

LOOSE LEAF COLOUR PAGE
AIRCRAFT OF 214 SQUADRON
Dec. 1917 to Jan. 1977

39/41.

"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)



WINTER / SPRING 2006

Minutes of the 17th. AGM of 214 (FMS) Squadron Association held at the
Maids Head Hotel, Norwich on Saturday September 24th. 2005

Committee present : Sqn.Ldr. G.W.Moffatt Chairman
 John Gulliver Treasurer
 Peter McD. Walker Secretary
 Jock Whitehouse Historian
 Roy Monk Committee
 Wng. Cdr. Bill Wilkinson Committee
 Dave Parsons Committee
 Shaun Broaders Committee

and 23 members

Apologies had been received from Charles Lilley , Bill Doy , Hazel Southgate, Neil Scott, Abe Levine (Canada), Keith & Norma Evans (NZ), Norman Storey, John Lyall (Australia), John Morton, Alan Wilkes, Peter Simmonda, John Brown (USA) , Herbert Harker, Jack Dixon, Mr. & Mrs. Birch , Gerhard Heilig (Vienna), Peter Jowett , Peter Brown, Walter Rowley , Peter & Chris Frost . Jim Newman , Martin Staunton , Steve & Joan Nessner.

Chairman's Welcome . Welcome to you all . First of all would you all please stand to remember all our friends and comrades who are no longer with us .

In Memorium	Stan Bayliss	(March 2005)
	D.T. Bailey	(October 2004)
	Fred Parkinson	(October 2004)
	Wng.Cdr. Ken Wilkinson	(March 2005)
	(Son of Bill and Kay Wilkinson)	
	Mrs. Margaret Deadman	(May 2005)
	Ray Gamble	(December 2004)

We then all stood for a minutes silence

The Chairman then continued his welcome to our new members present , Mrs. Alys Smith , Geoff Hicks and Maurice Mathhews. Mention was also made of our oldest member present, Ted Walker , 94 , who had come all the way from Darlington . The ladies were not forgotten, Bettie Bidmead , Joyce Hughes , Pauline King and Eunice Davies.
Moff said , " its good to see you here once again ".

Minutes of the last meeting .

With no matters arising the Minutes of the 2004 meeting were agreed. Proposed by Alistair McDermid and seconded by Paul Henry .

Chairman's Report

Last year I was able to report that 2003 had been a good year apart from our financial situation. With the agreement at the 2004 AGM to increase the annual subscriptions from £5--00 to £10--00 our financial situation is improving , but as you will see from the Treasurer's report to follow, quite a number of our members payments will , for various reasons , take time to catch up.

I would also like to thank the Committee for their sterling work in keeping the Association on the right track. As last year I am pleased to report that we continue to recruit new members. The " Nightjar " news letter appears to continue to be well received and the colour page in the last edition (July 2005) was particularly appreciated.

Once again our President , MRAF Sir Michael Beetham . will be with us this evening . Please welcome him .

Now to the business of the day.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer commenced by thanking Bill Wilkinson for his professional management of the accounts over several years. Thanks were also given for Vic Pheasant holding the position of Treasurer during 2004 and for transferring the accounts to computer spreadsheets.

Accounts for the financial year ending December 31st. 2004 were given to each member present. The main points were highlighted as follows.

1. The starting balance for 2004 was £620 higher than 2003
2. Membership subscriptions were down by £500 but many members had paid in advance in 2003 so this is not a disaster.
3. No major change in overall expenditure.
4. No. 2 Account reduced by the costs of the AGM and Reunion.
5. Overall assets reduced by £220

Projected situation for 2005-

1. Stock value of £121--55 will be reduced to zero.
2. No. 2 Account , which is only used to pay for functions , will be absorbed into the main account and then closed.
3. 122 members have paid a subscription this year (to date). Some members are in credit from prepayment.
4. DONATIONS. The Sally B (The Fortress that flies from Duxford) has apparently had a successful season in 2005. The meeting agreed that the Treasurer should make contact with the organisation with a view to making a donation in 2006, the amount to be decided at the next Committee meeting in March 2006.

The amount will be decided when the Association's closing balance is known at the end of December. (Amount not to exceed £214)

Thanks were given to all those members who had taken out Standing Orders or had paid their subs. by other means. The Treasurer hopes, that on present progress, a modest increase in Association funds will be seen at the end of the financial year.

Note : At the Committee meeting in March 2005 the Account balances were as follows .

No. 1. A/C £2898--20

No. 2 A/C £ 150--00

Historian's Report

Jocks report was read out at the meeting and is reproduced in this Nightjar newsletter.

Secretary's Report

The last two Nightjars , Valiant and Victor editions , the latter with colour , seems to have been well received by members who have contacted me.

The production of this twice yearly newsletter is our biggest expense. The last edition of 215 copies printed and sent out cost a total of £312--36. This figure includes envelopes, postage (23 overseas) , and the Reunion booking forms.

Our second biggest expenditure is the ongoing running costs throughout the year , telephone, stationary , postage , Committee meetings , etc.

At the date of this AGM we have 208 members and it is the Nightjar that keeps us all in touch, especially those who cannot get to Reunions.

Eleven new members have joined us since the 2004 Reunion and three of them are here today. They are Mrs. Alys Smith , Geoff Hicks and Maurice Matthews. We welcome you .

The RAF and Allied Air Forces Monument on Plymouth Hoe

Annual service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving and the unveiling of a Plaque to mark the 60th. anniversary of the ending of WW11. Sunday June 26th. 2005
Sqn.Ldr. Bertie Jukes who had attended as the representative for 214 Sqn. Association, now gave the meeting a brief outline of the event .
He reported that representatives of all the Allied Air Forces were in attendance , including those from Russia, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India and other Allied European

Air Forces involved in WW11 operations.

A flypast by the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight took place , with the Dakota , not the Lancaster , the latter being temporarily out of action.

A video of about one hour's duration has been produced and a copy given to the Association. Some photos and a list of all the representatives attending is also available, these being held by the Secretary. If any member would like to borrow these items please contact Peter Walker on 01603-713754.

The Chairman thanked Bertie Jukes for representing the Association on this historical occasion.

Election of Officers

As last year all Committee members indicated that they would be prepared to continue in office. In these circumstances the Committee was re-elected en-bloc, proposed by Bob Butler and seconded by Alistair McDermid.

The Chairman's thoughts on the Future of the Association.

The Chairman stood up and gave a brief outline of how the Association must look to the next few years. Even the youngest members who served at the latter period of the 1970s are now into middle age and it is now unlikely that 214 Sqn. will ever be reformed.

At the Committee meeting this morning it was decided to prepare a planning document titled " 214 Sqn. Association , The Way Ahead ".

A copy of this paper will be sent to every member and will endeavour to seek their views and thoughts by asking questions and seeking suggestions on how they think the future should develop.

Without any further questions the meeting closed at 15. 10 hrs.

Secretary's Report on the Reunion Dinner

The evening commenced at 19.15 hrs. when our President, MRAF Sir Michael Beetham arrived to join us in the sherry reception in the Oak Room.

Sir Michael was introduced to various members, from the youngest to the oldest , from aircrew, groundcrew (including former National Servicemen who had served when he was C/O), and also the ladies, some who had been WAAFs.

It was a very pleasant and relaxed evening when at 20.00 hrs. 60 members and guests took their places for the Reunion Dinner.

The Chairman then welcomed us all including our President who was attending for the second year in succession, and our oldest member here, Ted Walker , who is approaching ninety five. " We hope that they can also attend next and in future years ".

Following the dinner Moff then introduced our guest speaker , Air Vice Marshal Keith Filby. AVM Filby had served on 214 Sqn. as a pilot for a period in the 1970s.

He is a tall young man (I am of the age when even senior officers look young !) . We were regaled with stories of his adventures of flying interspersed with some humorous stories about the Irish and a risqué one about Arthur Scaregill which had us all in fits.

Thank you Sir , it was all very entertaining . Do join the Association and come again next year ?.

Overall it was a good Reunion, old friends and comrades met up and enjoyed each others company , the general feedback was that it was a great success.

There were a few glitches , the small bar that I had arranged to be open just off the Oak Room during the sherry reception did not quite function as planned, someone had moved the goalposts. The sherry glasses were too small causing spillage for those with a shaky hand, which was most of us. Another complaint was the lamb served with the dinner was rather chewy , certainly mine was.

These points have been taken up with the Maids Head and hopefully will be put right in future.

A note for your diary . The 2006 Reunion has been booked, by general agreement the Maids Head Hotel should continue as our venue, the date being Saturday September 23rd. 2006.

The price will increase to £55 per person, per night, to include dinner, bed and breakfast. The Reunion Dinner menu will offer a wider choice next year, but still offers reasonable value in comparison to many hotels.

Details and booking form will be in the June edition of the NIGHTJAR.

NEW MEMBERS SINCE THE 2004 REUNION

P. J. & Mrs. J.H. Birch (Associate). Mrs. Birch's uncle, F/Off. W.G. Cooper pilot, died after colliding with Jack Dixon's Stirling. March 30th. 1943.

Leslie Barker (Associate), nephew of F/Sgt. Leslie Hadder, died when shot down by a JU88 intruder over Oulton on March 4th. 1945.

Jim Goldson, Waist gunner, Fortress, shot down and POW , March 7/8th. 1945.

Don Walter, Air Electronics Officer in John Slessor's crew , Valiants, 1956/58.

Maurice Mathhews , Cpl. radio fitter, Valiants , April 1961 to Dec.1964

Ron Carr (Associate) His brother, Sgt. Lawrence Carr lost in a Stirling, Jan. 15th. 1943..

Alan Cooper, National Service airframe mechanic, Valiants, 1957/58

Geoff Hicks , National Service airframe mechanic, Valiants, 1957/58

John Stemp, Navigator , "Cam" Lye's crew, Fortress, 1944.

Joe Fell, Air gunner, George Mackie's crew, Stirling & Fortress 1943/44.

Kim Fell (Associate), nephew of Joe Fell (above), introduced his uncle to the Association.

Derek Arnot (Associate); younger brother of Flt.Sgt. John Arnot , Navigator in the crew of F/Lt. David Ingham RNZAF. Fortress 1944/45.

NEWS SINCE THE LAST NEWSLETTER

George Mackie was a renowned Stirling and Fortress pilot with 214 Sqn. and probably had more hours on Stirlings than any other pilot. (He flew Stirlings again in 1945/46, this time the transport version.)

Although not a member of the Association , he is in touch and in mid August 2005 I drove to Stamford, Lincs. to visit him at his home. We had a pub lunch and a good natter about his adventures and mishaps during his time in the RAF.

A couple of weeks before my visit to George a new member, Joe Fell, had joined the Association . On looking up my Fortress crew records I found that Joe had flown as a waist gunner in George's crew but they had not seen or heard from each other since 1944. It so happens that Joe Fell lives near Grantham , only about 35 miles from Stamford, so following a telephone call a meeting was arranged at George's home. I am informed that on meeting George's greeting was " Keep your eyes peeled for nightfighters".

Another member of this crew is Bob Moorby, a long standing member of 214 Sqn. Association. Bob and George have met in recent years and keep in touch.

Sept. 2005 Bob Davies and Pauline King spent three days visiting John and Pip Wynne at their home at Glyn Artro , Llanbedr, North Wales.

July 7th. 2005 The presentation of a die-cast model Fortress (1/48th scale) was made to the Oulton Exhibition at Blickling Hall. The model is in the colours and codes of 214 Sqn. but has an incorrect serial number.

News , continued

September 24/25th. 2005 . A weekend of events ~~was~~ was held to mark the 60th anniversary of the murder of five 214 Sqn. airmen at Huchenfeld in Germany. Those of you who have read the little booklet " Hoffnung the Rocking Horse " will know that this is the story of John Wynne and his crew and what happend to them on the night of March 14/15th. 1945.

During the weekend a visit was made to Oulton airfield and the museum at Blickling, (normally closed but opened specially for them).A dinner was held for the visitors in Ely and on the Sunday all attended a short service in Ely Cathedral.

The weekend was organised by Reg Kemp whose uncle , F/Off. Harold Frost, was one of the murdered airmen. Other attending were one of the survivors, Tom Tate, 87, and Frau Heinenmann-Gruber from Huchenfeld whose husband, the now retired Pastor of Huchenfeld , Curt-Jurgen Heinemann-Gruber was instrumental in forming the reconciliation group and for erecting a memorial plaque on the wall of the church in Huchenfeld.

October 22nd. to 29th. 2005

Continueing the reconciliation between Huchenfeld and Llanbedr , fifteen children from Llanbedr and a Welsh choir of mainly adults , travelled to Huchenfeld (Pforzheim) as guests of the German community.

The choir and some of the children gave a performance in the very modern Concerthall in Huchenfeld. In 2006 it is the turn of the Huchenfeld children to visit Llanbedr.

Sept. 21st. 2005 In Memorium

BERT FINCH , Bomb Aimer in F/Lt. Morrison's crew , Stirling / Fortress 1944. Not an Association member but known to people from that time.

October 26th. 2005 A new Associate member , WAYNE TAGGART , has joined us. Wayne lives in Parrsboro , Nova Scotia , Canada. His father was F/SGT. B.D. TAGGART RCAF who flew as Mid-upper gunner in the crew of Bob Mackett RCAF with Bill Wilkinson as Bomb Aimer. Stirlings ,Chedburgh.

October 26th. 2005 Sandie Blake, the daughter-in-law of R.O. "Doug" Douglas RNZAF was visiting her son in London and contacted me to say that she would like to come to Norwich by train and asked my advice on how to get to Oulton and Blickling. As I have done with other overseas visitors I offered to pick her up and take her there and show her round. It was a very warm and beautiful autumn day , we went to Oulton airfield, took photos at the memorial , visited the RAF Oulton museum at Blickling, had a light lunch in the Buckinghamshire Arms pub, walked in the area near the lake where many airmen had lived in Nissen huts, then went to have a look at the Hall (we did not go inside).

Finally we went to my home where we had a cup of tea and a bite to eat before I took Sandie back to Norwich station to catch her train back to London.

Although a Kiwi Sandie lives in Ipswich near Brisbane, Australia.

"Doug" Douglas was rear gunner in Norman Rix's Fortress shot down and all crew Pow on the night of March 14/15th. 1945. (See the story in the little booklet , " Hoffnung the Rocking Horse " , 214 Sqn. Assn. Aug. 2003 ".

News continued

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Nov. 14th. 2005 Received a telephone call from "Doug" Douglas in New Zealand to thank me for taking his daughter-in-law , Sandie Blake around Oulton and Blickling. He was on the 'phone for about 20 minutes talking about Oulton and his comparatively short time there before becoming a PoW.

Nov. 200⁵ A new Associate member , Mrs. Shirley Whitlock of Rayleigh , Essex. Her uncle, SGT. ERIC SMITH was the navigator on Stirling BF516 PX-E which, out of fuel , came down in the sea off Pevensey Bay , Sussex on August 10th. 1943. Sgt. Smith and another crew member were lost but the other five crew were rescued by high speed launch.

When I had received the enquiry from Shirley I looked up the records and realised that the wireless operator on this crew was Bob Moorby who is one of our very active members.

I immediately 'phoned Bob who in turn telephoned Shirley who was delighted that the 214 Sqn. "action desk" was able to come up with far more information that she had hoped for in such a short space of time.

The outcome of this was that on Dec.10th. Bob drove from his home in Surrey to spend a couple of days with Shirley and her family in Rayleigh. I bet that they had plenty to talk about.

One interesting thing that should be noted about the Stirling in this report is that it carried the squadron code PX and not the usual code of BU. Bob Moorby could not remember that it was PX so I consulted Jock Whitehouse who informed me that it was the code for "C" Flight of 214 Sqn. although this Flight had been formed into 620 Sqn. at Chedburgh in June 1943. We can only conclude that this Stirling had been retained by 214 Sqn. but had not been changed to BU at the time of the loss.

Nov. 2005 Received an enquiry , via a letter to Ian Coates ,from Mr. Ken Domm of Wokingham, Berks. for information on a relative who lost his life in Fortress HB805 BU-C on February 24th. 1945 (Skipper , F/Off. Shorttle).

His relative was F/Off. Kenneth C.Allan , Wireless Operator. Only the rear gunner survived to become a PoW.

I was able to give Mr. Domm details of the aircraft and crew and received a letter of thanks.

Oddly enough I remembered that about four years ago I had an enquiry from a Mr. Paul Davies who was a nephew of the pilot , F/Off. Shorttle. I looked up my records and 'phoned Mr. Davies and put him in touch with Ken Domm so that they could exchange information.

Nov. 2005 Enquiry from a Mr. Ralph Wooldridge , Waltham Abbey , Essex. His mother's cousin , Sgt. RICHARD FAIRHURST was mid-upper gunner on Stirling BF313 BU-T shot down by a night-fighter and crashed in Holland on July 3rd. 1942. The co-pilot on this trip was the Sqn. CO , W/C K.D. Knocker. Wrote to Mr. Wooldridge with information but to date have not received a reply.

IN MEMORIUM , Dec. 13th. 2005 JOHN FENN , Crawley , Sussex .

Wireless Op. on Stirlings (S/L Day's crew 90 and 214 Sqns. 1943 and 214 Sqn. Fortress to July 1944). 1699 Fortress Con. Unit at Oulton as signals instructor.

Back to ops. with 214 , Feb. to May 1945 (Bernard Haynes crew)

John had only found out about and joined the Association in 2005.

News continued

Information that only came to hand in December. Mrs. JOAN BURN , widow of BOB BURN RCAF , died at Whitby , Ontario , Canada in May 2005. Bob was the Navigator in Bob Davies's crew on 578 Sqn. (Halifax) and 214 Sqn. (Fortress) 1944/45.

July 10th. 2005 Our President , MRAF Sir Michael Beetham , flew in the Lancaster that dropped a million poppies over London to commemorate the 60th. anniversary of the ending of the Second World War.

Were any of our members in London on this date and managed to catch a poppy ?

IN MEMORIUM Dec. 25th. 2005 HERBERT HARKER , Coundon , Co.Durham. Air gunner , Fortress 1944/45. (in crew of Lucas and Van den Bok). Herbert had attended some Reunions up to 2004.

New member Dec. 2005 Bob Mackett Jnr. Vancouver, Canada . Bob is the son of Bob Mackett Snr. who flew Stirlings on 214 in 1942/43. (Alan Deadman was the Nav. and Bill Wilkinson was the BA). They are all in touch . Bob Jnr. is very keen on anything 214 and has always read his father's Nightjar with interest. Now he will receive his own copy.

Hoffnung the Rocking Horse Those of you who had a copy of this little booklet produced in 2003 will recall John Wynne's long lone flight from Germany on March 15th. 1945 when he finally landed at the USAAF base at Bassingbourne. When producing the booklet I was not aware that when John jumped out of the Fortress a Jeep came up with two airmen aboard. When in the darkness he saw their strange steel helmets a doubt came into his mind that they were Germans and that he had perhaps landed at a base in occupied Holland.

He had the Very pistol in his hand and approached these people with caution, holding it at head level until he asked "where am I " and received the reply, Bassingbourne Sir. He immediately knew that he was on an American base. After enquiring of the whereabouts of his crew he was then driven to the control tower in order to telephone to Oulton.

In the early 1990s , when John first learned the truth of the murder of five of his nine crew who had bailed out he began to research the background of the various people involved ,including the two American airmen who had approached him at Bassingbourne. Through a third party, John received ,in 1997, a short handwritten letter from the driver of the Jeep, a former Sgt.T.H.Dawson. In 2004 John sent me a copy of this letter which had an address in West Virginia, USA and a telephone number.

In 2005 I decided that if he was still alive and living at the same address it might be of interest to talk to Mr.Dawson. So I called and Mrs. Dawson answered, "Sure Mr. Dawson is here, who's callin" , " Hank,there's a guy here calling from England, wants to talk to ya".

The old boy was amazed that some stranger should be calling from England about something that happened sixty years ago. He is now 85 and told me what he remembered of that night when an RAF B17 landed with only the captain aboard , a main tyre burst and a propeller off. Hell I did'nt know the RAF flew B17s.

Of course he had no knowledge of John's amazing flight back from Germany so I decided to send him a copy of "Hoffnung the Rocking Horse".

About a month went by and I had not received a reply so I decided to ring him again. He was very apologetic and said I was going to write to thank you but " I aint very very good at letter writin these days." It was very interesting

News continued

to find out what had happened to that B17 and the pilot sixty years later.

" If I had known what had happened at the time I would have stepped back two paces and thrown that guy the smartest salute I had ever thrown".

" I am pleased to hear that he is still alive, give him my best wishes, and thanks for the booklet of this story."

Avenging in the Shadows . The reprint of this book was mentioned in the Nightjar twelve months ago and as a result quite a few members placed orders. It has still not reached the production stage but I understand it is getting close. Those of you who ordered a copy will be informed when it becomes available.

The 100 Group Reunion will be held over the weekend of May 12th to 14th. Details available from the City of Norwich Aviation Museum. 01603 893080 This popular event usually gets well attended so do book in good time.

Another new member Les Bostock , Old Stevenage, Herts. Bomb Aimer in the Fortress crew of Don Austin and later John Wynne (incl. post war) 1944 to 1946.

The loose leaf colour page in this edition

This individual sheet has been produced especially for 214 Sqn. Association by the well known aircraft illustrator M.D.Howley. David Howley has put these images on a CD which he then sent to Shaun Broaders who has , via his computer, produced the loose copies on 102 gm. photo quality paper.

David has also sent me a master copy print of this sheet so that if any member wanted a larger copy (A3 , twice the size) I can have these reproduced on a laser photocopier . However these would be on good quality photocopying paper and not on photo quality paper as the loose leaf sheet.

The image on the photocopy would not be quite so good as the original but from a test shot I believe that it would be acceptable and good enough for framing.

If any member would like a copy (ies) these will be available for £4.50 each to include the print, postage and packaging . (Sent in a strong cardboard tube)

For overseas members please add an extra £1 for additional postage.

A lot of behind the scenes work has gone into producing this new colour sheet so we hope that you like it.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS Can I remind all members that the annual subs of £10 are due for those who have not paid for twelve months or more. Those of you who pay by Direct Debit/Bankers Order or have joined the Association in the last six months can ignore this notice.

Payment should be made direct to our Treasurer , John Gulliver , whose address and telephone number are in the inside front page of this newsletter.

If you are in doubt of when you last paid please contact John.



Valiant XD870 during early dry refuelling trials about September 1958.
Photos taken from the right hand seat of WZ390 by Sqn.Ldr. John Slessor.
(Now Gp/Capt. J.A.G. Slessor.) Both were 214 Sqn. aircraft at that time.
Early colour photos sent in by John Slessor.



HISTORIAN'S REPORT (UPDATED)

Jock Whitehouse

Although enquiries / family contacts are noticeably reducing in number, the 'help' facility will remain 'open'.

Flight Sergeant Leslie Hadder. Killed in action 4 March 1945.

Mr Leslie Barker, nephew of the above 214 Squadron B17 crew member, has completed his research in which Peter and myself were glad to help, and has now produced a splendid book on his uncle's life which will undoubtedly become a valued piece of family history. Other similar projects usually concentrate on only the service life of the relative but Leslie's book is far more comprehensive and he should be congratulated on its final format. A copy is available over the weekend and it is well worth a few minutes of your time

Clare Pollard and myself represented our Association in June joining with No.218 Gold Coast) Squadron members during their annual reunion weekend to which 214 is always cordially invited to attend. A good crowd turned up for the service and wreath laying on the Sunday and the BBMF Lancaster gave a spirited display over the garden party on the Saturday.

Donation.

As in previous years at this time a generous donation has enabled squadron wreaths to be laid at Stradishall and Chedburgh. However, the donor has requested 'no publicity' a request which will be honoured but if you are curious, read your back copies of 'Nightjar'.

Thank you once again '-----'.

Addendum. On Saturday 12 November, Don Walter and Eddie Wheeler DFC laid wreaths on behalf of the Squadron Association and the RAF Stradishall Memorial Trust respectively. I delivered our wreath to Chedburgh for their own service.

Mention of the BBMF Lancaster reminds us how delighted we all were to learn that our President, MRAF Sir Michael Beetham was on board this historic aircraft during its memorable 'poppy drop' over the Mall during celebrations commemorating the end of the Second World War. A fantastic and moving sight from the ground but one wonders what it was actually like to be in the cockpit. (PMW)

After providing further information into the 1942 crash of a 214 Squadron Wellington near Vriezenveen in Holland we have received a copy of a locally produced book containing wartime recollections of experiences of people living in the area including details of the loss of the Wellington and its six crew members who were all buried close to where they fell. There is a copy available for you to see

Sheila Byrne of Oswega, USA, tried in vain to obtain a 'Corgi' die-cast model of a Mk.1c Vickers Wellington (the type in which her father (Sgt Peter Doig Scott) flew as an air-gunner at Stradishall in 1940).and finally asked if we could help. Although believed to be actually 'off the market', some examples were located in Norwich over the reunion weekend. One has now arrived safely with Sheila (probably the only Wellington to cross the Atlantic?) plus

decals and full instructions on how to convert the model from a No.9 Squadron machine into one of 'ours'. Needless to say Sheila was absolutely delighted with PMW /JMW help!

Marham crash.

Following my request for witnesses to the crash of an American F.100 Super Sabre in 1968, I have been able to piece the story together via various sources including Bertie Jukes. It must have been a remarkable sight as the aircraft, abandoned on approach due to flame-out slid at high speed toward a 'Victor' dispersal area fortunately stopping in time. Although on fire (drop-tanks) the fighter was not too badly damaged--not so the pilot who broke a leg after his low-level (very) ejection: perhaps he should have stayed with his aircraft? One eye witness recalls the coolness of two 214 Squadron 'old sweats' driving back from dispersal who seemed completely non-plussed as the flaming fighter skidded across the road just in front of them 'All in a day's work'!

Lockheed Hudson crash.6 April 1942. Similarly, most details of this incident involving a an aircraft of 1428 Hudson Conversion Flight at Oulton are now to hand after an intriguing 'trawl' through countless sources of information.

Stirling House. Stradishall

The building continues to be developed as a Prison Service College and Conference Centre with an increasing area of wall space 'crying out' to be filled with historic information. This building may well prove to be the only significant source of RAF history for this part of East Anglia and with the vital role of No.3 Group. Bomber Command yet to be documented in its own right, perhaps Stirling House could fill the gap in part. When a member of staff queried the chance for a 'Stirling' model to grace his desk, a 'hangar spare' was donated--in 214 markings naturally!

I recently gave a brief slide presentation to prison-officers whilst also providing photographs of the 'Edmund's Hill' complex --the original Sergeants' Mess opened in 1940 and which has altered little. The management staff were keen to learn of the initial layout and to this end Geoff Cole (214 Squadron Wellington pilot 1940) was able to help as he was one of the first inhabitants of the new building.

We were very pleased to welcome Mrs Alys Smith for her first reunion in September. Alys's late husband was F/Sgt Clive Smith, wireless operator in W/O Lee's B17, shot down in August 1944. Four crew lost their lives but Clive ended up a PoW. Alys is keen to learn more of Clive's life on the squadron and already, we are explaining the mysteries of the 'log book' to her. Interesting in that Clive's 'Heavy Conversion' time was at Stradishall on 1657 HCU--flying Stirlings!

Stirling at last!

The prestigious 'Aviation Painting of the Year' award made at the 2005 Exhibition of the Guild of Aviation Artists went to a fine evening study of a 'Stirling' no less. Unfortunately, but totally predictably, it featured a No.7 Squadron machine (how DO we explain that there were other Stirling squadrons?). However the work filled a long-overdue success for a Stirling picture whilst providing some relief from the usual endless Lancasters and Spitfires on show.

At a slide show recently given to a "packed house" of the Martlesham Heath Aviation Society, and using material drawn from the 1950s, 60s and 70s, it was pleasing to hear all the "Ooohs" and "Aahs" issuing forth from those who recalled real aeroplanes, including those of the V-Force.

Mr.J.Calver, Researching his father's wartime experiences including a complete tour of Wellington operations made with 214 Squadron at Stradishall has asked if we could help with a query concerning his father's pilot, F/O John Ruoff. After his successful tour with 214, F/O Ruoff was killed in action in 1943 but is actually buried in Enfield Cemetery. One explanation is that he died in the UK returning from "ops" or in some other "home" incident. However Mr.Calver is particularly interested in the RARE award of the Air Force MEDAL made to F/Sgt. Ruoff in late 1941 just before he was commissioned and apparently whilst he was still flying with 214 Sqn. at Stradishall. I have provided Mr. Calver with several official "routes" to try but if anyone has access to the AFM register, (assuming that there is one), I would welcome any information relating to F/Sgt. Ruoff's award.

We learn with sadness, the recent passing of two of the great characters of aviation. Roger Freeman was the recognised authority on the life and times of the American "Mighty Eighth" and wrote many fine books on that subject plus several others on other aspects of aviation history. A "gentle" man and a friend of many. Ray Hanna put his remarkable flying skills to many uses, from leading and developing formation flying for the RAF's Red Arrows to being instrumental on the "warbird" scene to not only thrill the crowds with his stunning flying, usually in high powered WW2 fighters, but also to ensure that many such aircraft have been recovered, rebuilt and returned to the sky.



Oberleutnant Jockke von Weisshausen in a Messerschmitt Bf109E

I may not be a celebrity - but get me out of here!
Your historian trying on a "109" for size. This totally accurate and very valuable aircraft (airworthy but yet to fly) is built around the part centre section of an original machine (damaged during the Battle of Britain in July 1940 and recovered from a French beach in 1988). With no provision of a side door I can assure you that whilst incredibly difficult to get into, it is virtually impossible to exit.
Photo -- Somewhere in England, Nov. 2005 JMW

Flt. Lt. W.A. (Johnnie) Johnson - Biggs DFC

How I became an air gunner

My first impression of Stradishall where I was posted on return from overseas duties in India, Iraq and Palestine was impressive.

I had joined the RAF in 1935 and was posted overseas as a Medical Sanitary Orderly, and whilst on active service in Palestine I applied for a posting to remuster as Air crew.

On November 22nd. 1939 I was posted back to England and sent to Stradishall kitted out in my high necked tunic, putties, breeches and peaked flat cap, pre-war issue, together with my kit bag and overseas topee slung on top.

I arrived at the guardroom to find a smart set of airmen in new uniform to me marching out of the gate. One of them shouted, "Why it;s Johnnie Biggs", it turned out to be an old school friend of mine from Southend on Sea.

He informed me that they had just completed training for Air Crew and were going to an OTU somewhere.

On reporting to the Medical Officer at the sick quarters I was sent home on a months overseas leave due to me.

When I returned to Stradishall a month later all my friends had been posted, and I settled down to mostly ambulance work on crashes and manning sick parades. I tried hard to become Air Crew but the MO stated that we were trained personnel and the Air Ministry would not let us remuster.

On ambulance duties I attended many air crashes at and around Stradishall. Half a mile from Stradishall I picked up a dead pilot who had been shot down in a Hurricane, another time a Wellington had crashed into trees and all on board were killed. I also remember Michael "Jinx" Elelman's Wellington crashing at the end of the runway, nobody killed fortunately.

During 1940 we were attacked by two JU88s during a daylight raid and one of the aircraft was hit by fighters or flak, I'm not sure, but it crashed about two miles from Stradishall. I went out in the ambulance and found three German airmen alive, we captured them and took them back to sickquarters as prisoners.

Despite this I still wanted to become Air Crew, but the chance seemed remote. Some time later I was attached to RAF Newmarket, it was on the Rowley Mile racecourse, and Sqn.Ldr. Stevens was the CO.

One morning he came into the sickquarters and demanded to see a pilot's P48 (medical history). I said he could not as it was confidential and for the Medical Officer's eyes only. He was livid, but went on his way.

A few days later I was passing the grand stand when I heard a shot. I looked round and saw Sqn.Ldr. Stevens firing a 12 bore gun at some clay pigeons, he was a good shot so I remember saying to him " Well done Sir ". He glanced at me and said " Can you shoot boy ?". I replied "Yes Sir" , as I had fired 12 bore guns shooting rabbits. He replied , "Have a try", so I did.

God must have been with me , I scored 5 out of 6. Sqn.Ldr. Stevens said " Well done boy , would you like to be an Air Gunner. "Yes Sir" was my reply.

" Leave it to me " he said.

At 11.00 hrs. next day Sqn.Ldr. Stevens sent for me, he told me to get a full medical examination and when that was over to draw a flying hat from stores. I had been remustered.

On April 13th. 1942 I returned to Stradishall and flew a few operations on Wellingtons of 214 Sqn. before they converted to Stirlings. In total I completed 28 operations before being posted to 28 OTU .

After my spell at 28 OTU I went to 97 Sqn. where I flew in Lancasters , completing another 14 operations.

During my time on Stirlings at Stradishall our losses were very heavy. We lived off the station in a large Estate House called Branches Park, I called it a Hotel because no one lived long enough to become well known.

I can remember two pilots I flew with; Sqn.Ldr. Carr and P/Off. Ince. I believe that they both got the chop.

Secretary's note. Johnnie Johnson-Biggs was until 2005 a regular attender at Reunions. He is now 95 and not enjoying the best of health. I telephoned him on January 2nd. to find out how he was and to wish him a Happy New Year. He sends his regards to all those who know him.

The next two pages are extracts from (a) 214 Sqn. Operational Records for part of August 1944. (produced by a member Ian Hunt from records held in the National Archives at Kew .)

Of interest is the visit, on 20th., of Lord Trenchard to Oulton and on the 26th., a change of CO. The pilot listed as M.Hill is an error in the Squadron records, it should be F/O N.L.Hill who is a member of the Association.

(b) This copy of the Return of Operational Aircrew for August 31st. 1944 was sent to me by George Mackie. Names of some of our WW11 members are on this and the previous list as are past members no longer living. The numbers after the names are operations flown on Stirlings and Fortresses on 214 Sqn., those in brackets being previous ops on other squadrons / units. A half op refers to one considered "easy", probably "spoof" Window or Mandrel raids over the North Sea?

Note : On the Sqn. Ops. Records one Fortress is, on Aug. 25th., listed as Failed to return. (W/O Lee's aircraft). Four of the crew were killed and six were taken PoW , including the pilot.

One of the air gunners , F/ Sgt. A.C.(Clive) Smith was an Association member until he died in April 2003. His wife, Alys , has continued as a member and came to last years Reunion in Norwich.

When Clive was a PoW at a Stalag Luft in Germany one of the prison staff was Max Schmelling who had briefly been world heavyweight boxing champion before the war. He seemed to have been an amiable character and even signed a small book that Clive had.

Date	A/c	Pilot	To	Raid by	- on	Jamming Type	Notes
16/08/1944	BU-G HB774	F/L J L Gilbert	Kiel	(348 a/c)	Docks area	Jostle	(ORB says a/c "G" / HB744)
16/08/1944	BU-R HB765	F/L C C Puterbough RCAF	Kiel	(348 a/c)	Docks area	Jostle	
16/08/1944	BU-T HB763	F/L P R S Filleul	Kiel	(348 a/c)	Docks area	Jostle	(Crew plus F/L Miller, DFC RCAF).
16/08/1944	BU-B HB788	F/O J A Lawson	Stettin	(461 a/c)	Port & industrial areas	Jostle	Saw e/a. (A/c replaced HB765 as "BU-B").
16/08/1944	BU-J HB787	F/O J M S Jackson	Stettin	(461 a/c)	Port & industrial areas	Jostle	Saw e/a.
16/08/1944	BU-D SR378	W/O J W Archibald				Mandrel	
16/08/1944	BU-F SR383	F/O J R Corke				Mandrel	
17/08/1944	BU-D SR378	F/O T J Bayliss	North Sea - Spoof Raid			Mandrel	
17/08/1944	BU-F SR383	F/O J E Morrison RAAF	North Sea - Spoof Raid			Mandrel	
17/08/1944	BU-B HB788	W/O J W Archibald	North Sea - Spoof Raid			Window	
17/08/1944	BU-C HB780	F/O J R Corke	North Sea - Spoof Raid			Window	
17/08/1944	BU-G HB774	F/O G L Wright	North Sea - Spoof Raid			Window	
17/08/1944	BU-J HB787	F/O M Hill	North Sea - Spoof Raid			Window	
17/08/1944	BU-M SR377	F/L D M Peden RCAF	North Sea - Spoof Raid			Window	
17/08/1944	BU-R HB765	F/L C E Lye RNZAF	North Sea - Spoof Raid			Window	
17/08/1944	BU-T HB763	F/O G A Mackie	North Sea - Spoof Raid			Window	
17/08/1944	"X" No serial	F/O N Rix	North Sea - Spoof Raid			Window	
17/08/1944	"Y" No serial	F/O J A Lawson	North Sea - Spoof Raid			Window	
18/08/1944	BU-J HB787	F/O J M S Jackson	Bremen	(288 a/c)		Jostle	
18/08/1944	BU-R HB765	F/O T J Bayliss	Bremen	(288 a/c)		Jostle	Jostle w/s. Contact with Fw 190 on way home. SWG fired. E/a turned away. No hits seen.
18/08/1944	BU-T HB763	F/O G A Mackie	Bremen	(288 a/c)		Jostle	(Crew plus F/L P R S Filleul).
18/08/1944	BU-B HB788	F/L J J Bray	Sterkrade	(234 (mainly 4 Gp) a/c)	Synthetic-Oil Plant	Jostle	Aborted op. at enemy coast with No.2 engine w/s (oil leak). Shortly after, followed by an e/a (Me 410?). Exchanged fire but no results observed.
18/08/1944	BU-C HB780	F/L V L Scantleton RAAF	Sterkrade	(234 (mainly 4 Gp) a/c)	Synthetic-Oil Plant	Jostle	(ORB says a/c "C" / HB789)
18/08/1944	BU-G HB774	F/O G L Wright	Sterkrade	(234 (mainly 4 Gp) a/c)	Synthetic-Oil Plant	Jostle	Aborted op. due to turbo trouble.
18/08/1944	BU-D SR378	F/O J E Morrison RAAF				Mandrel	
18/08/1944	BU-F SR383	F/O M Hill				Mandrel	
20/8/1944 - Visit by Lord Trenchard to Oulton.							
25/08/1944	BU-B HB788	F/L J J Bray	Russelsheim	1, 3, 6 & 8 Gps	Opel Motor Factory	Jostle	Jostle became w/s.
25/08/1944	BU-R HB765	F/L C E Lye RNZAF	Russelsheim	1, 3, 6 & 8 Gps	Opel Motor Factory	Jostle	Equipment became w/s.
25/08/1944	BU-I HB763	W/O J R Lee	Russelsheim	1, 3, 6 & 8 Gps	Opel Motor Factory	Jostle	Failed to return. No details of loss, but 4 killed and remaining 6 (incl W/O Lee) taken PoW.
25/08/1944	BU-D SR378	F/O H E Rawlin				Mandrel	
25/08/1944	BU-F SR383	F/L V L Scantleton RAAF				Mandrel	
25/08/1944	BU-C HB780	W/O J W Archibald				Window	
25/08/1944	BU-J HB787	F/O G L Wright				Window	
25/08/1944	BU-M SR377	F/O T J Bayliss				Window	
25/08/1944	BU-Q HB772	F/O M Hill				Window	(ORB says a/c "Q" / HB722)
25/08/1944	BU-S SR380	F/L D M Peden RCAF				Window	(ORB says a/c "Y" / SR380).
26/8/1944 - W/C D.D. Rogers (ex- 218 Sqn) took over from W/C D.J. McGlenn							
26/08/1944	BU-C HB780	F/O G L Wright	Konigsberg (now in Lithuania)	5 Group	Port & town	Jostle	Diverted to Honiley on return, low cloud at base.
26/08/1944	BU-R HB765	F/O H E Rawlin	Konigsberg (now in Lithuania)	5 Group	Port & town	Jostle	Diverted to Honiley on return, low cloud at base.

Return of Operational Aircrew as at 16.00 hrs. on 31st August, 1944.

"A" FLIGHT.

Pilot	F/Lt. Brey	22.	F/Lt. Peñon	25½.	W/Lt. Scantleton	19.	F/O Clarke	22.
Nav.	F/S. Roberts	19.	Sgt. Mather	23½.	F/O Forbes	20.	F/S. Pidgeon	18.
WOP/Air	F/O Murphy	20.	F/S. Stanley, DFM	15½.	W/O McDonald	20.	F/S. Bonner	9.
A.B.	F/O McCarrie	20.	F/O Waters	25½.	Sgt. Scott	19.	F/O Faskett	10.
L.U.G.	P/O Lyall	19.	F/S. Lester	21.	F/S. Howart	11½.	F/S. Roosa	10½.
R/Comm.	P/O Sainsbury	19.	W/O Phillips	22½.	W/O Connolly(30)	12½.	W/O Bonnes(21)	12.
F/Comm.	F/O Moore (30)	15.	F/S. Bailey	22½.	Sgt. Nuttall	18½.	F/S. Barber	10½.
W/Comm.	F/O Bryant(31)	8.	F/S. Walker	14½.	F/S. Taylor	17½.	W/O Delisle	9.
W/Comm.	F/O Hopton	12½.	F/S. Hopton	12½.	F/O Milton (18)	10½.	Sgt. Gregory	5½.

Pilot	F/O Lawson	19½.	F/Lt Gilbert	19.	F/O Jackson	14.
Nav.	F/O Chappell	19½.	F/O Knight	22.	F/S. Harding	14.
WOP/Air	F/S. Atkinson	17½.	F/O Grossman	19½.	F/S. Pollard	14.
A.B.	W/O Hallderson	18½.	P/O Watts (29)	8½.	W/O Plociano	14.
L.U.G.	F/O Knight	17.	W/O Boyle	23.	F/S. Hardie	16.
R/Comm.	W/O Sefton	17.	F/O Claxton	17.	F/S. Bright	14.
F/Comm.	W/O Sefton	16½.	F/S. Pugh	20.	F/S. Bartlett	14.
W/Comm.	F/O Hankins (21)	15.	W/O West	19½.	F/O Jones, DFM(27)	10.
W/Comm.	W/O Edzi (34)	8½.	F/O Marsell(27)	10.	Sgt. Fletcher	3½.

Pilot	F/O Wright	16.	W/O Archibald	10½.	F/O Battles(21)	15½.	F/Lt. Savage	3½.
Nav.	F/S. Mullenger	16.	F/S. Cottrell	10½.	F/O Evans	19.	F/S. Pike	18.
WOP/Air	F/S. Bates	16.	F/S. Shephard	10½.	F/O Kinsett	19½.	Sgt. Ristworth	17.
A.B.	W/O Chertourne	15½.	W/O Harriott	12½.	F/O MacIlchrist	25½.	F/O Craven	1.
L.U.G.	W/O Robson (25)	10.	F/S. Hodgson	10.	P/O Connolly	25½.	Sgt. Astbury	17.
R/Comm.	F/S. Southgate	17.	F/S. Lacombe	10½.	F/S. Smyth	24½.	Sgt. Konroy	17.
F/Comm.	Sgt. Williams	17.	F/S. Richardson	4½.	F/O Cann	19½.	Sgt. Lee	17.
W/Comm.	F/S. Williams	17.	F/S. Phillips (26)	7½.	Sgt. Chalk	5½.	Sgt. Judge	17.
W/Comm.	Sgt. Barrett	5½.	W/O Earle, DFM(28)	5½.			Sgt. Hamblott	17.

"B" FLIGHT.

Pilot	S/Lt. Miller, DFC. (36)	7.	F/Lt. Paterbough	21.	F/Lt. Iva	21½.
Nav.	F/Lt. Adams, DFC(34)	5½.	F/Lt. Dickson	15½.	F/S. Stomp	14½.
WOP/Air	W/O Macmillan (34)	5½.	F/O Wright	19.	F/S. Ord-Hume	14½.
A.B.	F/S. Adams	7.	W/O Joyce	18.	F/S. Braithwaite	14½.
L.U.G.	F/S. Adams	7.			F/S. Stokes	15.
R/Comm.	F/S. Adams	7.	W/O Adams	20.	F/S. Knowlton	14½.
F/Comm.	F/S. Adams	7.	Sgt. Parkington	19.	F/S. Currie	15.
W/Comm.	W/O Rogers (25)	7.	Sgt. Logan	15.	F/O Upton (31)	8.
W/Comm.	Sgt. Finzi	3½.	F/S. Brown (25)	7.	F/S. Lumley(28)	8.

Pilot	F/O Taylor	14½.	F/O Lawlin	24½.	F/O Mackie (20)	16½.
Nav.	F/O Brown	14½.	F/Lt. Owen	20.	F/O O'Leary	21½.
WOP/Air	F/S. Chatterton	15½.	F/S. Bonnet	22½.	W/O Mooreby	14½.
A.B.	F/O Crerar	15½.	F/S. Andrew	21½.	F/S. Morris	21½.
L.U.G.	F/S. Hancock	15½.	Sgt. Ward	22½.	W/O Flack	21.
R/Comm.	Sgt. Bailey	14½.	F/S. Wetherhill	22½.	F/O Wells, DFM(27)	5½.
F/Comm.	Sgt. Carter	14½.	F/Lt. Pottic	22.	F/S. Honeyman	21½.
W/Comm.	F/O Wilson(23)	7.	W/O Stewart, DFM(25)	6.	W/O Taylor	21½.
W/Comm.	Sgt. Charlton	10½.	W/O Heath (26)	8.	F/S. Fell	21½.

Pilot	F/O Morrison	15.	F/O Hill	15.	F/O Riz	3.	F/Lt. Pilleul (30)	2.
Nav.	F/S. Mitchell	15.	F/O Honsinger	15.	F/S. Sargeant	1.	F/O Dodds	..
WOP/Air	W/O Thompson	15.	Sgt. Goodwin	15.	W/O Irvine	1.	Sgt. Birkby	..
A.B.	Sgt. Finch	15.	F/O Harrison	14½.	F/O Lovell-Smith	1.	F/O Duck	..
L.U.G.	W/O Lyon (29)	10½.	F/S. Ives	15.	F/Sgt. Cuttance	1.	Sgt. Benson	..
R/Comm.	F/O Dunning	15.	F/S. Andrews	15½.	Sgt. Douglas	1.	Sgt. Billington	..
F/Comm.	F/Sgt. Carr	12.	F/S. Gregory	15.	Sgt. Pound	1.	Sgt. Wilson	..
W/Comm.	F/O MacI	15.	W/O Clark(28)	7½.	Sgt. Gamble	1.	Sgt. Dobson	..
W/Comm.	F/O MacI	15.			Sgt. Langford	1.	Sgt. Cooper	..

Their name liveth for evermore



Op de Gemeentebegraafplaats Vriezenveen vinden we een zestal oorlogsgraven van geallieerde soldaten. Zij vormden de bemanning van een Wellington Mark Ic, die op 26 maart 1942 om 23.53 uur neerstortte in het westelijke deel van het zogenaamde Veenschap. Uit de bestaande gegevens weten we, dat deze Vickers Wellington bommenwerper met zes bemanningsleden aan boord die avond was opgestegen van de Royal Air Force luchtmachtbasis Stradishall in de graafschap Suffolk. Hier was het 214 Squadron gestationeerd, dat in hoofdzaak bestond uit Wellingtons en Stirlings. Het embleem van het 214 Squadron toont een Nightjar (nachtswaluw) met als wapenspreuk "Ultor in umbris".

Het was één van de toestellen, die in die nacht op weg terug waren na een bombardement van de Krupp-fabrieken in Essen in Duitsland. Samen met honderdenvier Wellingtons en een elftal Stirlings waren ze om 20.03 uur plaatselijke tijd die avond vertrokken van het Engelse vliegveld om hun missie uit te voeren.



In die nacht vertoof de RAF van Wellingtons en Stirlings. Twee Wellingtons crashten in Nederland en van de 41 bemanningsleden van deze toestellen overleefde slechts een soldaat, die ingevangen werd genomen. Ook de vorige nacht was de stad Essen al bestookt door de Engelsen. De bemanning van het toestel Wellington Mark Ic No. Z 1143 BU - bestond uit drie Australiërs en drie Engelse militairen. De plootgezagvorder van het toestel was, Pilot officer E.W.C. Creed, en de andere twee Australische militairen sergeant Walter Irvine Christen en sergeant W.W.R. Norton. De drie Engelse bemanningsleden waren: Sergeant J.R. Payne, sergeant A.F.M. Emms en captain A.P. Mair, een kapitein van de Royal Artillery, die gedetacheerd was bij het 214e squadron R.A.F. in Stradishall.

THEIR NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE

In the Parish Cemetery of Vriezenveen we find 6 wargraves of allied soldiers. They formed the crew of a Wellington Mark Ic, which came down on 26 March 1942 at 23.53 hours in the mentioned county. From the existing data we know, that these Vickers Wellington bombers, with a crew of 6 onboard, had taken off that evening from the Royal Air Force base Stradishall in the county of Suffolk. It was here, that the 214 Squadron was stationed and which squadron primarily existed of Wellingtons and Stirlings. The emblem of the 214 Squadron shows a Nightjar with the device 'Uitor in umbris'.

It was one of these machines, who in that night were heading back after a bombing attack on the Krupp-factories in Essen, Germany. Together with 104 Wellingtons and eleven Stirlings they left at 20.03 hours local time that evening from the English base to carry out their mission.

In that night the RAF lost 10 Wellingtons and one Stirling. Six planes crashed in the Netherlands and from the 61 crew members of these machines just one soldier was taken prisoner. The night before, the town of Essen had already been bombarded by the English. The crew of the Wellington Mark Ic No. Z 1143 BU – consisted of 3 Australians and 3 English soldiers. The pilot/captain of the machine was E.W.C. Creed and the other two, Australian Military sergeant Walter Irvine Christsen and Sergeant W.W.R. Norton. The 3 English crew were :Sergeant J.R.Payne, sergeant A.F.M. Emms and Captain A.P.Mair, a captain of the Royal Artillery, detached to the 214e squadron R.A.F. Stradishall.

The 6 men crew of the Wellington were the first allied military, who lost their lives on Vriezenveen ground. On 28 March 1942 the funeral of the crew took place at the cemetery of Vriezenveen with Military honour. On the grave was placed a wooden cross with the wrong text : 'Hie ruhen 6 unbekante Englische Flieger. Gefallen 27-3-1942'.

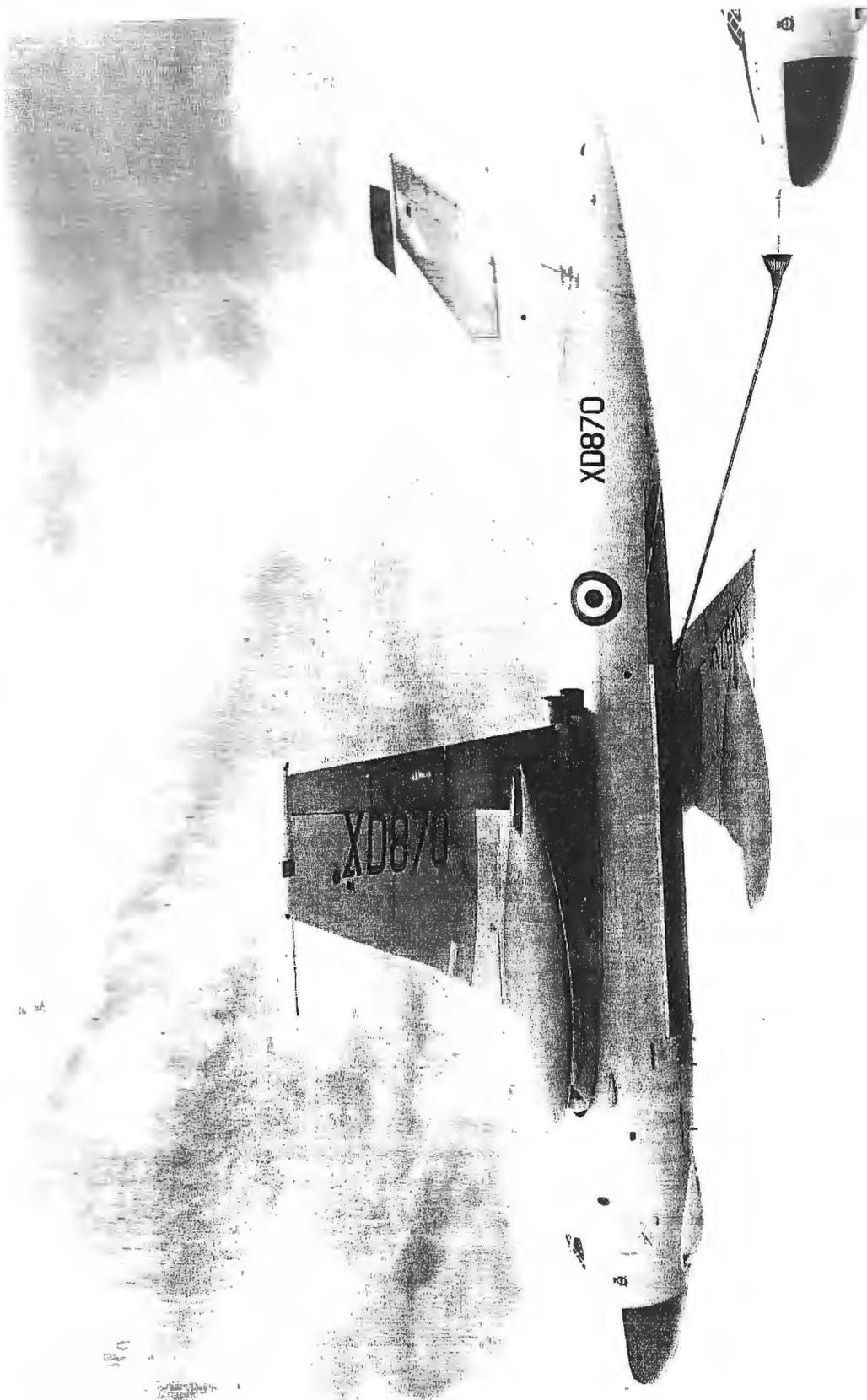
'Here rest 6 unknown English flyers.Fallen 27-3-1942'.

After the liberation and by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission the right name on the white stone was put on each grave. All six graves were adopted by the people of the parish. In memory of that fatal nightly crash, the air-tachometer of the unfortunate Wellington Mark Ic., was placed on the joint Memorial. Also later, their names were recorded on the war monument of Vriezenveen. In this way the memory of the war years in Vriezenveen remains, and in which many allied soldiers lost their lives at an early age. An event never to be forgotten. 'Their name liveth for evermore'.

This is the English translation of the item on the previous page, which is one of three pages from the Historical Society Magazine "Waver 't Vjenne" of the Dutch village of Vriezenveen.

In early 2005 Jock and I were able to supply some information to the editor of this magazine who eventually sent us each a copy with the item about a 214 Sqn. Wellington Mk.1c Z1143 that came down in the village on March 26th. 1942, killing all the six crew. Note that the rear gunner was a Captain in the Royal Artillery, not uncommon at this stage of the war.

A beautiful shot of Valiant BK1 XD870 of 214 Sqn. RAF Marham.
Flown by Sqn.Ldr. John Slessor. Early (dry) refuelling trials, April 1st. 1958.
Photo sent by Gp.Cpt. J.A.G.Slessor , February 2005.



ROLL OF HONOUR

January 1941 to November 1939

This is the last in the Roll of Honour lists for 214 Sqn. This series commenced in the Spring 2003 edition of the Nightjar. As in previous lists I have worked backwards to the beginning of the war in September 1939.

Wellington Mk. 1c T2956

Jan. 8th. 1941

P/O T.E. Timmins	+
P/O C.N. Walker	+
Sgt. P.R. Peart	+
Sgt. A.S. Roberts	+
Sgt. R. Cain	+
Sgt. W.E. Griswold	+

During an air test, iced up and crashed at Gt. Wratting, Suffolk.

Wellington Mk. 1c L7849

Dec. 27/28th. 1940

✓ P/O J.A. Temperley	✓	rscd.
✓ Sgt. E.B.D. Jenkins	✗	+
✓ Sgt. J.F. Huxtable	✗	+
✓ Sgt. Alleway	✗	rscd
✓ Sgt. A.W. Hodgson	✗	+
✓ Sgt. Vaughan-Davies	✗	rscd

Came down in the sea off the Norfolk coast. Three crew rescued by a coast guard vessel.

Wellington Mk. 1c R3209

Dec. 7/8th. 1940

F/Lt. W.A. Harris	+
Sgt. A.A. Wooding	+
Sgt. W.D. Ingrams	+
Sgt. A.C. Ashman	+
Sgt. R.F. Stacey	+
Sgt. P.J. White	+

Wellington Mk. 1c R2476

Dec. 7/8th. 1940

F/O D.A. Dadswell	+	✓
Sgt. F.T. Buckingham	+	✓
Sgt. C.D. Powrie	+	✓
Sgt. W.H. James	+	✓
Sgt. J.C. Macaskie	+	✓
Sgt. E.C. Lee	+	✓

Wellington Mk. 1c T2471 ~~W2471~~

Nov. 23/24th. 1940

Sgt. N.C. Chester	+	✓
P/O E.R.M. Pears	+	✓
Sgt. H.W. Brook	+	✓
Sgt. A.E. Taylor	+	✓
Sgt. R.C. Bishop	+	✓
Sgt. A. Hyam	+	✓

Wellington Mk. 1c T2470

Nov. 5/6th. 1940

Sgt. G.E. Turner	+
Sgt. Wormwold	+
Sgt. McCulloch	+
Sgt. Sansum	+
Sgt. A.W. Hay	+
Sgt. E. Kenny	+

Crashed near Stradishall

Wellington Mk. 1c L7840

Oct. 11th. 1940

P/O C.W.A.H. Rafter	+
Sgt. G.W. Hunt RNZAF	+
Sgt. R.S. Eastment	+
Sgt. C. Hellewell	+
Sgt. R.A. Powrie	inj
Sgt. D.J. Capel	inj

Swung on t/o, crashed into hanger

Wellington Mk. 1c L7843

Sept. 27/28th. 1940

Sgt. J.R. Hall	✓	+
P/O J. Rea	✓	+
Sgt. A.C. Peck	✓	?
Sgt. H.E. Sambrook	✓	+
Sgt. T.F. Williams	✓	pow
Sgt. K.S. Thompson	✓	pow

The records for Sgt. Peck are not clear of what happened to him.

continued

ROLL OF HONOUR (continued)

Wellington Mk. 1c T2559

Aug. 30/31st. 1940

F/O L.M.Craigie-Halkett +
 P/O W.B.S. Cunynghame +
 Sgt. G.H.Bainbridge +
 Sgt. S.J.Haldane +
 Sgt. A.B.Pozey +
 Sgt. G.E.Merryweather +

Wellington Mk.1a N2993

June 6th. 1940

F/O J.F.Nicholson +
 Sgt. B.Raper +
 Crashed near Ely after the pilot
 was blinded by searchlights.

Wellington Mk.1 R2699

Dec. 14th. 1939

P/O W.L. Comer +
 P/O R.A. Russell-Forbes +

Wellington Mk.1 L4345

Nov. 6th. 1939

P/O J. Lingwood +
 AC1 A. Matthews +

The following aircraft crashed on t/off at Stradishall but thankfully none of the crew lost their lives.

As the aircraft lifted off the port engine failed, it hit the runway and burst into flames.

Padre Harrison, who was nearby, and despite the risk of explosion, went into the aircraft and helped to rescue the crew. For his gallantry he was awarded the George Medal.

Sgt. "Jinx" Elelman, the rear gunner, survived the war but died some years ago.

His widow, Mrs. H.Elelman was an early member of 214 Sqn. Assn. and remains as a member.

Wellington Mk.1c T2841 BU-K

Jan. 29th. 1941

Sgt. J. Smiles
 Sgt. J.R.Turner
 Sgt. Turner
 Sgt. Foster
 Sgt. Rothorn
 Sgt. M. "Jinx" Elelman

All the Roll of Honour lists in this and previous Nightjars have been taken from W.R.Chorley's excellent work, Bomber Command Losses in the Second World War, volumes 1 to 6. Two further volumes have since been published, vol. 7 the OTUs and vol. 8 the HCUs. A further work is in the pipeline.

The word Losses in the title refers to the aircraft and not the crew members. If an aircraft was repaired and went back into service that aircraft does not appear in these volumes, even if some or all crew members lost their lives. This has caused some confusion among former aircrew, who having looked for their aircraft have asked why some of their comrades who died are not included.

Despite this, the volumes are an essential work of reference for anyone interested in researching the wartime operations of RAF Bomber Command.

From the outset Bill Chorley and the publishers, Midland Publishing, gave 214 Sqn. Assn. their permission to quote from the information contained in these volumes and for that we offer them our thanks.

Peter M. Walker

January 2000

MILITARY WEB SIGHTS

For all of you who have access to the World Wide Web (www) I thought the following may be of interest, I hope you enjoy your travels, Shaun

<http://214squadron.atspace.com/default.htm>
www.rafweb.org
www.rafweb.org/index.htm
www.rafweb.org/menu.htm
www.rafinfo.org.uk
www.rafinfo.org.uk/airsearch
www.rafnews.co.uk
www.raf.mod.uk/rafhome.html
www.raf.mod.uk/rafcoltishall
www.raf.mod.uk/bombercommand
www.raf.mod.uk/history/sources.html#archives
www.mod.uk/contacts/rafrecords.htm
www.rafmuseum.org.uk
www.rafmuseum.org.uk/mainHendon.cfm
www.rafcommands.com
www.rafa.org.uk
www.rafa.org.uk/homepage.asp
www.stirling.box.nl/home.htm
www.associations.rafinfo.org.uk
www.british_forces.com
<http://british-forces.com>
www.armedforces.co.uk/rafindex.htm
www.bomber-command.info/sitemap.htm
(Bob Balter's Bomber Command)
www.hellzapoppin.demon.co.uk
(Bomber Commands Historical Society)
www.stable.demon.co.uk
(The Air War)
www.homepages.mcb.net/bones/06airfields/uk/uke06.htm
(UK Airfields – England East)
<http://fly-to/AirNet>
(Howard Curtis' Web Site) (Very good site)
<http://freespace.virgin.net/anne.welch>
(War time airfields as they are today).
www.forcesreunited.org.uk
www.martin-baker.co.uk