nixey DSO	+
F/Off. R.McD.Mitchell RCAF	pow
Sgt. W.E. Pearson	+
F/Off. C.D.Noble RCAF	pow
W/Off. L.R.Burgin	pow
Sgt. D.A.Melville	+
Sgt. A. Buckley	+
Sgt. J.H. Bailey	pow

Stirling Mk.1 R9326 " G "

June 11/12th. 1942

✓ Sgt. A.R. Tonkin RAAF	pow
✓ Sgt. G.H. Ransome	pow
✓ Sgt. W.D.Horne	pow
✓ F/Sgt. C.L.Honeychurch RCAF	pow
✓ Sgt. G.D. Morton	pow
✓ Sgt. S.G. Goodey	pow
✓ Sgt. L.D.Richardson	pow
✓ Sgt. B.F.Hoskins	pow

Stirling Mk.1 N3761 "E"

June 6/7th. 1942

F/Lt. R.W.A.Turtle DFC	+
Sgt. A.R. Scott	+
F/Lt. N. Harrison	+
P/Off. L. Treppass	+
F/Sgt. W. Barham	+
P/Off. J.B. Holdsworth	+
P/Off. B.P. Cardinal RCAF	+
P/Off. E.M. Marks RCAF	+

Stirling Mk.1 W7537 "H"

June 3/4th. 1942

F/Sgt. R.J. Finch	+
W/Off. W. Wall	+
Sgt. S.E. Saunders	+
Sgt. E. Docherty	+
Sgt. J.F.P. Knight	pow
W/Off. L.S. Hill	pow
Sgt. J.H. Spinks	+
F/Sgt. J. McD. Brown	pow

Stirling Mk.1 W7534 "E"

May 30/31th. 1942

P/Off. H. Dent	+
Sgt. C.H. Muir RAAF	+
Sgt. R.S. Cruise	+
P/Off. S.S. Dimond	+
Sgt. G.C.Bunning	+
Sgt. J.H. Munday	+
P/Off. W. Davies	+
Sgt. P.G. McGrath	+

Wellington 1c DV768

April 28/29th. 1942

Sgt. S.W.G. Avent	+
Sgt. A.J. Hyde	+
Sgt. H.F.V. Whehay	+
Sgt. G.E. Newman	+
Sgt. G.T. Owen	+
Sgt. F.T.Williams	+

Note: The last Squadron Wellington
to be lost on operations.

Wellington 1c Z8951

April 15/16th. 1942

P/Off. L.M. Leech RCAF	+
P/Off. H.A. Shortt	+
Sgt. J. Ward	+
Sgt. G.M.C. Turner	+
Sgt. P. Heppenstall	+
Sgt. V.E. Egan	+

Wellington 1c Z1148

April 14/15th. 1942

F/Sgt. R.M. Lawrence RCAF	+
Sgt. B.O. Gates RCAF	+
P/Off. R.B. Halliday RCAF	+
Sgt. D.H.M. Jacques RCAF	+
Sgt. E. Mason	+
Sgt. S. Cox	+

Wellington 1c HF856

April 10/11th. 1942

P/Off. J.W. Murray	+
F/Sgt. H.A.Neal RCAF	+
Sgt. C.W.Penny	+
Sgt. F.Bonser	+
Sgt. D. Smith	+
Capt. H.M.Butterworth RA	+

APRIL 1st./ 2nd. 1942

On this night the target was Hanau and seven of the Squadron's aircraft were lost. Of the 42 crew members , only one survived to be taken as a pow.

Wellington 1c R1789

Sgt. S. Burtwell	+
Sgt. A.E. Rees	+
Sgt. K.H. Tibbatts	+
Sgt. P.Wood	+
Sgt. J.C. Dunn	+
Sgt. H.Downs	+

Wellington 1c X9979

P/Off. J.H.A. Baker	+
Sgt.D.A.S.Hamilton RNZAF	+
F/Sgt. A.R. Vint	+
F/Sgt. T.F.Flanagan	+
F/Sgt. R.A.J.Trevillian	+
Capt. H.J.Tingle MC , RA	+

Wellington 1c Z1052

✓ W/O1 W.D. Page RCAF	+
✓ Sgt. H. Mitchell	+
✓ Sgt. J. Murphy	+
✓ Sgt. S. Perry	+
✓ Sgt. R.A.Platt	+
✓ Sgt. C.H. Davidson	pow

Wellington 1c Z1156

Sgt. A.A.Ferguson	+
Sgt. W.R.West RCAF	+
Sgt. V.P.W. Wheaton	+
✱ Sgt. D.O. George	+
Sgt. H. Chilvers	+
Sgt. N. Ramsbottom	+

Wellington 1c Z8805

Sgt. E. Dixon	+
P/Off. T. Best RCAF	+
Sgt. A.G. Richards	+
P/Off. J.McK. Henderson	+
Sgt. E.K. Stevens	+
Sgt. E.T. Albrighton	+

Wellington 1c Z8842

F/Lt. E.D.Baker DFC RCAF	+
Sgt. V.L. Stephens	+
F/Sgt. S.S. Dawes RCAF	+
Sgt. G.E. Newman	+
Sgt. E.W. Shotter	+
F/Sgt. E.H. Erby	+

Wellington 1c Z8979 Bu-?

✓ P/Off. R.W.S. Hayes	+
✓ F/Sgt. N.G. Hickey RCAF	+
✓ Sgt. G.W. Jackson	+
✓ Sgt. I. L. Eagleton	+
✓ Sgt. R. Kitney	+
✓ F/Sgt. J. Nash	+

Note: Two of the rear gunners were Royal Artillery officers , not uncommon at this period. One had probably served in WW1 as a holder of the Military Cross.

Once again thanks are due to Bill Chorley for allowing us to reproduce these losses from his Bomber Command Losses, Vol. 3 (1942). WW11.

THE NEXT " NIGHTJAR " NEWSLETTER

This edition is the biggest yet ; it has more pages and items of interest , but with increased production and postage costs. We hope you think it worth the extra outlay ?.

It is our intention to make the next edition , due out in mid February , a special TANKER version , however in order to produce this we need help from members who served on the Squadron from the early trials period in 1957 / 58 through to disbandment in January 1977.

We require history , stories, anecdotes , any other items of interest, and of course photographs. It takes quite a few weeks to plan and produce each edition in which case could you please let us have whatever you can provide by the end of October at the latest.

If the number of items received amounts to more than we can use in one edition it will have to be carried forward into future editions.

It cannot be guaranteed that every item will be used, that will depend on a variety of factors such as space , cost , suitability etc.

Colour photos are acceptable but because of cost will have to be reproduced in the "Nightjar" in black and white.

If possible laser printed copies of your original photos would be preferable, but of a size that would fit comfortably into the pages of the newsletter.

Peter M. Walker and Jock Whitehouse

AND FINALLY A LITTLE BIT OF NONSENSE

The Station Commander at a wartime airfield was driving down a narrow country lane when he saw, coming towards him, a little girl of about ten years of age leading a very large Ayrshire cow attached to a halter.

He pulled on to the side of the road to let her pass, wound down the window, and as the girl and cow came past said , " and where are you taking that huge beast young lady "?

" Oim taking her to be bulled zur "

" But could'nt your father do that "

" Oh no zur, thas gotta be a bull ".

Two old pensioners were sitting in the sunshine recalling their "squarebashing" days in the late 1940s.

" Do you remember ", said George , " That stuff they put in the tea to take our minds off young women".

" I think that was called bromide ", recalled Fred.

" Whatever it was called ", said George, " I think it's beginning to work ".

A Viking warrior returned to his home town, having been away for two years, burning and pillaging in Britain.

He was extremely annoyed to find that he had not been accorded a civic reception and that his name was no longer on the register of leading citizens. He threatened to hang, draw and quarter the person responsible.

When the town mayor informed the registrar of his likely fate all he could say was " Oh dear, I must have taken Lief off my census ".

LATE NEWS EXTRA

New Members (since the last Newsletter)

JACK BENNETT -- Cpl. Engine fitter , Stradishall 1941/42

JOHN V. MATHEWS RAAF , W/op. Oulton 1944/45. Shot down and
pow , March 1945. (George Stewarts crew)

IAN HUNT , Aircraft researcher on 214 Sqn. Fortress operations.

(has produced a list of all ops., with aircraft and skipper of each and
kindly sent me a copy in a very smart folder)

Mrs. MARGARET CRAIG. Her uncle, Sgt. D.O.Dowson lost on a
Stirling , April 11th. 1943.

KATE BRETTELL , her uncle, Flt.Lt. Reg Turtle DFC skipper of
a Stirling lost in June 1942 . (see Roll of Honour in this Nightjar.)

New 214 Sqn. colour prints available. (Approx size , 18 x 12 inches, unframed)

Valiant XD816 , Fortress BU-Q , Fortress BU-B

£7.00 each plus postage/packing £2.00 (sent in a cardboard tube)

From the City of Norwich Aviation Museum, Old Norwich Road,
Horsham St. Faith, Norwich NR10 3JF . Tel. 01603-- 893080

Payment to , City of Norwich Aviation Museum.

Postage of this edition of the Nightjar

In the report of the cost of producing a bigger Nightjar (see Committee notes)
I mentioned that the postage would be 43p per copy (UK). Since then postage
has increased and this copy (UK) now costs 47p.

The cost of printing each bigger Nightjar amounts to £1.55 , totalling, with
the postage (UK) £2.02 . This figure does not take account of the cost of
the Reunion and Booking forms or other incidental costs throughout the year
in running the Association.

Therefore you will see that with two Newsletters each year ,we are left with a
very small margin from the annual subscription of £5.00 per member.

Nonetheless, as you will see in the Committee notes , we intend to fund our
expenditure from reserves as and when required, rather than increase the subs.,
at least for the time being.

Some of our members pay £10.00 each year and this is very welcome, thank you
to those of you who do.

Peter M. Walker
Secretary

See overleaf for some historical information -----

Special D-Day Edition

Operations flown by 214 Sqn. on the night of June 5/6th. 1944 .

Fortress SR382 BU-B Sqn. Ldr. S.R. Jeffrey ABC jamming
early return , No. 1 engine fire (reached 51-00 N / 00-40 E)

Fortress SR377 BU-M F/Off. C.E. Lye RNZAF . ABC jamming ,
Early return; oxygen failure, intercom trouble and No. 3 engine problems.
(reached 50-47 N / 0054 E)

Fortress SR386 BU-N W/Cdr. D.J. McGlinn ABC jamming ,
early return due to damage by an ME410 (claimed destroyed) and loss
of height in combat.

Fortress SR381 BU-F F/Lt. D.M.Peden RCAF , ABC jamming ,
operation carried out , no problems.

Fortress SR388 BU-H Sqn. Ldr. W.S. Day DFC , RCAF ; ABC jamming ,
operation carried out , no problems .

Note: ABC jammer (Airborne Cigar) . This type of jamming equipment was
generally phased out by late July 1944 and replaced by JOSTLE .

These Fortresses were B17Fs , fourteen of this model being supplied to the
Squadron in 1944. By late September 1944 they had largely been replaced by
B17Gs.

This information was obtained from the list of 214 Sqn. operations produced
by Ian Hunt, a new member.

Ian had spent many hours going through the Sqn. ORBs (Operational record
books) at the National Archives, Kew (formerly The Public Record Office)
He is currently working on producing a list of the names of each crew member
and not just the aircraft and skipper ;

Bill Chorley's volumes on Bomber Command Losses 1939/45 lists all those
aircrew who were killed or taken pow, but does not of course list those who
survived.

Ian Hunt 's lists of crews will prove very useful in answering various questions
that often arise. Each crew member will know from their log books when they
went on ops. but I have sometimes been asked " who else was up that night ? ,
its' a long while ago and I can't remember."