



Nightjar

Winter 2011/2012

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CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

It is already over five months since the 2011 Reunion and Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at the Hallmark Hotel in Derby. Sixteen members attended the AGM whilst twenty members and guests sat down for a convivial dinner in the evening, as can be seen from the photograph elsewhere in this edition of *Nightjar*. A similar number came to the National Memorial Arboretum on the Sunday morning for a simple wreath-laying ceremony at our Squadron Memorial. There was much discussion on possible locations for future reunions and the form that they should take. However, the realistic options boiled down to two: to return to Derby again or to go back to Norwich, where a number of Reunions had been held in previous years. The former had the advantage of being within a reasonable distance of our Squadron Memorial at Alrewas, whilst Norwich had the advantage of being near the Squadron's last wartime base at Oulton. A compromise solution was also suggested, whereby the Reunion would alternate each year between Derby and Norwich. As you will see from the notice [enclosed], we have elected to return to Norwich for the 2012 Reunion, with the possibility of going to Derby again in 2013. In view of the activities already arranged for 2012, including the dedication of the Bomber Command Memorial and the Olympics, as well as other conflicting activities that take place in September, we have decided to delay the Reunion to early October. We are also considering the possibility of visiting the memorial at Oulton on the Sunday, and also Blickling Hall, where we may be able to gain access to the former dormitories occupied by the Squadron in 1944/5. We will let members know in due course what we have been able to arrange. However, in the meantime, please make a note in your diaries of the date of the 2012 Reunion and make every effort to come; if we are to continue to hold these events, we need all the support we can get!

During the course of the 2011 Reunion, the topic of the Squadron history was raised. Like me, some of you will already have copies of *Avenging in the Shadows*, written by Ron James and published privately in 1989. Ron James' book does not pretend to be a comprehensive record of the Squadron's history since No 7A (later 14) Squadron was hived off from No 7 Squadron Royal Naval Air Service in July 1917. However, if a comprehensive history is ever to become a reality in the future, it will need to draw on not only the doings of the Squadron as recorded in the official documents stored in The National Archives and elsewhere, but also the personal recollections of the people who were there. In this context, although we are already too late to obtain many more recollections of wartime experiences, there are still a substantial number of people around who served on the Squadron post-War and have memories of the Lancaster, Lincoln, Valiant and Victor and the air and groundcrew who operated them. So we are calling on all former members of the Squadron, both air and ground crew, to consult your diaries if you kept one, your log books, scrap books, photograph albums and any other sources and put pen to paper to record your memories for possible inclusion in a future Squadron history. Even if you consider that nothing of significance happened during your time on the Squadron, recording the routine of Squadron life in the post-War era is just as important as recording the big events. What was it like to operate in Kenya against the Mau-Mau? What was it like to be on QRA? What was it like to service nuclear-armed aircraft? What was it like to tank Lightnings to Singapore? What was it like to service Victors or Valiants in the heat of the Persian Gulf? Your memories can be submitted in hard copy direct to Jock Whitehouse or electronically to me or John Gulliver for onward transmission. If you have photographs to support your memories, they should ideally be submitted in digital form (TIF or JPEG) but we can make arrangements to scan them if you are unable to do this. If you are scanning your own photographs, please ensure that they are scanned at 600dpi for small photographs (8x5cm or less), 300dpi for medium size photographs (up to 20x14cm), or 200dpi for larger photographs. Over to you!



For more information on the DVD please visit the film's website.

www.intothewind.co.uk.

For those who wish to order the film, *Into the Wind* is now available in the UK via Amazon and direct through our website.

If you would like to order *Into the Wind* for viewing in Australia or New Zealand then the best way is to order directly from our website. For those who wish to buy their copy in person, the film is available at a number of

locations across the UK with more being confirmed each month.

These include,

- The RAF Museum, Hendon
- The RAF Museum, Cosford
- Tourist Information Centre, Castle Square, Lincoln
- J Ruddocks, High Street, Lincoln
- Newark Air Museum, Nottinghamshire

For those who wish to pay by cheque, please make a cheque made payable to 'Electric Egg Ltd' for £14.99 and send with your delivery details to:

Electric Egg Ltd - ITW Orders

Sparkhouse Studios,

Ropewalk,

Lincoln,

LN6 7DQ

UK

Should you know anyone whom may be interested in the film, please forward them the details.

Thank you for all your continued support and all the best

Steven Hatton

Director of 'Into the Wind'

Steve Hatton – the producer was at our reunion and took the group photograph. This film is due to be shown on the Yesterday Channel sometime in the new year. The DVD will not be interrupted by advertisements however!

A 'Must See'
I had a copy for Christmas – Excellent!!



Annual General Meeting of No 214(FMS) Squadron Association
Hallmark Hotel – Derby
Saturday 9 July 2011

1. Chairman's Welcome

2. Apologies: 16 Association members attended the meeting and apologies were received from the following members: MRAF Sir Michael Beetham, John Gilpin, Peter Witts, Bill Wilkinson, Graham Spaxman, Vic Pheasant, Don Walter, Bob Tuxford, Mrs Linda Fraser, Bob Froggett, Maurice Webster, Sylvia & Maurice Harding (Australia).

3. In Memoriam: The following members had passed away since the last AGM:

Alan Gardner	21 Oct 10	Navigator - Canberra, Valiant, Victor K1 & K2.
Geoff Parnell	Dec 10	Air Gunner - Stirling - taken POW.
Ian Fraser	Dec 10	Family Member
Mrs Eileen Cox	Jul 10	Wife of George Cox
Mrs Muriel Johnson-Biggs	Aug 10	Wife of Johnny Johnson-Biggs
Les Bostock	Autumn 10	Bomb Aimer / Jostle Operator - Fortress
Robin Murray	14 Oct 10	Air Gunner – Wellington - taken POW
John Pitchford	19 Nov 10	Bomb Aimer / Jostle Operator - Fortress
Wg Cdr Cyril Miles	21 Jan 11	Pilot - Wellington
Sqn Ldr Geoff Cole	20 Feb 11	Pilot - Wellington
Frank Lee	22 Feb 11	Pilot - Stirling - taken POW
Bettie Bidmead	Spring 11	Widow of Harold Bidmead
Ron Penhaligon	Apr 11	Engine Fitter – Wellington / Stirling
John Stemp	26 Jan 11	Navigator – Fortress
John Cripps	8 Mar 11	Family Member
Roy Howard	4 Apr 11	Bomb Aimer / Jostle Operator – Fortress

4. Minutes of AGM held at the Hallmark Hotel - Derby on 17 Jul 2010 - were published in the 2010/2011 edition of the *Nightjar*. Acceptance was proposed by Paul Henry and seconded by Gerhard Heilig. They were accepted unanimously.

5. Matters Arising: There were no matters arising

6. Chairman's Report: The Chairman summarised the Association's dealings over the previous year, and gave the options for the reunion in 2012. The highlight of the year was the launch of the book 'Stay the Distance', the biography of MRAF Sir Michael Beetham. The Chairman and Secretary attended the launch on 3 Mar at the RAF Club in London.

7. Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer reported that the current financial position of the Association was sound and that the annual subscription should be maintained at £10 for the foreseeable future. He summarized the annual accounts for approval by the meeting. Acceptance was proposed by Roy Monk, seconded by Geoff Barrell and passed unanimously.

8. Secretary's Report: The Secretary stated that he had had the usual enquiries for research on behalf of families which had been answered in association with Jock Whitehouse

9. Historian's Report: The Historian gave a brief resumé of the enquiries that he had received during the year with the intention of placing a full report in the next edition of *Nightjar*.
10. Election of Officers: The existing committee had agreed to stand for the following year and the motion to re-elect the Committee was proposed by Gerhard Heilig, seconded by Paul Henry and passed unanimously.
11. Options for the 2012 Reunion: The Chairman outlined the options for the next reunion with the alternatives of Derby or Norwich. Members discussed the advantages and disadvantages of each venue without a clear decision for either. The Chairman stated that the Committee would investigate the two locations with a view to finding the better venue and to decide a date for the next reunion.
12. Any Other Business: Thanks were offered to Vic Pheasant for auditing the accounts.

V-Force Reunion

Saturday 28th April 2012

Newark Air Museum

**There will be another reunion in 2012 for those of you that were on the V-Force.
An event not to be missed!**

www.vforcereunion.co.uk

Treasurers' Notes

I apologise if this edition of the *Nightjar* is a little later than planned, but we have been looking at what to do for the next reunion, and make a decision in order that we can let you know in this newsletter.

I would like to have featured a few of your letters, but I have not received any! Please, if you have any tales to tell, tall stories, or just what you are up to these days, then let me know. This is your newsletter so I would like to include any comments you might have, or feedback on the articles.

My thanks to all of you who have managed to pay your subscriptions. If you can't remember if you have paid, or have a guilty conscience, then please get in touch and I will bring you up to date.

I would like to wish you all the very best of health and wealth for 2012 and hope to see you at our reunion in Oct or at the V-Force gathering in Apr.

No. 214 (FMS) SQUADRON ASSOCIATION

2010 INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS

Income

Expenditure

No. 1 Account

Subscription/Donations	£1,130.00	Donations - (RAF Benevolent Fund & Bomber Command Memorial Appeal)	£814.00
Sales	£0.00	Printing	£382.32
Other	£0.00	Stationery	£81.78
Memorial Appeal	£0.00	Postage	£237.14
Brackles	£5.50	Telephone	£78.00
Unpresented Cheque	135.00	Travel	£0.00
		Annual Reunion - Contribution	£0.00
		Dedication	£0.00
		Wreaths	£0.00
		Committee Meeting Expenses	£0.00
		Web Site	£71.29
		Misc	<u>£332.31</u>
	<u>£1,270.50</u>		<u>£1,996.84</u>

Total Funds

1 st January 2010 Opening Balances		Bank	£3,356.60
		Cash	
31 st December 2010 Closing Balances		Bank	£2,630.26
		Cash	

Nett Changes in No 1 Account Funds:

-£726.34

Original Signed

11 January 2011

J GULLIVER

Treasurer

This is to certify that I have completed an audit of the 2009 Accounts of No 214(FMS) Squadron Association and found them to be a true and accurate record.

Original Signed

1 May 2011

V A PHEASANT

HISTORIAN'S REPORT

This report is an extended version of that presented at the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 9 July at the Hallmark Hotel, Derby (2011 Annual Reunion).

Wreath laying: Our Association wreath was laid at the Stradishall memorial on the Saturday of Remembrance Weekend. The Haverhill Squadron of the Air Training Corps was represented and the Standard of the Bomber Command Association was paraded.

'Tankards': I was recently contacted by Norman Didwell (No 99 Squadron Association) reference the time spent by Charles Pickard flying 'Harrows' with No 214 Squadron at Feltwell in 1937-1938. But, apart from a brief mention in Squadron records and his inclusion in an official photograph of 'Harrow' pilots of the time, the only tangible evidence we have is a tankard presented to the squadron by him on his departure in 1938. Charles Pickard served briefly with 99 before being attached to No.3 Group HQ, but visited Stradishall in the summer of 1941 when, although probably meeting up with some old friends, he also made some 'unusual' operational flights both on 214's Wellingtons and on the Whitleys of the SD Flight (SOE) also based at Stradishall. It may well have been connected with planning for the famous Bruneval raid in early 1942 in which Charles Pickard took part. By coincidence I was recently contacted by a gentleman whose wife, on sorting out some family effects, came across a tankard presented to No 214 Squadron in 1939 by P/O 'Hal' Bufton and he was asking if we could enlighten them as to its background, which I have done. This was the famous 'Hal' Bufton (later of 'Beams and Oboe fame') who had also been a 'Harrow' pilot on 214 Squadron at Feltwell, along with Charles Pickard, and in fact is only two 'bodies' away from him on the above mentioned photograph! 'Hal' would almost certainly have visited Stradishall in the Spring of 1942 where (with little official backing) members of No.109 Squadron proved that 'Oboe' could be fitted into a Mosquito. 109 Sqn (Wellingtons) and 214 Sqn (Stirlings) flew together on the first '1000-bomber' raid (Cologne) from Stradishall.



Wellington crash-landing. Peter has received an unusual photograph from the Ulster Aviation Society showing Wellington 1 (L4261) force-landed in in County Down in early part of WW2. Its wartime BU-T codes suggest it to be early March 1940, probably remaining on strength when 214 Sqn moved from Methwold to Stradishall in February. Records show that L4261 served with both Nos 9 and 214 Squadrons during 1939-40 but in March 1941 it stalled on the approach to Bassingbourn. It also served on No 9 BATF at Thornaby in 1941. Why or how it came to grief in N Ireland in 214 'colours' is unclear (training exercise?) but presumably it was repaired and returned home 'somewhere'.



B-17 remains. Bob Collis, an experienced East Anglian researcher, sent me photographs of an interesting find made whilst re-examining a WW2 USAAF dump; namely an upper panel from No.3 nacelle of Fortress 42-3103. Not unduly surprising except that this particular fortress became SR388 of No.214 Squadron and flew mainly as BU-H during April - August 1944 plus five trips as BU-Z during November - December 1944 (data via Ian Hunt) and survived the



war. Why part of it turned up in an American dump raises a few questions. Was it repaired during its original American service days, or were repairs carried out by American personnel when 'on 214' at Oulton? An aerial of a type fitted to 100 Group Fortresses was also found.



Art Exhibition: The Annual Exhibition by the Guild of Aviation Artists in the Mall Gallery once again offered a superb selection of works covering all aspects of aviation history, and it was well worth the effort of getting there. The 2012 exhibition, unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately), clashes with an Olympian event taking place just over the road on Horse Guards Parade. I am certain however that any of you 'in the area' will naturally head for the aviation paintings rather than try to get a glimpse of the 'Ladies' Beach Volley Ball' competition in progress, which I understand is one of the few events already completely sold out! Aviation Art will provide a wonderful alibi for being in that part of London at that particular time.

Family visits: Three family visits have shown the value of Associations such as ours by providing invaluable help to those seeking the type of information which would probably be beyond their reach - very simply they would not know where to look, and here I do humbly recognize the value of any initial contact being made via the 'Web'.

1. I was asked via the Wattisham Heritage Museum if I could offer any help to a small memorial project being planned, namely a simple family ceremony in memory of F/O 'Bill' Cooper to be held on the anniversary of his death, and as close as possible to the crash site where he died in March 1943. The story is well documented, but Bill died when, after colliding with another over Chedburgh (both returning from different operations) his aircraft crashed near Hadleigh in Suffolk. Although the other Stirling was skillfully put down on the airfield by Jack Dixon, Bill was only able to keep his very badly damaged aircraft airborne just long enough for all his crew to exit safely before it came down across a field and into trees, costing him his life. The family wished to remember 'Uncle' Bill and so on 30 March a small group (including two eyewitnesses of that night) gathered in the corner of a small paddock. Prayers were said, and wreaths laid, including one on behalf of No 214(FMS) Squadron Association, which also commemorated Sgt H L Burt, RNZAF, the rear-gunner of the other Stirling who also died. Our wreath was donated by the Haverhill RBL. The Standard of the Bomber Command Association added colour to the occasion, and the lady owner of the field who was present later, announced that in future this small piece of Suffolk would be known as 'Cooper's Field'.



[\(See newspaper report on page 12\)](#)

2. In April, the saga of the 'Sept Saulx' painting, already covered in previous 'Nightjars', reached an emotive conclusion when Margaret Deacon, the sister of Sgt Dutton the air-bomber in the crew, and her husband John, were able to visit Chedburgh to see the picture in its place of honour in the church. Maurice Leary, so long involved in the history of RAF Chedburgh, had arranged access to the church and it proved to be an emotional occasion for Margaret and John, also enhanced by the chance to see the location of the old airfield plus the Station memorial in the village, still with its No.214 Squadron wreath in place.



3. In May 1941, Wellington R1462 from Stradishall, captained by P/O John Toplis, failed to return from operations crashing near Hamburg with the loss of all on board. Andrew and Gavin Lindsay, nephews of Sgt Thomas James, the Welsh air-gunner in the crew, decided to try and find out all they could about their uncle's life and carefully planned a dedicated journey to do this. After accessing information in the National Archives they felt the need to get closer to the Stradishall part of the story and so contacted me. I helped with various pieces



of documentation and photographs prior to their proposed visit when their youthful enthusiasm took care of the whole of one fine April Sunday. After exploring as much as possible of the old station and its surrounds including the main memorial, they were further very moved by the RAF memorial aspect in Stradishall church, the highlight being to see their uncle's name in the Book of Remembrance. Next day they departed for Hamburg from where they travelled to meet people who received the boys with kindness, sympathy and understanding, and who could recall the crash of the Wellington, and the recovery of its crew. They were then taken to the crash site and finished their remarkable journey at the Hamburg War Cemetery where all the crew lay. I have yet to receive full details of this final part of their experience.

I have attended the funerals of Geoff Cole (Wellington pilot) and Ron Penhaligan (Groundcrew) both on behalf of the Association and as a friend. Geoff (91) was one the first major contributors to the Stradishall research and Ron (90) always enjoyed recalling his days on both 214 and 620 Squadrons. I was privileged to be asked by his family to say a few words at Ron's service and have since learned that many of those present had simply no idea of the vital role played by the dedicated groundcrews on a bomber station!

'Airfix' Valiant kit: This long awaited kit has at long last 'hit the shelves' and overall has received a good press, but unfortunately '214' is not represented in the squadron decal selection (these being for 49 and 207 Sqns). The kit is of the bomber version but apparently there is to be a later 'package' which will enable creation of the tanker model. We look forward to Roy's verdict for, as he was able to obtain one of the first kits on sale, it should be completed by now.

214 again: In May I enjoyed a special event at the Theatre Royal in Bury St. Edmunds, when Sir Stirling Moss talked about, and answered questions, on his racing career. In addition there was a mouthwatering selection of cars driven by him on show in the car park of Greene King Breweries (except the famous 'Cooper' 500 (unbelievably simple) which shared centre stage). The outside line up was impressive: 1957 Vanwall 'Teardrop', Lotus 18, Maserati 'rip' 61 'Birdcage', Cooper 'Monaco', Porsche RS61 and the Maserati 300S. But most eyes naturally lingered on the immaculate pale green Jaguar XK120C, undoubtedly one of the most beautiful cars ever built, but I did think that its registration- 'MDU 212' should really have been '214'. Someone must have heard me, for in a recent newspaper article on the 'Goodwood Revival' the Jaguar featured was a pale green XK 120C with its racing number '24' and other logos, but registered 'MDU 214'! (whose stable?).

RAF Bentley Priory: As we know, the Royal Air Force connection with this historic site has finally been severed as it is to be privately developed, but with many aspects of its Air Force Heritage being tastefully incorporated within the building. I was lucky enough to be given a copy of 'An Illustrated History of Bentley Priory', a superb 44-page booklet published by Command Media Services which details its very grande interior (as it is today) along with its RAF links. Well worth getting -if possible. It is hoped that future residents will be appreciative of their famous surroundings.

Jock M Whitehouse

214 Squadron's Fortress Ops - 20/4/1944 to 2/5/1945. (RAF Sculthorpe, then Oulton from 16/5/1944).

Date	A/c	Pilot	W S Day	RCAF	To	Raid by	-on	Jamming Type	Notes
20/04/1944	BU-H SR388	S/L	W S Day	RCAF	La Chappelle (Paris)	5 Group	Rly Marshalling Yards		
24/04/1944	BU-H SR388	F/L	V L Scamleton	RAAF	Karlsruhe				Vern Scamleton's logbook: "600 a/c".
26/04/1944	BU-H SR388	F/O	J A Lawson		Villeneuve-St-Georges (Paris)	4, 6, & 8 Gps	Railway Yards		Sgt James' (Day's M/U Gunner's) log book at the RAF Museum records a "near collision with a Lancaster" over the target.
27/04/1944	BU-H SR388	S/L	W S Day	DFC, RCAF	Montzen (Aachen)	4, 6 & 8 Gps	Railway Yards		Vern Scamleton's logbook: "110 a/c".
01/05/1944	BU-H SR388	F/L	V L Scamleton	RAAF	Malines (Belgium)	4 & 8 Gps	Railway Yards		
07/05/1944	BU-H SR388	S/L	W S Day	DFC, RCAF	Tours	5 Group	Airfield		Attacked by Me 210. Evasive action taken and strikes observed on e/a.
08/05/1944	BU-H SR388	W/O	J E Morrison	RAAF	Brest / Lanveoc	5 Group	Airfield and Seaplane Base	ABC	
12/05/1944	BU-H SR388	W/C	D J McGlenn		Louvain	3 & 8 Gps	Railway Yards		
19/05/1944	BU-H SR388	P/O	G L Wright		Le Mans	3 & 8 Gps	Railway Yards		
21/05/1944	BU-H SR388	P/O	J L Gilbert		Kiel Bay		Minelaying		
24/05/1944	BU-H SR388	W/C	D J McGlenn		Antwerp	5 & 8 Gps	Ford Motor Factory		
27/05/1944	BU-H SR388	F/O	J A Lawson		Nantes	5 Group	Railway Junc'n & Workshops		Bad weather on return. Landed at RAF Desborough and returned next day.
02/06/1944	BU-H SR388	S/L	W S Day	DFC, RCAF	Trappes	1, 4 & 8 Gps	Railway Yards	ABC	
05/06/1944	BU-H SR388	S/L	W S Day	DFC, RCAF	D-Day Cover				
11/06/1944	BU-H SR388	F/O	J A Lawson		St-Valery-en-Caux (nr Dieppe)		Coastal Radar Station?		
15/06/1944	BU-H SR388	F/L	V L Scamleton	RAAF	Valenciennes	3 & 8 Gps	Rly Marshalling Yards		Vern Scamleton's logbook: "100 Lancas".
17/06/1944	BU-H SR388	P/O	J M S Jackson		Aulnoye		Railway junction		
21/06/1944	BU-H SR388	F/O	J R Corke		Gelsenkirchen	5 Group (plus some from 1 & 8 Gps)	Synthetic-Oil Plant		
04/07/1944	BU-H SR388	W/O	J W Archibald		St-Leu-d'Esserent (N of Paris)	5 Group	U/grd Flying-Bomb Store	ABC	
07/07/1944	BU-H SR388	F/O	K J Bettles		St-Leu-d'Esserent (N of Paris)	5 Group	U/grd Flying-Bomb Store	ABC	
12/07/1944	BU-H SR388	P/O	J M S Jackson		Culmont Chalandry		Railways	Jostle	
14/07/1944	BU-H SR388	F/O	G L Wright		Villeneuve-St-Georges (Paris)	1, 5 & 8 Gps	Rly Marshalling Yards	ABC or Jostle?	
17/07/1944	BU-H SR388	P/O	J M S Jackson		Revinny			Window	
18/07/1944	BU-H SR388	F/O	J A Lawson			1, 3, 5 & 8 Gps	Rly Marshalling Yards	Window	
19/07/1944	BU-H SR388	W/O	J W Archibald		Courtrai		Rly Yards & Junction	Window	
20/07/1944	BU-H SR388	F/L	J J Bray			1, 5 & 8 Gps		ABC	
21/07/1944	BU-H SR388	F/L	V L Scamleton	RAAF	Kiel		Town (incl U-Boat Yards)	Window	
23/07/1944	BU-H SR388	F/L	J L Gilbert		Stuttgart			ABC	
24/07/1944	BU-H SR388	F/L	V L Scamleton	RAAF	Wanne-Eickel	1, 4 & 8 Gps	Krupp Oil Refinery	ABC	Vern Scamleton's logbook: "800 a/c. Flak moderate". Severe turbulence broke window in W/Op's cabin and caused other damage. (ORB says a/c "H" / HB763 (= "T"))
25/07/1944	BU-H SR388	F/L	C C Puerbough	RCAF	Stuttgart			ABC	Early return. Landed at RAF Shipdham after an engine fire and another running rough.
28/07/1944	BU-H SR388	F/O	J R Corke		Stuttgart	1, 3, 5 & 8 Gps		ABC or Jostle	
29/07/1944	BU-H SR388	F/L	C C Puerbough	RCAF	"Dutch Coast"			Window	Passed a Ju 88 on a reciprocal course at 5208N / 0332E.
06/08/1944	BU-H SR388	P/O	J M S Jackson					Window	A/c was later re-coded "BU-Z" (see below at 20/11/44). HB818 became the new "BU-H" - see at 11/11/44 below.
09/08/1944	BU-H SR388	F/O	G L Wright		Saarbrücken			Window	A/c was formerly coded "BU-H" (see at 9/8/44 above).
20/11/1944	BU-Z SR388	F/O	B J Haynes					Window	Early return. Landed Ford with engine u/s. (Note earlier crash-landing at Ford on 31/10/1944).
21/11/1944	BU-Z SR388	F/O	N T Scott					Window	
26/11/1944	BU-Z SR388	W/O	J P Robertson	RNZAF				Window	
12/12/1944	BU-Z SR388	F/O	N Rix		"Osnabrück"			Window	
17/12/1944	BU-Z SR388	P/O	M Crosbie					Window	

REMEMBRANCE

A grey, misty but mild Saturday 12 November saw a small gathering at the Stradishall Memorial at 11.00 hours for the Annual Wreath Laying. The occasion was brightened by three visitors from Bury St. Edmunds' RAFA, two of whom paraded Association Standards, plus that for Bomber Command Association. This was carried as usual by Ron Pearson, and which will of course be 'on parade' at the June unveiling of the Bomber



Command Memorial in London. The three wreaths laid were those for the RAF Stradishall Memorial Trust, the local Aviation Society, and one on behalf of our own Association, the duty being undertaken by Don Walter (living locally but in fact a 'Valiant' man). The two daughters of the late Eddie Wheeler also attended.



As I had to attend a small ceremony in my own village, our Chedburgh wreath was laid on the following bright and warm Sunday morning by Maurice Leary, who, as a founder member of the RAF Chedburgh Trust, has enjoyed many close friendships with ex-'214' men and their families over the years. Maurice's charming Dutch wife originates from northern Holland where helping Allied aircrew 'on the run' was very much part of life in spite of the enormous risks run by the families and the appalling consequences if caught.

Addendum

I spoke recently to John Hoskin who, at 94, must be one of few very early WW2 members of the Squadron. John was a fitter at Stradisall and Chedburgh (along with the late Ron Penhaligon with whom he kept in touch) helping to look after Wellingtons and Stirlings, and he can still recall various incidents together with many members of aircrew (Sqdn Ldr Sellick, Sqdn Ldr [later Wg Cdr] Smyth, Sqdn Ldr Nixey) keeping his own log of many air tests flown. John was also a keen sportsman, with short distance running being his speciality, and with many others, recalls those days with great affection as he met his future wife Elsa, who was a parachute packer, whilst stationed in East Anglia. They both attended the early reunions at Marham and Brize Norton and regret that they have been unable to attend more recent gatherings.

Our Flypast readers will have noticed two mentions of '214' in the November edition. One, a very nice colour image of a Hanley Page Harrow marked as 214-J and two, an interesting survey of Norfolk airfields surrounding RAF Coltishall where, not surprisingly, the section on Oulton includes a photograph of a 214 Squadron Fortress.

Jock Whitehouse.

Do you know Dinty Moore?

Some years ago I met the late Harold Claridge, a Flight Engineer on a Stirling 214 Squadron aircraft that crashed in Hampshire killing his pilot who fell into the moving prop while trying to bale out. Harold was to survive another horrific crash with his crew. Some years ago we planted a tree on the site of the first crash and this was attended by Harold, Tug Wilson and Dinty Moore. Moore became their new skipper replacing Rundle who was killed. Since those pictures were taken, Tug Wilson has died and I wonder if Dinty, last recorded living in Canada, is still alive. Your help would be appreciated.

Ken Rimell

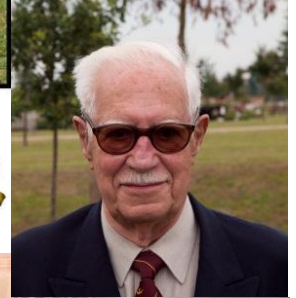
(I have Ken's e-mail address should you have any information. – Ed)

Reunion 2011

IMAGE: STEVEN HATTON - WWW.INTOTHEWIND.CO.UK



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For further information please visit www.intothewind.co.uk



No.214 (Federated Malay States) Squadron Reunion 2011



Photographs
With thanks to:
Jock Whitehouse
John Brown
Steve Hatton



Flying Officer William (Bill) Cooper

Fg Off Bill Cooper has been honoured by North Kesteven District Council in recognition of his brave actions on 30 March 1943 when he stayed at the controls of his Stirling to allow his crew to bail out after a

TRIBUTE: Bill Shaw with the road sign named in honour of his late uncle, F/O William Cooper. With him are, from left, RAF Cranwell Warrant Officer Steve Johnson; RAF Coningsby Flt Lt Pete Walker; North Kesteven District Council leader Cllr Mrs Marion Brighton OBE; and RAF Waddington Sqn Ldr James Hayton

East Anglian Daily Times
30 Nov 11



mid-air collision with another Stirling flown by Jack Dixon. Returning from a raid over Germany, Bill's Stirling Mk1 suffered severe icing over East Anglia which caused it to collide with Jack Dixon's aircraft and suffer serious damage. Jack Dixon managed to get his aircraft home, but by the time Bill's crew had abandoned their Stirling it was too low for him to get out. He died when the aircraft crashed in Nedging near Hadleigh. A new housing development has been built in Branston and a road there



FIELD RENAMED: Bill Shaw lays a wreath earlier this year in Nedging, near Hadleigh, where F/O William Cooper, right, was killed when his bomber crashed in 1943

has been named after Bill in recognition of his heroic actions. The ceremony was attended by Bill's nephew, Bill Shaw together with 'Stoo' Waring from the Sqn Association. Representatives from RAF Cranwell, Coningsby, Waddington and the Royal British Legion also attended the event.

In Memoriam

We are sad to report the passing of the following members of 214 Squadron and the Association:

- | | | |
|-----------|---|---|
| 4 Apr 11 | Roy Howard | Navigator / Bomb Aimer - Stirling/Fortress 1943-1945. Aged 89. |
| 19 Jul 11 | George V Cox | Flight Engineer - Stirling and Fortress. Aged 87. |
| 23 Jul 11 | Sqn Ldr Kenneth John (Beetlejuice) Bettles DFC | Pilot – Flying Fortress
Royal Oak Victoria, BC, Canada. Aged 90. (See 214 Sqn Website for Service career) |
| Nov 11 | Wg Cdr R McAlastair-Furze AFC MBIM | Pilot & Flt Cdr on 214 - Valiant . Took part in UK NZ Air Race. Flew secret reconnaissance missions over hostile territory. Aged 83 |
| 28 Nov 11 | WW (Bill) Doy DFC | WOP/AG. Aged 95 |
| Nov 11 | Peter Witts | Air Gunner – Fortress. Aged 95. |
| 21 Dec 11 | WGM (Bill) Foskett | Navigator / Bomb Aimer / Air Gunner - Stirling / Fortress 1943 - 44 |



FLYPAST: A Tornado roars overhead yesterday in tribute to the memorial to Narborough Aerodrome

NARBOROUGH

First world war air base is recognised

A Tornado roared overhead as a memorial was unveiled to those who took to the skies for their country almost a century ago.

Narborough Aerodrome was Britain's biggest air base during the first world war. But today almost all that remains is a track leading out across the fields.

Yesterday a guard of honour from nearby RAF Marham snapped to attention as Sir Michael Beetham, former Marshall of the RAF and one of the last surviving Lancaster bomber pilots, arrived.

"In 1915 an airfield was built here," he said. "Pilots and observers were being trained for the Western Front and casualties were high.

"Forty-one people were killed and a number of them are buried in All Saints Church in Narborough.

"It's very important that what was

By CHRIS BISHOP

at Narborough is remembered for history."

Pilots from the Royal Naval Air Service, Royal Flying Corps and American squadrons trained over Norfolk before being sent to the Western Front.

Casualties were high among those who flew their flimsy bi-planes over enemy lines, to act as artillery spotters. Those on board the wood and canvas aircraft didn't even wear parachutes. And many perished on training flights, with engine failure the commonest cause.

The memorial stands off Chalk Lane - where the guard house at the entrance to Narborough Aerodrome would have stood - opposite the lane which leads to the main gate of RAF Marham.

Almost nothing remains today of 1,000 acres of runways and hangars.

The memorial was dedicated by Canon Stuart Nairn, Rector of the Nar Valley.

"Their actions and their sacrifice are their remembrance," he said. "We come to dedicate this memorial so there may be a place on earth dedicated to their memory."

Dignitaries including Georgina Holloway, High Sheriff of Norfolk, and Shirley Matthews, Mayor of Swaffham, joined parish councillors and veterans.

Wreaths were laid before a Tornado thundered overhead. They included a tribute from Col Christopher Kulas, commanding officer at RAF Mildenhall. Some of the first American airmen to serve in Britain trained at Narborough.

■ chris.bishop@archant.co.uk



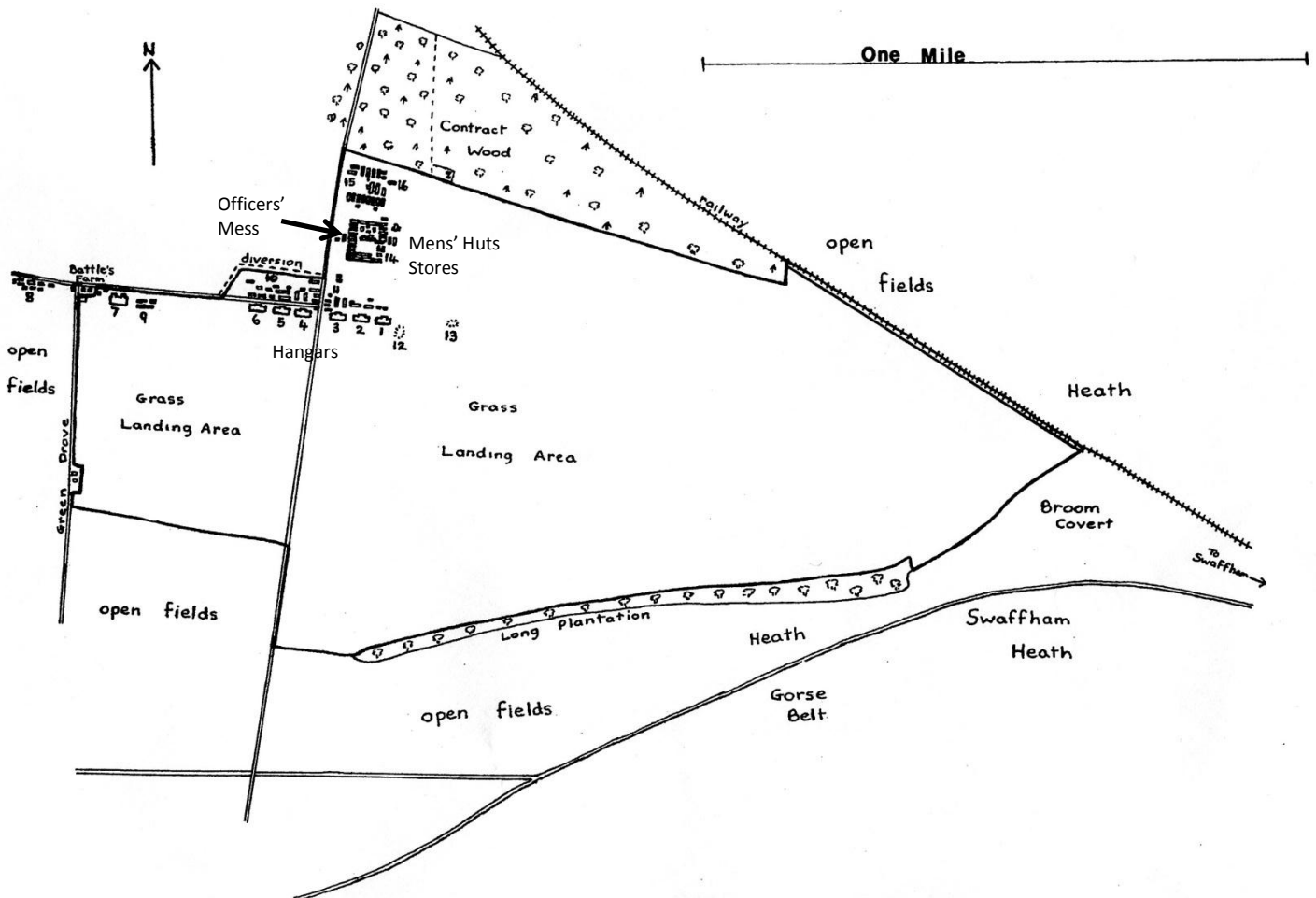
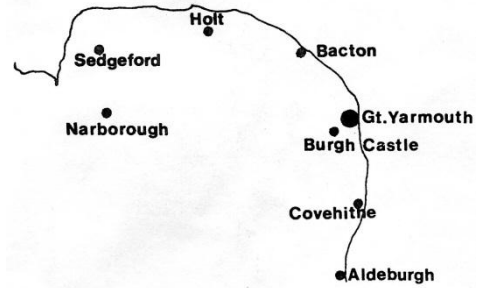
TRIBUTE: Service personnel past and present were among those to pay their respect yesterday.

Marham & Narborough Airfields in the First World War

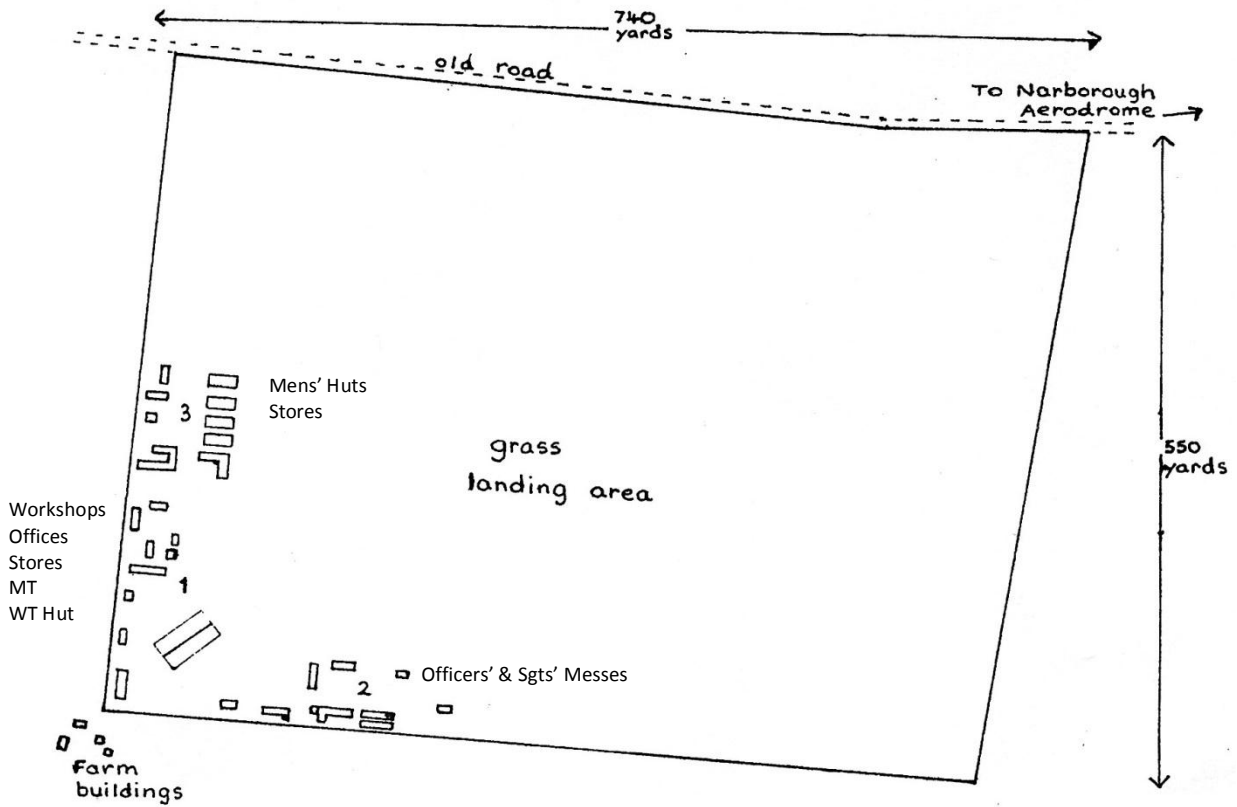
Those of you who served at Marham up to 1977 will remember the old 'Black Hangar' that stood near the corner of the road from Narborough to Marham village. This was the last of seven large hangars at Narborough, but in 1977 a gale ripped off part of the roof and it had to be demolished. Narborough had been opened in 1915 as one of the satellite landing grounds for the Royal Naval Air Service Station at Great Yarmouth which was, at that time, responsible for the defence against Zeppelin and other air attacks. A small airfield of about 80 acres was also in use at Marham as a landing ground for the Royal Flying Corps.

In April 1916 Narborough was transferred to the RFC and was developed so that by 1918 it was one of the largest airfields in Great Britain covering 908 acres. The airfield was gradually changed to a training depot station, supplying aircrew for duties on the Western Front. With hundreds of airman training here during that period there were, inevitably, a fair number of accidents involving death or serious injury.

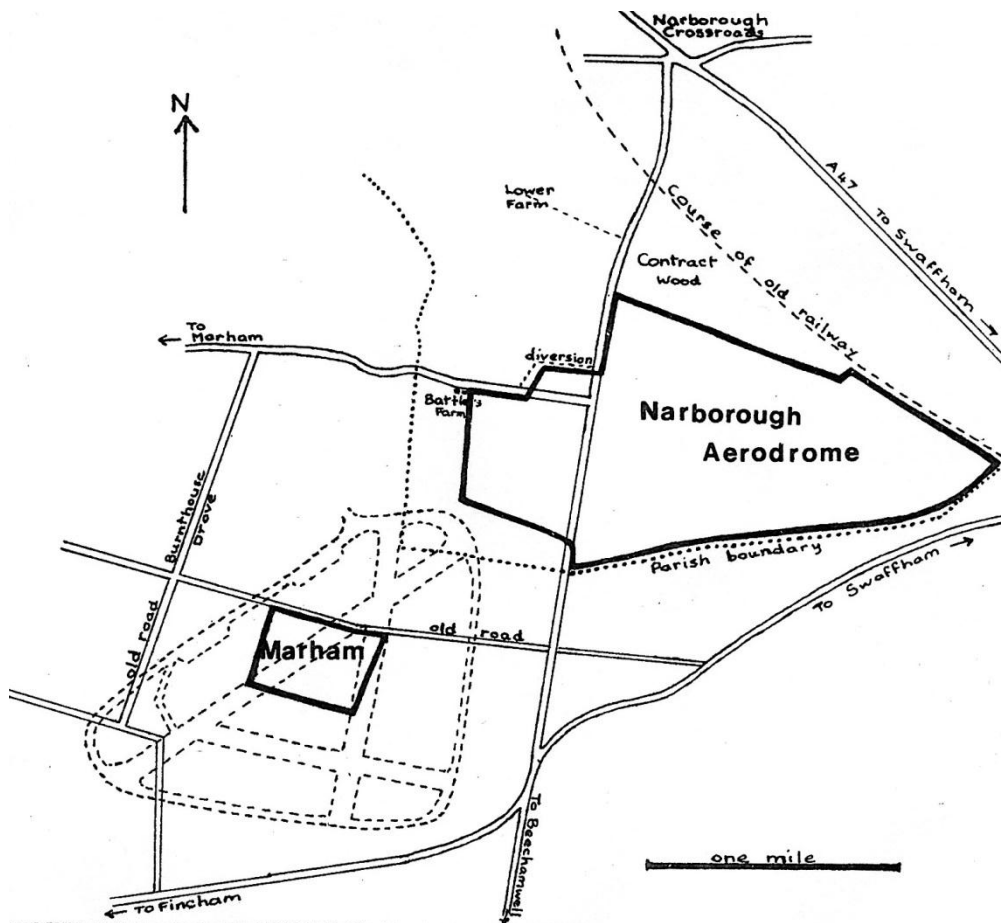
To remember those young men who lost their lives at Narborough, a memorial stone was laid there in September, dedicated by Canon Stuart Nairn, Rector of the Nar Valley, and unveiled by our President, MRAF Sir Michael Beetham (P13). It was good to see Sir Michael up and around again following his recent knee replacement. He is, of course, very much involved with the building of the new Bomber Command Memorial in Green Park which is due to be unveiled in the spring of 2012.



Plan of Narborough Airfield c1918



Plan of Marham Airfield - 1918



Map showing the position of First World War Aerodromes at Narborough and Marham with modern day runways superimposed

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Wg Cdr A J Mawby OBE BSc alan_mawby@hotmail.com
Treasurer	John Gulliver Chucky's, Swains Lane, Bembridge, Isle of Wight, PO35 5ST Phone: 01983 873248 j-gulli@supanet.com
Secretary	Peter M Walker 21 Beverley Road, Brundall, Norwich, NR13 5QS Phone: 01603 713754
Historian	Jock Whitehouse

Committee

Shaun P Broaders MBE MSM

Committee

Sqn Ldr G W Moffatt

Sqn Ldr V A Pheasant MBE

Roy Monk

Squadron Website
www.214squadron.org.uk

Web Site Managers John & Carol Edwards

raf214squadron@yahoo.com

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

The Nightjar has been compiled by your Committee; it has then converted to a computerised form, proof read, then printed, assembled, and distributed by the Association Treasurer – John Gulliver.

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