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Praeter Sescentos

"THE RIGHT OF THE LINE"

600 (City of London) Squadron RAuxAF Association Newsletter

Patron: The Viscount Trenchard of Wolfeton

Affiliated Members; 601 & 604 Squadron Associations.



December 2011

Editorial

Welcome to the Christmas 2011 edition.

Well, I would like to start with a BIG thank you to all of you who have sent me articles for inclusion in the newsletter over the last 12 Months – thank you, it is your material that keeps the newsletter packed and I couldn't easily do it without you. The Association really does appreciate all your contributions, so please do keep your memories and stories coming folks as this is what helps me produce such bumper editions.

Those of you who sent me photographs, thank you – you will notice I use them all and they then go into the archive. These really are wonderful as they help boost the archive, so many many thanks.

Thanks as usual for another fantastic articles from the Author and Historian, Ian White. Ian has written another is a series of special articles based upon aircraft types used by our Squadrons which is really interesting. Ian is also writing a good many of the profiles. Many thanks for Ian's very kind & continuing support and his very interesting articles.

This edition also features details about our exciting new web site – so read on! Big thanks has to go to Mr John Wheeler for his technical expertise & brilliance for getting us this far. This is very much a work in progress so keep checking in as we build on it.

As usual, we are still particularly interested in receiving any photo's records etc. please as we still have some big gaps in our history to fill. We have a good deal of Squadron archive but are missing huge chunks from the war years. Any photos etc. will be well taken care of, copied and returned safely, so please have a dig and send me all you have! All items will be very gratefully received, and taken great care of.

On behalf of the Association, may I wish you all a very happy & peaceful Christmas & a healthy and prosperous 2012.



Obituaries

We will try to keep this up to date, but sadly we can only report the passing of old friends and colleagues if we are told about it. Since our last Newsletter, we are sorry to report the loss of the following;

Flight Lieutenant Sean Cunningham of the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team (the Red Arrows).



It is with sadness that the MOD must confirm the death of Flight Lieutenant Sean Cunningham of the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team (the Red Arrows). Flight Lieutenant Cunningham was killed when he was ejected from his Hawk T1 aircraft on the morning of Tuesday 8 November 2011. A full Service Inquiry will investigate the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Red 5 – Flight Lieutenant Sean Cunningham, 35, was born and raised in Johannesburg, South Africa, and moved to the UK in 1986 at the age of nine. Although a profession in football was a possibility, Sean followed his dream to become fast jet pilot in the Royal Air Force. Sean attended Ernesford Grange School in Coventry during which time he qualified for his Private Pilot Licence at the age of 17. He went on to read Electrical & Electronic Engineering at Nottingham Trent University and completed his Elementary Flying Training as a member of East Midlands University Air Squadron.

Joining the Royal Air Force in 2000 Flight Lieutenant Sean Cunningham was selected for Fast Jet Training. On completion of his flying training, Sean was posted to the Tornado GR4 aircraft serving on 617 'The Dambusters' Squadron at Royal Air Force Lossiemouth. During his three years on the Squadron, Sean completed several operational tours of Iraq as part of Operation TELIC, flying close air support missions for Coalition ground forces. After completing exercises in America, Canada, Romania and France, Sean joined XV (R) Squadron as a Qualified Pilot and Tactics Instructor. Sean continued his instructional role when posted to the Weapon System Officer (WSO) Training Unit at 100 Squadron, Royal Air Force Leeming before being selected to fly for the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team (the Red Arrows) 2010.

Flight Lieutenant Cunningham's family, Father Jim, Mother Monika & Sister Nicolette said: "Sean was first and foremost a much-loved son and brother who will be dearly missed by all of his family, and his many good friends. Since his childhood Sean had dreamed of flying fast jets in the Royal



Air Force; through his hard work and dedication he achieved that dream, and the pinnacle of his career was to fly in the Red Arrows. Sean loved his flying and we hope that his life will be an inspiration to all those who share his dreams. His fun-loving nature has never failed to put a smile on the faces of those who knew and loved him; this is how he will be remembered. We ask that the media please allow us the time and space required to come to terms with what has happened”

The Rt Hon Phillip Hammond MP, Secretary of State for Defence said: “It was with great sadness that I heard of the death of Flight Lieutenant Sean Cunningham. He was clearly a gifted pilot who served his country with honour and distinction throughout his career in the Royal Air Force. As a Red Arrow, Flt Lt Cunningham was regarded as among the most talented aviators in the world. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends at this terrible time.”

Air Officer Commanding Number 22(Training) Group, Air Vice-Marshal Mike Lloyd said: “The Red Arrows personify the teamwork, professionalism and excellence that is common-place throughout the Royal Air Force and Flight Lieutenant Sean Cunningham demonstrated each of these values on a daily basis. His contribution to the Service as an aviator in the Tornado GR4 Force, as a Red Arrows Pilot and as an officer has been outstanding. Sean will be missed by all and our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.”

Group Captain Simon Blake, the Commandant of the RAF's Central Flying School, said: “Flight Lieutenant Sean Cunningham joined the team in October 2010 and flew for his first year as Red 3. This year, Sean had commenced training as Red 5 and was the senior member of the ‘front 5’ affectionately known as ‘Enid’, and thus had the unofficial mantle of ‘Uncle Enid’ – a key position in mentoring and helping to train the new pilots to the team. His constant smile, energy, and joie de vivre was infectious and he will be sorely missed by his fellow pilots, the entire Red Arrows team and his many colleagues and friends in the wider Royal Air Force. Our heartfelt sorrow and sympathy go out to his family and all those whose lives he touched”.





Military Quotations

"I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat. . . . You ask, what is our policy? I say it is to wage war by land, sea, and air. War with all our might and with all the strength God has given us, and to wage war against a monstrous tyranny never surpassed in the dark and lamentable catalogue of human crime. That is our policy. You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word. It is victory. Victory at all costs - Victory in spite of all terrors - Victory, however long and hard the road may be, for without victory there is no survival."

- Winston Churchill

(in his initial speech as Prime Minister to the House of Commons 10 May 1940)

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"It is a good thing for an uneducated man to read books of quotations"

- Winston Churchill: *My Early Life* (1930) ch. 9.

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"Never in the face of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few."

- Winston Churchill

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"The power of an air force is terrific when there is nothing to oppose it."

- Winston Churchill

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Never give in--never, never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense. Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy.

-Winston Churchill



600 (City of London) Squadron RAuxAF News



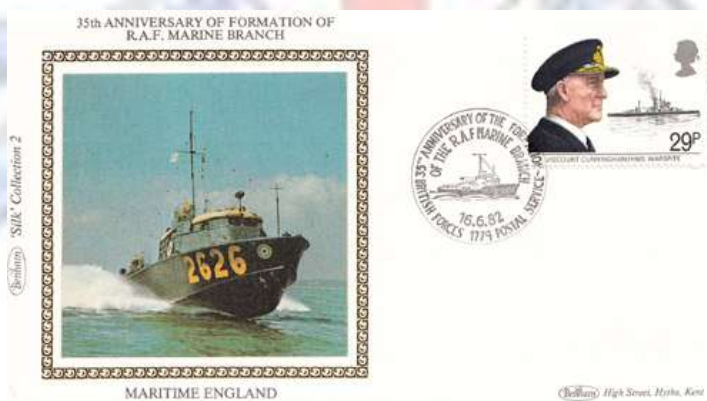
Sep-Dec 2011 600 Sqn Update from Wg Cdr Crossman, OC 600 Sqn

By the time you read this I will be a distant memory (hopefully not a blot on the landscape) of 600 Squadron. Since the last edition the Squadron personnel have been as busy as ever with mobilisations continuing alongside training and the annual Field Training Exercise being undertaken at Bramley Training Area. The articles provided by Squadron personnel give an insight into some of the activities undertaken.

During my 2 year tenure I have endeavoured to channel the professionalism and enthusiasm of the personnel that are both part time and full time members of the Squadron and provide them the leadership and a structure and organisation to allow them to unleash their potential.

I think we have moved on considerably although we are constantly striving to improve and will continue to do so. Looking back, I have enjoyed my time meeting and working with such an incredible, eclectic bunch of people both on the Sqn and within the Association.

I wish you all every success for the future and look forward to seeing you all again perhaps if I am invited to cross to the 'other side' and join your Association ranks. I am sure you will extend a warm welcome to my successor, Ian Tripp who will introduce himself to you in your next newsletter.



600 (City Of London) SQUADRON COMPLETE KEY TRAINING

600 Squadron (City of London) Royal Auxiliary Air Force, have recently returned from their three day annual field training exercise at Bramley training camp. The exercise is a key part of the Sqn's pre-deployment training to prepare their personnel for operational service, working alongside their regular RAF counterparts throughout the UK, and in support of operations in Afghanistan and around the globe.

The first phase of the exercise was to refresh the Sqn members on their weapon handling skills, before subject matter experts from the RAF Medics from 4626 Sqn, and the RAF Regiment shared their extensive operational experience and gave detailed and practical demonstrations on a variety of topics.

Of particular interest was a lecture from Major Ben Moorhouse from the 621 EOD Regiment RLC who gave the Sqn an insight into the incredible difficulties faced with the kind of improvised explosive devices (IED) that are currently being used in Afghanistan, and was able to give a demonstration of their most valuable assets, their EOD Robot.

Once all the practical demonstrations were complete and personnel were equipped with the necessary skills required to cope with complex combat scenarios, the teams were briefed as to their various tasks, from providing rapid reaction forces, to setting up headquarters, and searching vehicles and persons as necessary, at the control of entry points.

For this final phase of the exercise, volunteers from the British Transport Police participated as very convincing ' enemy forces ' providing valuable injects to test and challenge the Sqn's newly practiced skills, and resulted in a climatic adrenalin filled confrontation, which enabled valuable lessons to be learnt by all exercise participants.

The Sqn were delighted to host some important guests during the exercise, their Honorary Air Commodore, Viscount Hugh Trenchard was able to visit the Sqn for a day to observe the Sqn's training along with American, TSgt Chris Allen from the 111th Air Support Operations Squadron, currently being hosted by 600 Sqn as part of a US exchange visit, who commented that;

" This has been an eye-opening experience on the striking similarities of how the RAF Reserves and the United States Air Force train for combat readiness" he continued "conducting an exercise with real world scenario objectives is key preparation for mobilisation, and I have even picked up ideas to take back to my unit back in the United States."

The Commanding Officer, Wing Commander Michele Crossman added "This exercise is an important part of our training, and a great part of the Sqn ethos, as it is the only opportunity for the whole Sqn to work together, and expand their military skills to better equip them for potentially austere operations "

Flt Lt Cowling

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UK/USNG Exchange Programme 2011

A very successful exchange programme between 600 (City of London) Squadron and 111th Air Support Operations Squadron with Cpl Cairn-Neeson and T/Sgt Allen respectively. Highlights of both visits are recorded below.

Cpl Cairn-Neeson – 600 Sqn

I was met at Abraham Lincoln Airport, Springfield, Illinois on Saturday at 09.30 hrs by Capt. Shawn Stahle, OC of the Communications Flight of the 183 Fighter Wing (FW) Air National Guard (ANG), he was to act as my host throughout my stay. We should have met the previous night but due to some bad weather over Washington this didn't happen. Shawn took me to my accommodation which turned out to be a hotel. He left me there so that I could unpack and catch up on some sleep. In the evening he and his wife Anne took me into Springfield. There was a local event taking place called "Taste of Springfield" This was where local restaurants and bars had set up stalls in the city centre for people to try. This was an excellent way to start ones visit to any country. I would recommend the "Springfield Wheat Beer". The food was OK too.

Sunday: Shawn collected me from the hotel and took me to "work" In fact he picked me up and drove me to and from work everyday except at the weekend. Here he introduced me to various members of the Communications Flight and then showed me round the "Wing." The 183 FW had flown F16's but in a re organisation of the ANG they had lost them and the unit was re rolled as a Base Support Unit. Now they maintain the engines of F16's for ANG Squadrons and in the future possible "Active Squadrons". I returned to my hotel in the early afternoon.

I should explain some terminology. Someone described as on "Active Duty" is what we would know as a "Regular." Their reserves are split up into Reserve and National Guard / Air National Guard. The Reserves are only answerable to the Federal Government, while the National Guard / Air National Guard are answerable to both the Federal Government and to the State Governor.

Monday: in work for 07.30. I was put in with the Network Support Section with whom I would be spending most of my time with. They were tasked with installing a printer and up grading a switch at Fort Lincoln which is home to the Illinois National Guard. On the third floor of the HQ Building in a small corner was the Air National Guard HQ. This was run by Col. Cobetto to whom I was introduced to. On hearing who and why I was here, he went off and brought back a media rep. It was agreed that I would give an interview and that photographs would be taken while we installed the printer. The Col then brought back Maj General Enyart who is the Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard. The General presented me with a coin and photographs taken. The section had split into various groups, three of us assembled the printer, one replaced the switch and two sorted out the connectivity. With the work completed we returned to base for a late lunch. The unit is within the Airport of Springfield which is very small with only one catering facility. The unit does have a mess (Chow House) but that opens only during training weekends. As the host unit is required to pay for messing I was given an ample supply of discount cards for various restaurants near my hotel.

Tuesday: I was introduced to Col. Meyer and the Wing Executives. I duly gave my presentation on 600 Sqn, its history and present day role. This was well received. We returned to the Flight where Shawn has a weekly brief with his section. I gave a quick run down to, who I was and what we did on the Sqn. The rest of the day was spent with the network section looking at how the section was split up and the roles and responsibilities.

Wednesday/Thursday: Due to building works round the station, the team had to reroute an underground cable. As I am not cleared for working at height or in confined spaces my role was limited to mainly observing and pulling back the cable.



Friday: Shawn collected me and took me round various sites in Springfield, where we visited the War Memorial Gardens, Lincoln's Tomb and Lincoln's Museum.

Saturday: I was kindly taken up to Chicago by Alana and spent the day seeing the sights which included going up the "Sears Tower" and a trip out onto Lake Michigan.

Sunday: Shawn and his wife took me to St Louis where we went up the Arch and visited the Budweiser Distillery followed by a meal before setting off back to Springfield.

Monday: I was shown how it is possible to force updates down to computers and learnt that using this they are able to change Operating Systems i.e. MS Vista to MS 7. which is what most of their systems are on, though they do have to keep some on MS XP. It was an early finish as Shawn had bought tickets to see "KISS" in concert. They were awesome.

Tuesday: For a change I didn't spend any time with the network section, instead I spent some time with Bob and Alana in Quality Assurance who are responsible for ensuring that the sections are carrying out their duties correctly. This was followed with talking to Mari who amongst her duties included planning and asset tracking.

Wednesday: Visit to the AOC in the afternoon and with their IT section that are separate from the Comms Flight. They explained their role and responsibilities. Unfortunately due to the sensitivity of their work their screens were all switch off.

Thursday: Had a farewell meeting with Col. Meyer. He presented me with a plaque from 183 FW in commemoration of my visit; In return I presented him with the book "Gentlemen in Blue a History of 600 Squadron." Back with the section we got out the JFSCISS which is a mobile Communications HQ. For me this was the highlight. It is housed in two trailers and is used for national emergencies. The first trailer has all the communication hardware while the second holds the peripherals e.g. chairs and tables etc. The idea for this came as a result of experiences gained from the 9/11 where it was found that communication between the various agencies was difficult or non-existent. This was particularly true for radios where some were on different bands i.e. VHF, HF or UHF. The various frequencies are loaded and when someone calls a computer takes the incoming signal converts it to the required band and rebroadcasts it. There is also a small computer network. Its rear link is via satellite. The first task was to unpack and set up the satellite which was done via a bit of OJT. After that was completed I was shown the inside of the trailer and the various components explained. Fortunately or unfortunately there wasn't a chance to see the set up in action. I spent the afternoon with MSgt Debra Schmitz who is the Information Manager for the Wing and is responsible of collecting all written procedures from the various units on the Wing. The Wing was shortly to be audited and so the pressure was on to have all records completed in time. It was therefore very kind of her to take the time out to explain what her section did; interestingly she advised me that the Air Force was looking at putting their records onto Share Point which is what is currently being pushed out M.O.D. wide here as MOSS.

Friday: All too soon it was the last working day, Checked out of the hotel before starting work. Before that Shawn took me to a cafe where I had to order the largest pancake (16") I've ever seen. I didn't even make a dent in it.

Saturday: with MSgt Aaron Marshall who was manning the helpdesk. Later on I helped with a number of laptops whose hard drives needed wiping prior to loading Windows 7. I left work for the last time and went back to Shawn's home where he and his wife were hosting a farewell BBQ.

I would not hesitate recommending to anyone who is thinking of volunteering to take part in the Exchange Program. It allows you to see a close ally at work, to see their systems and compare work practise. Interestingly, they are currently going through the same pain as we are in terms of defence cuts. Another interesting point that came out of the brief held in March was that although we see the NG/ANG as being massive compared to us the ratio of volunteers to head of population in the US is similar to ours, we just forget that they live in a big country.



T/Sgt Allen – 111th Air Support Operations Squadron

Sgt Cair-Neeson was waiting for me at the terminal upon arrival and had a driver to drive us to base with my luggage. The itinerary they laid out for me was stellar. I truly came at the right time because I got to camp out for two days to see how a RAF unit trains in preparation for war in sync of what's relative in combat situations out during the field training exercise at an old WW1 station site for the military event. Then I got to visit the busiest C4I Information Systems squadrons throughout England to get a good feel of the Communication trade group 4 which varied in many different skill sets that totally encompasses the communications full spectrum. I worked with my sponsor in the CIS Projects section of the Sqn organizing office moves and rigging phone line changes in the frame room that go along with those office moves. Along the way, they made time for me to sight-see and enjoy the following locations: Oxford, Stonehenge, Whitby, York, Lincoln, Cambridge and central London. There were long drives in between bases to enjoy beautiful country-side scenery. The evenings were delighted with bars and good beverages that soothed my international taste.

Visiting the only UK ASOC was particular special for me because I belong with the 111 ASOS that does the part in the US. This was particular important to me because I got to see the similarities between the two and the differences between the career trades within the unit. Also, getting to the see the SIM and knowing that we came to visit them in 2008 to help them get the Quick Strike Simulator established was a plus because they still use the same configurations that we use and being that I manage the simulator back home, it gave me reassurance that what we implement can positively impact our allies. Another distinct visit was with the 29 Fighter Squadron at Coningsby which gave me an up-close tour of the Typhoon F2 (Eurofighter Jet) that was way better than any briefing you'll get an air show.

This experience was an amazing cultural, educational and social event that was orchestrated brilliantly. It's always nice to see the differences and similarities of your trade in a different part of the world being performed the same way or in some ways better/worse. I'm not sure if it was just good timing of my visit but the No. 600 (City of London) Squadron RAuxAF/ RAF Reserves Program Coordinator got it down-packed from the sponsor (Cpl/Sgt Craig Cair-Neeson) they chose to creating the itinerary that covered five different bases and the multitude of different specialties that Trade group 4 has to offer was first class. From the FTX to the UK ASOC visit and even to the Typhoon F2 hangar visit was unexpected and totally welcomed because it collaborated perfectly to what I do here in the States for the 111 ASOC.

OC 600 Sqn and OC 111th ASOS Statement

OC 600 Sqn

'This 2-week exchange has provided an excellent opportunity for Cpl Cair-Neeson of 600 (City of London) Squadron RAuxAF and Tech Sgt Allen from the US Air National Guard to gain an insight into the use and utility of Reserve service both at home and overseas. This occasion further cemented relationships between the US and UK and was also a chance to reward Cpl Cair-Neeson for his recent period of mobilised service undertaken as part of C4I Sqn at RAF Brize Norton.'

OC 111th ASOS

'Sgt Allen was able to visit the UK ASOC to relate the mission from a different perspective that would help bridge the gap of understanding NATO operations. Sgt Allen now has better understanding of the ICT Trade, culture of the UK and how the RAF Reserves play a vital role in the sustainment of the RAF.'





On Tuesday 18 October, 600 (City of London) Squadron were hosts to The Worshipful Company of Butchers, who were given a tour of RAF Northolt and RAF Uxbridge.

Now you may be thinking 'Worshipful what?', 'Butchers at Northolt', what's this, are we about to create a Friesian Squadron, or are unused parts of the airfield going to be used for grazing? Well the answer to these questions is no, because 600 (CoL) Squadron is affiliated to The Worshipful Company of Butchers, which is a livery company of the City of London.

Livery Companies are trade associations based in the City of London and are known as 'Worshipful Company of' the relevant trade or profession. The City of London has many Worshipful companies and the range of trades or professions is vast, such as, Fishmongers, Goldsmiths, Ironmongers, Paint-Strainers and of course everyone's friends, International Bankers. A Butchers organisation has existed since 975, was granted the right to regulate trade in 1331, and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1605. The Company continues to exist today as a trade association for members of the industry, and contributes, as do many of the Livery companies, to various charities.



The Squadron's association with the Butchers originates from long before 600 (CoL) Sqn reformed in 1999 and was between 1 Maritime Headquarters Unit, and the Butchers. I'm not sure of the reason for the original association; perhaps we had on the Sqn a Cpl Jones, or possibly a Sqn Ldr Fred Elliot, I said SQN LDR FRED ELLIOT. The original reason seems less important to the special link we have today. We were delighted to invite and welcome our Butcher friends to RAF Northolt.

The inevitable traffic delayed the arrival of some of our guests so we had to hot-hoof it over to 11 Group Bunker to meet up with Mr Chris Wren. Chris gave us an extremely interesting tour of the bunker, but regrettably, lunch beckoned and he had to chop 30mins from his tour. That was necessary as we did not want the visit to become an udder disaster.



We were joined in the afternoon by Sqn Ldr Johnstone, of 600 (CoL) Sqn who was on hand to assist with the afternoon leg of the tour which continued with a visit to Air Traffic Control (ATC).

After a gentle climb up the Control Tower stairs, we arrived on the topside of the tower, to observe aircraft on their final leg before landing, and other aircraft manoeuvring on the aprons. We were given a very good talk from Sgt Brian Capel (an ex member of 600 Sqn), who admitted to us all that he could talk to us for hours. Thankfully he did not do so on this occasion, only because we had other places to visit. It is always a pleasure listening to one of Brian's talks (no doubt I'll end up with a thick rib or a knock on the shin for that comment). This was followed by a tour and brief about the Approach Radar.

The end of the ATC tour came too soon, and so off we went to 32 (TR) Sqn for the final part of our RAF Northolt tour. Now our guests with their 'meaty professional culture' may have thought, initially, that TR meant 'Thick Rib' or 'Thin Rib', so we informed them that it meant 'The Royal'. A tour was given of the BAe 125 and the Augusta Westland AW-109E. I noticed one guest was attracted to the unpainted polished leading edge of the 125. Maybe he liked the contrast between the painted surfaces and the polished silverside of the wing. I must admit, both 125 aircraft in the hangar did look immaculate and very impressive.

The last item of the days itinerary was for a photograph to be taken next to the Gate Guardian hurricane at Support Wg HQ and then refreshments back at 600 (CoL) Sqn HQ.

The Company thoroughly enjoyed their visit to RAF Northolt and were extremely appreciative of being given the opportunity to learn more about the RAF and the breadth of activity here at RAF Northolt.

600 (CoL) Sqn is looking forward to when we return to the Butchers Hall, to meet our butcher friends, for our annual all ranks 'Butchers Dinner'



Cpl Gary Edgerton
600 (City of London) Squadron



Festival of Remembrance 2011

This November, I had the privilege of representing 600 Squadron at the British Legion Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall as a member of the RAUXAF contingent of the muster party; and also at the Remembrance Day service at the Cenotaph.

Prior to the weekend's ceremonies, I, along with the rest of the RAF contingent was required to report to RAF Northolt for a week's intensive drill training under the tender ministrations of the Queen's Colour Squadron drill instructors. The D.I.s put us through our paces with a mixture of skill, humour (No Sir, the other left foot if you please!) and patience – especially the latter, as many of the group hadn't been near a parade ground in quite a few years.

There then followed a period of square-bashing and marching up and down stairs in time to the RAF March Past in preparation for the steps of the Albert Hall. Much time and concentration was spent over this as nobody wanted to be immortalised on national TV in front of millions of viewers, marching into the arena out of step, or even worse, tick-tocking (for those not of a military background, this means swinging ones left arm in time with the left leg instead of the right).

Finally, after a full day's rehearsal at the Royal Albert Hall, where we encountered the redoubtable master of ceremonies in the form of Garrison Sergeant Major Mott, who is responsible for seeing that all military aspects of the festival go without a hitch, we were then ready for our two performances. One young Guardsman had an especially memorable day as the entire cast and crew, backed by the massed band of the Royal Marines sang 'Happy Birthday' to mark his Eighteenth birthday.

To march into that spectacular arena in the presence of the Royal Family and a hugely appreciative audience was a very proud and at the same time, humbling experience. Several of the military personnel found it difficult to keep their emotions in check listening to the stories of heroism and sacrifice and the two-minutes silence and fall of poppies that ended the service.

The following day saw us formed-up at Wellington Barracks, ready to march off behind the Central Band of the RAF along Birdcage Walk to Whitehall and the Cenotaph itself. Because it was a cold Autumn morning, we were grateful for the heavy greatcoats that we'd been issued with for the occasion, plus the benefit of a good breakfast as more than one person(not RAF I hasten to add!) succumbed to the rigors of standing on parade for up to two hours.

Taking part in these two high-profile national ceremonies was a huge privilege and is to be highly recommended when next year's volunteer request is issued.

SAC K Looseley
600 Sqn RAUXAF

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600 Squadron Association News



The 600 (City of London Squadron Association) is delighted and proud to announce the launch of a totally new web site. The new site hosts a full and ever growing history of 600, 601 & 604 Squadrons with an impressive gallery of photographs, some of which many people will not have seen. The Association newsletter will be posted onto the web site along with back issues. In addition, we have an extensive links page, a guest book, an events diary, a news section & pages dedicated to membership & fundraising. Remember, this is YOUR Association, so do tell us what you like, what you don't like and any ideas you have – and, as ever, PLEASE keep your material coming in for both the newsletter and now the web site.

Credit must go to Mr John Wheeler our webmaster. John is credited with helping create & manage the 601 Squadron (recreated) and the Battle of Britain Historical Society web sites, and has worked really hard to bring us the site as we see it today.

There is much to do still and in some areas are still temporarily “under construction”. John is working as fast and as furiously as possible as I ask him to do things, so bear with us – between us, we intend to build the web site into one to be rightly proud of.

So, have a look at;

WWW.600squadronassociation.com

In the September issue, I reported on Russell Turner's presentation of a sword to Wing Commander Michelle Crossman OC 600 Squadron. Please see below a couple of pictures that I have subsequently received. Many thanks to Russell & OC 600 squadron for the use of these pictures.





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President's Christmas Message

Another year over. Where did it go? Last Christmas seems only a couple of months ago, but as I write this in late November the Christmas decorations are already up again in Regent Street and in many High Streets throughout the land, and there will be many more by the time you read this.



This past year has been a mixture of change and “same old same old”. We had the usual annual events, the AGM and lunch (well attended), the church service in St Bart’s (not well attended – must try harder!), the Federation of OCAs annual march and lunch at Armoury House (600’s birthplace), the Battle of Britain Service in Westminster Cathedral, and the usual busy time in November, with the visit to Mill Hill Cemetery on Armistice day by the Dutch Wapenbroeder, Lord Mayor’s show the following day, and Remembrance Sunday the day after that at St Paul’s Cathedral (stepping over protesters’ tents) and afterwards at the Royal Exchange and Mansion House.

Our Standard has been on parade at virtually all of those events – and many more – in the care of Andy Cameron, our standard bearer.

We’ve now had a complete year’s issues of our excellent new and much more comprehensive newsletter, edited by Andy Cameron.

And now our revamped website is up and running (although still being developed) at www.600squadronassociation.com, and the driving force behind it has been – guess who? Andy Cameron, of course. Many thanks, Andy, for all you do for us.

And the changes? Well, I wasn’t in this seat this time last year. Terry Lynn served us well for six years after taking over the Presidency from Bill Williams but stood down because he felt that the increasing time he spends overseas was not allowing him to devote the time to the job that he thought it needed. Thank you for all you did, Terry – enjoy your well-earned retirement! I was very upset when pressure of work forced me to resign the Chairmanship a few years ago, so was delighted to be offered the chance to succeed Terry as your President at the AGM in March. It was a great honour to be elected, and I hope my performance will keep me in office for some time yet.

Change at the Squadron as well. Wg Cdr Michele Crossman has moved to her next appointment, and been succeeded as Officer Commanding by Wg Cdr Ian Tripp, another Regular officer, and another “loggie”. I think I speak for many when I say that there was fear and trepidation two years ago when we learnt that the Squadron was to be commanded for the first time ever (in peace time) by a Regular Officer, but although our hearts may have trembled at the thought, our heads knew that the Squadron needed to be picked up and shaken to get it out of the doldrums into which it had sunk. It very soon became apparent that Michele was the right person to do just that. Within the first year of her command other Auxiliary Squadrons were once again looking to 600 as “the way to go”. Ian has inherited a much healthier squadron than Michele did, and has a good foundation to continue the work of putting 600 back where it belongs – at the top. Rumour Control informs me that the plan is for Ian to be succeeded in two years by an Auxiliary OC, but much can change in two years – let’s wait and see! In the meantime, a hearty welcome to the new Officer Commanding 600 (City of London) Squadron, Royal Auxiliary Air Force. Sir, you’ve inherited the best squadron in the Force – all you have to do is get the rest of the Force to acknowledge that fact. Simples!!

Of course, our pre-1957 members are not getting any younger, and sadly but inevitably we have said farewell to some of them this year. Clifford Baynam, Robert Hills, E W Allen, J Riordan, Jack Cox, Flt Lt Hugh Cole-Baker, Ted Mooney, Leonard Clucas, Graham Tidman and C J Annals, Secretary/Treasurer of 604 Squadron Association are no longer with us, and this Christmas our thoughts and prayers go once more to all their families and friends. Whilst not members of our Association, we also mourn Group Captain Tom Barrett, Station Commander of RAF Northolt and Flight Lieutenants Jon Egging and Sean Cunningham, respectively Red 4 and Red 5 of the Royal Air Force Aerobatics Team. All three lost their lives far too early in tragic accidents.

As to next year, well, things look good. Our membership is stable and we have an enthusiastic and hard-working committee, so we are well placed for a successful year ahead. Our Secretary, Angie Luddington, somehow manages to juggle Association work with her busy life as a serving sergeant in the Squadron and her civilian job as paramedic. Thank you, Angie – I don’t know how you do it! And that brings me to John Wilding, who has been our Treasurer for 31 years. No, that wasn’t a typo; he took on the job in 1980. He has now said he thinks he’s completed his apprenticeship and can he have a break, please? John, you have our undying gratitude for keeping us on the financial



straight and narrow so well and for so long. It is said that a Treasurer's job is a thankless task, but we do all sincerely thank you for your devotion to duty for all those years. It is a measure of this quietly capable and modest man that when I asked him how long he'd been Treasurer so that I could thank him properly in this Christmas message, he told me he didn't want any public thanks. Sorry, John – you're overruled.

We will be looking for a successor – applicants please form a queue outside the Secretary's office. Seriously, anybody interested in performing this valuable task for your Association, please contact Angie.

And so all that remains is for me to thank you for your support in the past year and to wish you all you wish yourself for the next New Year, preceded only by the happiest of Christmases.

Kevin O'Shaughnessy
President

.....

A Christmas Message from The Revd (Flt Lt) Matthew Buchan

Having just completed the month of remembrance we now start on our build up to Christmas and concentrate more on the importance of giving – both to each other and to those less fortunate than ourselves.

Christmas is of course a time for celebration - the birth of any baby is – but the birth of this baby even more so. In the birth of this child we find hope and inspiration and we find ourselves drawn out of ourselves into an event that is exciting and different, magical even.

Although for most of us Christmas is fun and relaxing (until of course the traditional family row!), it can also be a time when we feel losses keenly and loneliness can be a real problem for some, especially the bereaved and the relatives of those deployed on ops.

Although presents are important at this time of year, perhaps the best gift we can give someone who is alone is to include them in our celebrations?

With best wishes for a happy and holy Christmas.

The Revd (Flt Lt) Matthew Buchan



A Message from the Editor.....

This is just a short note to put on record, sincere thanks to our Association Committee members families.



We all of us put in a lot of time to attend to Association matters and more often than not, as was the case when we were all serving, it is at the expense of time with our families. I dare say when each of us "retired", our loved ones were relieved & thought that they might see more of us (maybe some were not!), but either way when we're working for the Association, whilst we're off doing what we love, it is mostly apart from our families.

It's too big a list to name them all, but special thanks to Jacqui O'Shaughnessy, Veronica Ahearn, Julie Cameron, Nancy Wilding & everyone who knows Angie mega-multi tasker Luddington. Thank you all for your support, patience & understanding.

Blazer Badges

A reminder for those wishing to purchase blazer badges. Our Squadron crests are £19 each plus £1.50 p & p.

As 600 Sqn are unique and have 2 badges to choose from, I suggest you use their wording (shown below with the 2 crests) in order to find on the web site or to order over the phone.



600 Sqn blazer badge



600 Squadron blazer badge



601 Sqn RAF blazer KC badge



601 Sqn blazer QC badge



604 Sqn blazer badge

Please order direct from

Robin Finnegan Jeweller and Military Badges, 27 Post House Wynd, Darlington, County Durham
DL3 7LP England
Tel. +44 (0) 1325 489820

Email diamondmerchants@btopenworld.com

Website WWW.Militarybadges.co.uk

Association Diary dates 2012

Association AGM – date and venue to be confirmed



13 May 2012 – 600 Sqn Annual Act of Homage Service at St Bartholomew the Great.

Old Comrades Association Parade, London. TBA

BofB Memorial Day – Capel le Ferne TBA

BofB Annual service, Westminster Abbey, London TBA

09 Nov 2012 - Dutch service of Remembrance, Mill Hill, London

10 Nov 2012 - Lords Mayors Show, London

11 Nov 2012 - Remembrance Day, St Paul's Cathedral, London

.....



TRIVIA –

1. What was the amount of soldiers lost in the allied campaign?
2. What was the amount of soldiers lost in the soviet campaign?
3. Why was the the soviet death toll so high?
4. What was the battle of Britain?
5. Why were the Germans low on ammo at D-Day
6. Who was Mussolini?
7. What was a Panzer?
8. What was the first nuclear bomb called (the bomb not the plane that carried it)

1. Total deaths range from 50-70 million
2. About 26.3 million
3. Lack of basic equipment, poorly trained soldiers and a lot were used as canon fodder.
4. Between 10th July and 31st October 1940 Hitler wanted to have air superiority over the RAF. It was the first military campaign to be fought mainly by aircraft. We won and thanks to that Hitler was unable to launch Operation Sea Lion.
5. I don't know i guess because they were stretched. The USSR had opened another front so the Nazis had to fight at both the West and the East and supplies were stretched.
6. Mussolini is a dictator who was in charge of Italy between 1922 and 1943. His death (in 1943) also meant that Italy left the axis powers.
7. A Panzer is a German tank and is a name not specific to any model.
8. Little Boy was the first nuclear bomb to be used against an enemy. Others were developed and fired for testing.



Copyright C M B Barrass 2001- 2008

Reunions & request's for information?



Please do let me know of any anything in the way of reunions etc. and lost/found friends that you would like included here.

AC Stuart Edwards would like to write an article on Peter Stewart who took over from Stan Collett. We have a fairly detailed chronology that he wrote himself. Peter formed the Association, ran it for many years and was hanging around at 600 as a dispossessed Wing Commander well in to the 1950s. If any of our older members have any memories or stories please do pass onto me.

.....

A letter from Colin Bowen, Son of the late Sidney Earnest Bowen, a past Secretary of the Association.

Dear Andy

I am very much enjoying reading the amazing newsletters that i have picked up from Irene. It is very sad that my step mother has got dementure and is now unable to enjoy her life.

She used to accompany Dad on all his many activities for the squadron and they enjoyed them together. I have got some old VHS Tapes of squadron Dinners and Parades which are very poignant to watch.

I was wondering if maybe I might put an appeal out in a future newsletter for any one reading who might remember my father? I do have a few names but alas no contact details?

I did once many years ago meet The Wing Co Mikey Mount and I think I might have met John Wilding at a Squadron dinner at the RAF club many years ago.

My father's best friend was a Bill Addison who in fact attended my Father's funeral but I believe he too was in failing health at the time?

Yours sincerely
Colin Bowen

Colin can be contacted via email; bowencolin@btopenworld.com

.....

Donations

Membership fees and donations are the financial lifeblood of our Association and so it is with great thanks the Association acknowledges the very kind donations from:

Sqn Ldr (retired) B. Blanche	£50.00
Eddie Duke-Low (RAFA City & Central London Branch	£10.00

Michael Angelo Zollo

Does anyone have any recollection of Michael Angelo ZOLLO, 1321643, Flight Sergeant, Royal Air Force (V.R.), 600 Squadron, died 24th May 1944 (picture below)?



We have received a letter from Edward John ('Jack') Brockhurst.....

Jack is interested in tracing comrades of 601 Squadron who served with him in 1939-45. He will be 97 years old on VEDay 2012 and would dearly love to know if he is the eldest remaining member. If anyone served with him and would like to contact him, his address is;

23 Gorselands Court
Glenmoor Road
Ferndown
Dorset
BH22 8QF.

.....





Service of Remembrance St David's Ex-Servicemen Nursing Home, Ealing - 11 Nov 2011



A short service of remembrance was held in the grounds of St David's Nursing Home, Ealing on the morning of Friday 11 November. The service was attended by veterans & residents, as well as Sgt Bole of 600 Squadron. A big thank you to Sgt Bole for his contribution and for the Squadron for allowing his participation. A small number of Association Standards were paraded including Andy Cameron with the Association Standard and we were joined by an RAF Central Band Bugler along and 30 or so residents.

Based in a former Royal residence in the leafy suburb of Ealing, St. David's home was first established in 1918 by Lady Anne Kerr, daughter of the 14th Duke of Norfolk. The Home is spacious, with pleasant grounds; it has its own chapel and provides a secure and relaxed environment.

The St. David's Home for Disabled Ex-servicemen and women is a registered charity (Registered Charity Number 220151) providing care for the elderly and rehabilitation of the physically disabled. Whilst priority is given to ex-service personnel and their dependants, St. David's is willing to care for the needs of those with disabilities, based on a needs/health assessment carried out by qualified medical staff.

Detailed information about the rich and interesting history of St. David's can be found at;

www.stdavidshomealing.com



Dutch Remembrance service - Mill Hill – Friday 11 Nov 2011

The annual service of remembrance for the Dutch Bond van Wapenbroeders took place at Mill Hill Cemetery. The Dutch party of 20 joined by members of 600 Squadron and the Squadron Association for a short service of remembrance in the chapel, before marching to the Dutch memorial where wreaths were laid. Many thanks to John Eddisford (RAFA Standard Bearer) for supporting Andy Cameron with the Assn Standard.

Netherlands Field of Honour - After World War II this small plot of land (approx. ½ acre) in the north of the cemetery was given by the Borough of Paddington to the Netherlands War Graves Commission to form the Dutch National War Memorial in Great Britain. It contains the graves of 254 Dutch naval servicemen and women killed during World War II. There are also 180 other names commemorated on the larger memorial stones. The central memorial consists of a bronze figure of a dying man by Von Kralingen. The plot was opened on 12th May 1965 by H. H. Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands in the presence of H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester. In April 1972 Queen Juliana visited the site.





www.westminster.gov.uk/services/communityandliving/burials/millhill

Lord Mayor's Show – Saturday 12 November 2011

Today Saturday 12th November 2011 one of the biggest ever Lord Mayor's Show took place in the City of London. The streets were crowded with spectators who were entertained by sultry samba dancers, Servicemen and cadet forces from all services, in total there was over 6000 participants, 200 Vehicles, 21 carriages, 71 floats 150 horses (91 which were military) and 20 marching bands.

As per previous years, 600 Squadron members participated as well as a number of 600 Squadron Association members lead by the Association Standard.



© John J. Wynne





© John J. Wynne



© John J. Wynne





© John J. Wynne



© John J. Wynne





Alderman David Wootton began serving as the 68th Lord Mayor of London on Friday

www.lordmayorsshow.org

.....

A message from our Secretary, Angie Luddington.

Dear all,

I spoke to several of our older members last year who had fallen. Unfortunately it is a fact of life for many but as well as causing injury, falls can lead to a loss of confidence and reduce a persons quality of life. I work alongside a 'Falls Team' who showed me the enclosed booklet which I felt I should share with you. If you don't feel it could benefit you, maybe it could benefit a relative?

Angie

.....



A Prayer For Remembrance Day



God of peace and love, on this 11th day of the 11th month we once again gather to remember. We remember that in Jesus of Nazareth you have called us to be people of peace saying, "Blessed are the peacemakers" and reminding us that we are to love our neighbour and our enemy as we love ourselves.

But we also acknowledge that there are times when we as a global community fail to live out those words, times when young men and women hear the call to don the uniforms of their country and serve under their flag.

Today we give thanks for all who have chosen to serve their country. We give thanks for their bravery, their commitment, and their love.

But we know that when soldiers meet on the field there are always some who don't come home. And so we pause in the memory of those who went but did not return....

Amen

.....





Remembrance Day - St Paul's Cathedral – London - Sunday 13 Dec 2011

The annual Remembrance Day service was held at St Paul's Cathedral in the presence of His Royal Highness, Prince Michael of Kent. During the service, the Association Standard was carried to, and laid upon the high altar. There followed a short march to the Royal Exchange where wreaths were laid by many service leaders and representatives including, Wing Commander Ahearn. Afterwards, lunch at The Mansion House with HRH Prince Michael of Kent & the new Lord Mayor.



*(L-R Sqn Ldr K. O'Shaughnessy, Andy Cameron. Wg Cdr A. Ahearn)
St Pauls Cathedral.*



Band of the HAC





The War Memorial in front of the Royal Exchange



HRH Prince Michael of Kent speaking with Andy & Julie Cameron at the Mansion House.





The Rt. Hon Lord Mayor with Andy & Julie Cameron



Ian White (604 Sqn)





The Mansion House



Sean & Veronica Ahearn





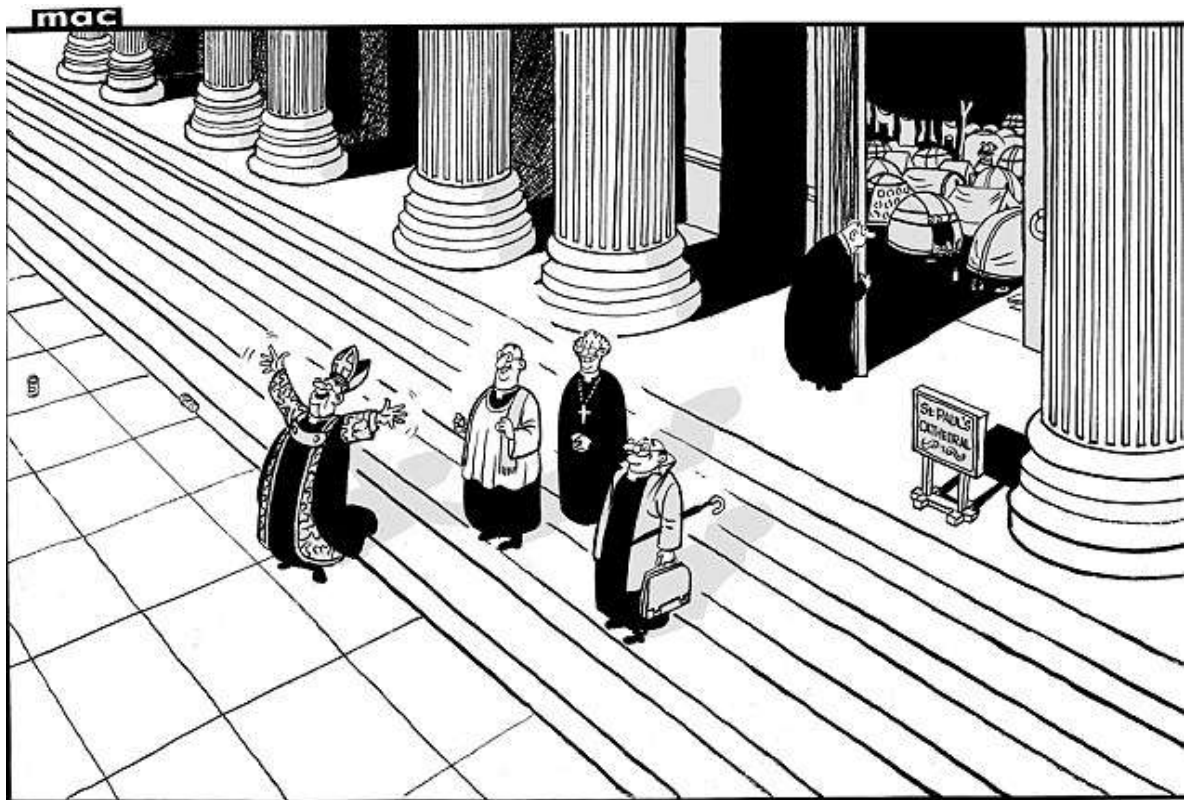
The Mansion House



Our wonderful photographers, Al & Eileen Hanley-Brown (604 Sqn)

Sincere thanks to all who joined us on the day, especially to Al & Eileen Hanley-Brown (604 Squadron) for all of these superb images. (Rights reserved).





'Look, look! Our prayers have been answered. Overnight they've all gone!'



© Metro Newspaper



Battle of Britain Squadron



"More than six hundred"

**No: 600 (City of London) Squadron
Royal Auxiliary Air Force**

A. G. Burdekin
600

Flight Lieutenant A. G. Burdekin AE, JP

This Special Edition has been personally signed by a veteran who served with
No: 600 Squadron during the Battle of Britain, flying in the Bristol Blenheim



SPVA – An Overview

The Service Personnel & Veterans Agency (SPVA) provides pay, pension and support services to both Military Personnel and the Veterans Community, directly serving around 900,000 personnel. SPVA is currently situated over four main sites from Glasgow in the north to Gosport on the south coast. It is a tri-Service organisation and works with HP as its commercial partner. The diverse nature of SPVA's remit is outlined below.

JPA. The Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system was fully rolled-out to the Services in March 2007. JPA is a modern personnel administrative process, based on harmonised policy and regulations. It has been delivered using a commercial software package and is accessible to all service personnel via Defence Information Infrastructure (DII). Individuals have access and responsibility for the upkeep of their own information and can make expenses and allowance claims on-line, via the self service facility. JPA has enabled the Services to streamline their administrative posts and as a result, some £100m per year of savings have been generated now the system is in steady state.

AFCS The Armed Forces Compensation provides compensation, irrespective of fault, across the full range of circumstances in which illness, injury or death may arise as a result of Service. The Scheme covers all Regular and Reserve personnel whose injury, ill health or death is predominantly caused by Service on or after 6 April 2005. Compensation can be claimed personnel who are still serving. Tax free lump sum awards, up to £570,000, for injury can be paid in Service, with an additional Guaranteed Income Payment available for the most seriously injured on leaving the Armed Forces.

Pensions The Agency is responsible for the assessment, award, payment and maintenance of all pensions relating to Service in the Armed Forces. This includes the Armed Forces Pension Schemes, Reserve Forces Pension Scheme and, for those disabled or bereaved through Service, War disablement pensions, related allowances and other payments to Veterans.

JCCC The Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) provides a 24/7 service to members of the Armed Forces and has built up an enviable reputation for service excellence. Handling over **96,000** telephone calls a year, it co-ordinates all work relating to current military fatalities, injuries and compassionate cases, including family liaison and repatriation. JCCC also co-ordinates investigations following the discovery of human remains of personnel from primarily the First and Second World Wars.

Storage of Wills The MOD provides a package of personnel support services to the Armed Forces, including one to one assistance on deceased estates matters for the families of those killed in Service and the safe storage of wills. This facility is optional but is available to over 300,000 regular and reserve personnel with the ability to change or replace wills at any time. We fully understand the importance of this service and we strive for total accuracy.

Medals The MOD Medal Office is responsible for the assessment, engraving and awarding of circa 70,000 current campaign and historic medals a year to past and present members of the Armed Forces. Medals relating to Service dating back as far as World War II can still be claimed. Around 200 such applications per week are received.

Veterans Badges

In addition, the Agency continues to administer the distribution of the extremely popular HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge, with over 750,000 distributed to date.

<http://www.veterans-uk.info/index.htm>



Honouring my Great Uncle: 600 Sqn Beaufighter model by Dave Zollo

Now that the surprise is (finally) out of the bag, I can post my build honouring my Great Uncle. Michael Angelo Zollo was shot down in his Beaufighter by friendly fire on the 24th May 1944, his first name in our family can be traced back over two hundred years but the line was broken here.

My father being born after the war was the next male in the family so the name was passed to him. There is a Beaufighter kit in his study which has waited to be built for years, I asked to build it a couple years ago but he wanted to do it, so I thought I would get another kit and go for it. I bought a 1/48 Tamiya Beaufighter Mk.VI, gave it to him on Father's day, then stole it. With my parents being away over the summer I started work and research.

Have a look at the pictures below and see the full story on Dave's research and the models construction the internet at:

<http://www.rctankregiment.com/rctankforum/viewtopic.php?f=88&t=2321>









These images are reproduced by kind permission of Dave Zollo. Dave is open to commission any model in any size if there is ever something anyone would like. He mainly works in 1/16 and 1/18 which is the easiest size for him but says he will have a go at anything.

Please contact Andy Cameron for contact details for Dave.



.....
Who are these men who march so proud,
Who quietly weep, eyes closed, head bowed?
These are the men who once were boys,
Who missed out on youth and all its joys.

Who are these men with aged faces,
Who silently count the empty spaces?
These are the men who gave their all,
Who fought for their country for freedom for all.

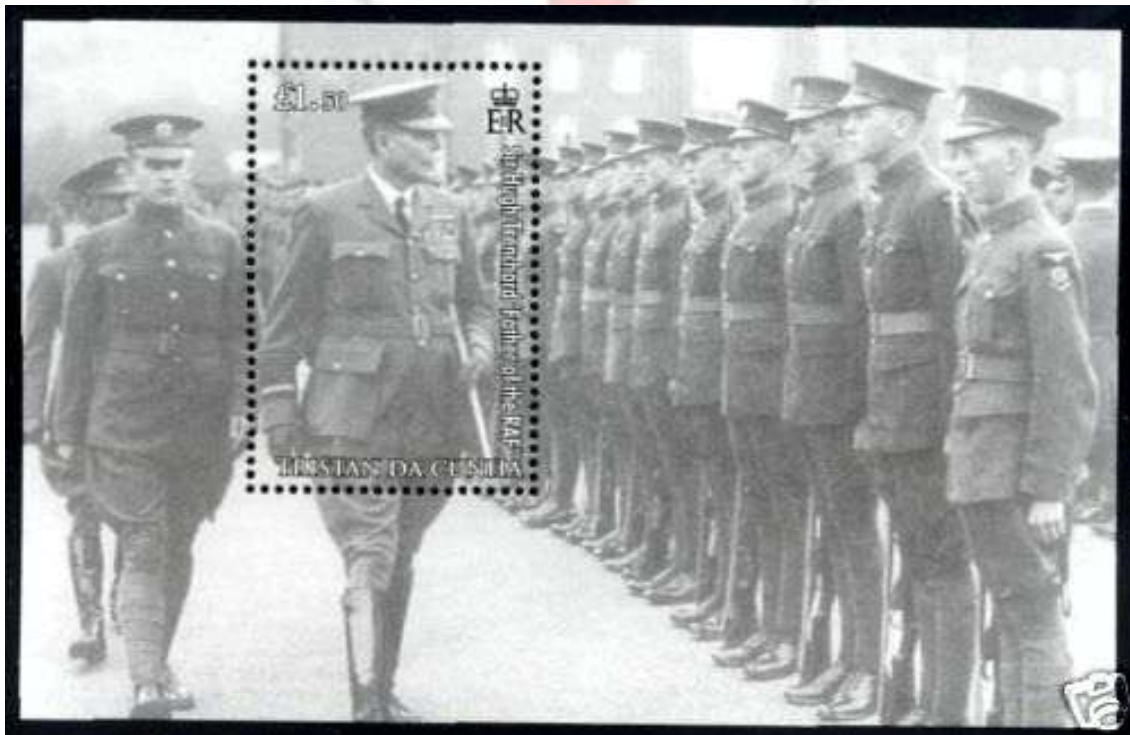
Who are these men with sorrowful look
Who can still remember the lives that were took?
These are the men who saw young men die,
The price of peace is always high.

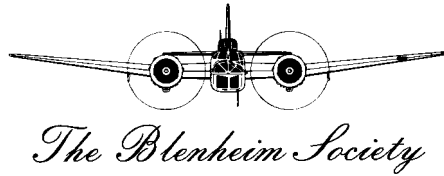
Who are these men who in the midst of pain,
Whispered comfort to those they would not see again?
These are the men whose hands held tomorrow,
Who brought back our future with blood tears and sorrow.

Who are these men who promise to keep
Alive in their hearts the ones God holds asleep?
These are the men to whom I promise again:
'Veterans', my friends-I will remember them !.

(Written by: an 'unknown'-12 year old girl-1966.)

.....





Blenheim progress – From the Engineering Side

We now have the aircraft on its wheels and it looks very good, its one of those visual progress times that everyone needs from time to time to give that fillip and make you feel that progress is being made, though of course we do know that it is.

Both elevators have now been fabricked and along with the rudder, which is having its paint rubbed back, are ready for painting. All of the control cables are now laid in and only the trim cables now need to be connected.

Whilst that's been going on the hydraulic pipes are continuing to be connected in the cockpit area and the throttle mixture and throttle tourque tubes are ready for painting prior to fitting.



A new pilot mast has been manufactured and will soon be fitted and Colin made a good find on eBay and got us a brand new Venturi for the vacuum system.

Other works on the bomb doors and inner cowling continue as well as other structural fittings around the engine frames and Tom, who is being trained up on the Mercury's, is making good progress on his first strip down and has brought up all the prepared spares to the hangar for further inspection prior to use.

With the aircraft now sitting on its wheels it is intended to take it up temporarily to the ARC hanger for inspection and to plan out the engineering requirements over the next months. All in all a productive time.

Smudge Oct 2011

Some good news – the Blenheim should return to the skies in 2012 – all being well! – thanks to the dedicated and highly-skilled workmanship of Smudge and Colin and their new young apprentice Connor, helped by three Committee members. All under the expert overall supervision of John Romain, who will of course make sure that the stringent airworthiness requirements of the CAA are met, and that everything is done correctly as he will fly her. We as the Blenheim Society have helped considerably over the years to make this possible. And still do so, by making major financial contributions. When flying, she will once again become the focal point of our Society and attract



widespread coverage in the national and aviation press which renew interest in the Society and enable us to continue to grow and prosper.

Blank cards for Christmas, birthdays etc?



The Blenheim Society, by kind permission of Artist Tim O'Brian have produced some blank cards of the above painting "Final Destination Waalhaven". The original painting was presented to 600 Sqn by Sqn Ldr Kevin O'Shaughnessy QVRM AE on his retirement in 2003. The central Blenheim, BQ-O, was flown by Norman Hayes and was the only aircraft to return.

The cards are sold in packs of 5 (with envelopes) at £5 +p&p (p&p will be 60p for one pack, 90p for two packs). The insides are plain – there is no Christmas message printed therein, so they can be used not just as Christmas cards but also as Birthday cards, thank you cards etc etc

To order, please contact Ron Scott on 01992 442608 or my email r.j.scott@ntlworld.com

All profits go to the Blenheim Society.

.....



The usual balance.....



DAP Mark 21 Beaufighter A8 – 328 (on display)

The Bristol Beaufighter was designed and built in England as a development of the Beaufort bomber, and initially saw service as a night fighter. English built aircraft were delivered to the RAAF for service in the Pacific with No. 22, 30, 31 and 93 Squadrons operating the type.

In Australia the Department of Aircraft Production was in the process of producing the Beaufort bomber and in 1944 began the manufacture of the Beaufighter as a follow on project. Design changes included revised armament and a dihedral tailplane, and between September 1944 and 1946, 365 Australian Beaufighter Mk 21's were built.

Powerfully armed, fast at low level and very quiet in flight, the Beaufighter earned a grim nickname from the Japanese, who called it "Whispering Death".

Symbolically, our aircraft was built on the day the Pacific War ended, and saw extensive post war use as a target tug. It was retired in 1956 and given to the Lord Mayor's Children's camp at Portsea. In 1962 it became the first aircraft donated to the museum.

The aircraft in our collection is dedicated as a memorial to No 31 Squadron. It is one of only 6 complete examples surviving worldwide, and one of only two complete Australian made examples.

Engines: 2x 18 Cylinder radial 1,725HP Bristol Hercules
Length: 41 feet 8 inches (12.70m)
Span: 57 feet 10 inches (17.63m)
Height: 15 feet 10 inches (4.82m)
Weight: 15,500 pounds (empty) (7,076 kg)
Speed: 249 mph (cruise) (400kph)







<http://www.aarg.com.au/beaufighter.htm>



(A Beaufighter in 600 Sqn Markings - Copyright C M B Barrass 2001- 2008)



This is a wonderful letter I received along with the picture shown here of a piece of artwork. It was sent by Paul Clucas, the Son of the late Leonard Clucas. Thank you Paul!

Ok Andy, strap yourself in for an occasionally bumpy ride, culminating in an exciting landing!

I have pulled together some loose threads and knitted them into a possible scenario for the cartoon. Try and keep up. The dates at the top correlate with the number of candles on each of the cakes; 46 and 20, so perhaps a double birthday celebration, maybe even father and son, the ages could be right? The youngster has the various stages of his 20 years listed down the sleeve, discovering all sorts of new things along the way, as do we all! (Dad's signature is at 19, across the gun, appropriate for an armourer)

Not sure of the relevance (perhaps the connection is the number 20 itself) of the book 'FROM LOG CABIN TO WHITE HOUSE', although it is actually a real book by William Thayer, telling the story of James Garfield, who was the 20th President of the US of A. Perhaps a favourite book of one of the birthday boys, or an inspirational tome to show what can be achieved from humble beginnings. Also not sure of the relevance of the book at the bottom 'DO AS I SAY NOT AS I DO', (which is also a real book but not published until 2005, so it must rather be the phrase that has some meaning) unless it is a bit tongue-in-cheek and lends further weight to the father-son relationship, or it could just be that the figure at the bottom holds officer rank as denoted by the shoulder pips? (incidentally, zoom in and look closely at the beer-engine handles in the saloon bar picture in the centre of the cartoon – is it my furtive imagination or is there a bit of schoolboy graffiti going on there?)

The poem alongside is of course a paraphrase or pastiche, I'm not sure which term might be appropriate, based on lines from different verses of 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, and I suspect shows that it has always struck a chord with those in The RAAF 600. I am surprised that 'grape fruits' are mentioned in the verse, as I would have thought they would not have been common in England at that time? Perhaps there is some other connotation, maybe relevant to the pub.

One of the signatures above is Clark, presumably the 'Nobby' mentioned in the verse? No idea who Doris might be, perhaps the barmaid in the pub, or another lass smitten with the aforementioned Nobby. On the subject of the signatures, when I asked Mum to think of some names from that time, so I could see if they were on the cartoon, she thought she remembered the surname Walters as being someone that Dad had spoken of as being in 600, but as there are both a D Walter and a B Walter signature, perhaps it was the plural that she was thinking of – the Walters, brothers maybe. Some of the signatures are difficult to decipher, but she did not recognise any of those that I managed to read out to her.

I had a punt round the interweb looking for a Jolly Farmer near to Finsbury Barracks, as I thought it might be the local to where 600 used to parade, but there were no hits. Another line of thought was that one of Dad's fellow 600 erks was George Farmer, with whom he kept in contact for many years, so I thought this might be a connection, him being The Jolly Farmer.

I re-read a letter of Dad's about his experiences whilst with the BEF, as I seemed to remember that he went round about May 1940, so this birthday celebration would have been only a few weeks before he shipped (actually flew) out with a few others from 600. I found references in his pencil drafts to Northolt, so I looked for The Jolly Farmer in that area, again with no hits. In his letter, he says about one incident in France when his convoy was strafed, and losing several people as a result, but does not say if they were 600 personnel. Perhaps you have access to info on that?

Also in the draft was mention of twice-weekly parades at Finsbury Barracks. Mum had mentioned that Dad had been, as she put it, 'called up for 2 weeks in 1938' and had afterwards arrived back home with George Farmer, and a Norman Childs. Mum also remembers another pals name, Chas Waterman.





It would seem these three were regular pals. I don't know how things worked in the RAAF, but when I was in the ATC (as it was then), we paraded once or twice a week, and worked towards our necessary tickets so we could attend summer camp, in my case at RAF Lyndholme, in a section of the airfield next to what was then a V-bomber base, and watched them doing circuits and bumps, as well as getting the chance to be a pilot for a few minutes – only a Chipmunk, but hey, it still counts.

The wheels started whirring and I remembered Dad mentioning that he had spent some time at RAF Manston during the war, and I thought that perhaps that was also where he had been for his 'call-up' in '38, and possibly for his armourer training.

Then I had a brain-wave - STAND BY YOUR BEDS!

I had a further punt on the interweb and y'know what, there is a Jolly Farmer pub in the High Street in Manston. On its website it says that it has been there since the C17th, and more recently was popular with WW2 pilots. It would seem that it was also popular with the groundcrew.



RESULT!

Obviously the mystery is not totally solved as to the occasion and the people who were there, but at least it would seem that we now know where 'there' is.

I have attached a good resolution image of the cartoon which I am sure you will agree is if nothing else a fantastic piece of freehand draughtsmanship. There is just so much going on. Hopefully there might still be a few of Dad's contemporaries around, or maybe their children, who can shed some light, maybe recognising signatures, so please by all means include it in the Newsletter if you wish, along with any of the ramblings that you may feel would be pertinent.

The original is drawn directly onto a 12" x 10" piece of card, which I assume used to be white but has yellowed over the years.

It is now safe to undo your harness.

Paul Clucas



An amazing experience; a great reward. A great debt; a little interest repaid. By Hans Onderwater

It must have been late October 1977. One of my trips in the region south of Barendrecht took me to the town of Spijkenisse, south-west of Rotterdam, along the Oude Maas River. And as often, I parked my car near the old town cemetery. Two green metal shields indicated that soldiers had been buried there. Curious I walked along the old graves until I saw the typical form of a Dutch and two Commonwealth War Graves. The Dutch head stone mentioned the name of a Netherlands army soldier, killed by the Germans during the invasion of May 1940. On his right were the head stones of the CWGC and to my horror they said: 'Unknown'. They too had lost their lives on 10 May 1940, the first day of the German attack. Two unknown men, who died in a foreign country, only 12 hours after that country's rape, which ended in five years of occupation and horror. On one grave there was one extra piece of information. It indicated that it was the last resting place of a Leading Aircraftman. I believe no man or woman who lays down his or her life for someone else should remain unknown after death. So, without realising that it would take me a long time, I decided these two deserved their names on their graves, so that they would become people like me. They also deserved their family to visit them if it were possible to find them. This was how it all began.



The graves of two Unknown Airmen next to Private Diederik who was killed on 12 May 1940 at Spijkenisse.

Once I was home I began to track all the RAF losses for May 10th 1940. The research now at hand was to take almost a year before I gathered all the information necessary to reconstruct what happened on that fateful 10 May 1940. One of the RAF Squadrons detailed to support the Dutch who were still neutral 24 hours earlier, was a Squadron of 'weekend airmen': No.600 'City of London' Squadron, a unit consisting of bankers, lawyers, solicitors and clerks from the City, all civilians, but people with a heart for aviation and willing to stand their ground if called upon to fight. Soon it turned out that No.600 Squadron had been detailed to attack German transport aircraft that had landed at Waalhaven with airborne troops. These troops were now reinforcing the paratroopers that had landed earlier and who were hard pressed by the Dutch after they had overcome their first surprise and shock.

Going through the town archives of Rotterdam, Spijkenisse, and a few other sources such as the Air Raid Warning Service I found that British aircraft had attacked the Junkers Ju52 trimotors which had landed, soon to be bounced by an overwhelming force of Messerschmitt Bf110 fighter that were patrolling over their own transports. After further research at the National Archives (then called the Public Record Office) a flight of six Blenheim aircraft had taken off from RAF Manston with orders to cause as much havoc as possible, supported by Spitfires, which were said to be waiting for them over the North Sea. Alas, the much needed Spitfires never showed up. The officer leading the Flight was the Commanding Officer Squadron Leader Michael Wells, son and heir to be of the Charles Wells Family Brewery. The Operations Record Book of the Squadron showed in all its horror what had happened to Jimmy Wells and his crews: five of the six aircraft had been shot down and only one succeeded in limping home to Manston that day. As could be expected the old Blenheim Mk1s were no match for the Germans. Squadron Leader Wells and his air gunner Corporal Basil Kidd in Blenheim L6616, BQ-R died when they crashed on a bakery at Pernis, less than a mile from Waalhaven aerodrome. Sergeant Davis, a regular NCO who flew with Wells as a navigator, saved his life by parachute. Flying Officer Moore and his air gunner Corporal Laurie Isaacs died when L1335 BQ-W crashed at the edge of the field. Pilot Officer Dick Haine and his air gunner Pilot



Officer Michael Kramer were badly shot up by the Bf110s, but managed to force land L1514, BQ-N south of the island of Goeree Overflakkee. Flight Lieutenant Hugh Rowe and air gunner Pilot officer Bob Echlin RCAF crashed in flames near Piershil, some 10 miles southwest of the airfield. Echlin died, and a badly burned Rowe was rescued from burning L1401, BQ-K. The soldiers took him to a hospital where he was captured by the Germans five days later and, after recovering from his burns, spent the rest of the war at Stalag Luft III Sagan. As it turned out one aircraft crashed against the river dike at Hoogvliet. That same day Dutch troops removed the bodies from the wreckage and buried both unknown airmen at Spijkenisse cemetery. They later were identified as Pilot Officer Mike Anderson and air gunner Leading Aircraftman Bert Hawkins in L1515, BQ-L.



Left to right: Pilot Officer Michael Anderson, Leading Aircraftman Herbert Hawkins and the book that started it all.

Later that day a lone Blenheim returned at Manston after struggling across the North Sea. It was L1517, BQ-O with Pilot Officer Norman Hayes and his air gunner Corporal John Holmes. After he landed the aircraft which was declared a write-off later, all asked when the others were to return. 'I fear no-one will return', replied Norman Hayes and he told about the carnage which had taken place in the sky over Rotterdam.

He did not know that the three airmen who had reached to ground. Pilot Officers Haine and Kramer, and Sergeant Davis, had been helped by the Dutch to get to the Hook of Holland from where they returned to England on HMS Hereward, the same vessel that took HM Queen Wilhelmina to England. Seven men remained in Holland as casualties, buried in foreign ground, one stayed behind badly burned. It had been a dreadful day for the Squadron....

It took me four years to find sufficient evidence for the CWGC to take steps to attempt an identification of the two unknown airmen buried at Spijkenisse. For obvious reasons they were reluctant to re-open a grave and disturb the remains. Furthermore various national and international steps had to be taken to ensure a respectful procedure. It involved the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, experts from the BAOR (British Army, Germany), the Identification and Recovery Unit of the RNLAf, the local police and the manager of the local cemetery. As no next of kin were known it was difficult to obtain personal information of the deceased.

My aim was relatively simple: I had to find out which British aircraft crashed on 10 May 1940 within a circle of 40 kilometres from Waalhaven aerodrome. Interestingly enough on that date twelve Blenheims were lost: five of No.600 Squadron, one of No.604 Squadron (all Mk1Fs) and six Blenheims Mk.IV: one of No.18 Squadron, four of No.40 Squadron and one of No.57 Squadron. As the five Mk.1Fs had all crashed at about the same time (between 1350 and 1410 Dutch time), it was clear that the unknown airmen had to be men of 600 Squadron.





With pride the Association marched through Spijkenisse. The photo on the right became the 1981 photo of the year.



Now the head stones told the names of the men who rested there. For Ann Bennett and her second husband Peter it was a great comfort to know the last resting place of the man she had been married to for less than two weeks.

The next move was to research the municipal reports, local papers and Dutch military reports in which eyewitnesses gave details about these crashes. I mentioned the results earlier in this article. Then, simply, it was clear that the unknown Leading Aircraftman had to be a crewmember of the man buried on his right. The army units report stated that his rank had been established as the body had a single propeller on the sleeve of his uniform jacket. For me the two unknown airmen were P/O Mike Anderson and LAC Bert Hawkins. Convinced that the identification was possible I pulled each string I found available. I must add if it had not been for Mayor De Groen of Spijkenisse and the British Air Attaché in The Hague, it probably would have been a polite, yet definite NO.

Then everything happened very quickly: The cemetery was sealed off and off limits for the general public, in great secrecy the graves were opened and the teeth were inspected. Less than two hours later the conclusion was: these were the remains of Anderson and Hawkins. I was asked not to say a word to the press until the next of kin had been informed. After three months it turned out that there was no one to be found. With the help of the chairman of the Squadron Association Ray Aveyard, who had served with No.600 Squadron when this tragedy happened, we found the widow of Anderson and a brother of Hawkins. Aveyard visited them personally to bring the news. After 41 years they got news about the last resting place of their loved ones.





With my love
 Ann Bennett
 Thank you for
 for all you have
 done for the peace
 of mind
 Ann Bennett



13th October 1981

Dear Mr Onderwater.

I write at the bidding of Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother to thank you for your letter of 7th October.

Queen Elizabeth asks me to tell you how delighted she would be to receive a copy of your book which has been dedicated to No. 600 City of London Squadron, and it would also give Her Majesty very great pleasure to receive from you an account of the visit of the Squadron Association to the graves of their comrades who gave their lives in the operation on 10th May 1940.

Yours sincerely,
 Martin Gilliat

Private Secretary to
 Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother

Mr. J.G. Onderwater.

Clockwise: No.600 Squadron Association marching; one of the many newspaper photographs. Sir Martin Gilliat, Private Secretary to Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother sent a very nice letter, while Ann Bennett, P/O Anderson's wife also wrote a very sweet note to me.



In 1944 HRH Prince Bernhard visited RAF Ford. One his left is his ADC Flt Lt Sipkes. On the right we see Sqn Ldr Norman Hayes, who had been one of the flight instructors of the Prince. In 1982 HRH invited Norman Hayes to come and spend the afternoon at Soestdijk Palace. Left to right Hans and Marjoan Onderwater, Norman and Mary Hayes, HRH Prince Bernhard and Mr. Sipkes.



Then everything went very quickly. A contingent of the Squadron Association came to the Netherlands in November 1981. They were received by the Mayors of Rotterdam, Spijkenisse and Piershil, the towns where their comrades had been buried in May 1940. There was great interest by the press and the identification found the national news. When it was found out that HRH Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, husband of the late Queen Juliana had been a student of the only pilot to fly home on 10 May, Norman Hayes DFC, both Norman and his wife Mary were invited to meet HRH at the Palace. A year later the whole association went to Soestdijk, led by the Association President Air Cdre Mickey Mount. My work was done. Two men had been given back



their names and pride, a bond had been forged that remains until today and, as I hope long into the future. Each 4th of May No.600 'City of London' Squadron comes to the Netherlands, stays at the Royal Marines barracks, visits the graves and receives a warm welcome among the people of Spijkenisse. I was honoured by the Association in making me an honorary member and allowing me to wear the 'Dust Cart Tie'. Her Majesty the Queen Mother kindly received me and told me how pleased she was that I had identified HER airmen.



Gentlemen in Blue; at the reforming ceremony at Northolt and being presented to Her Majesty at the Butchers Hall.

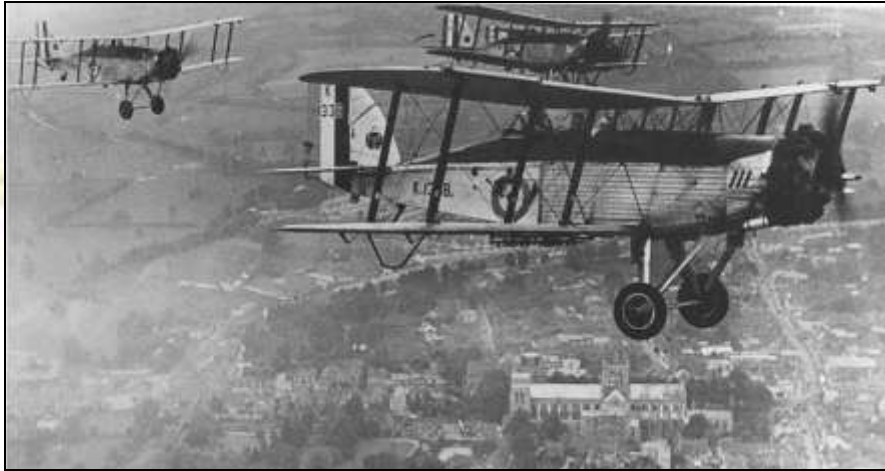
Now some 40 years year have passed since Michael Anderson and Bert Hawkins were identified and 31 years have passed since I got permission to wear the tie. I have been rewarded immensely by the Association and the Squadron. However, I find the greatest possible satisfaction not in these honours but in a simple click on the website of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as I did today while writing this article. It is a tremendous feeling to read:

ANDERSON MICHAEL HERBERT, M.H., United Kingdom, Pilot Officer, RAF AuxAF, 600 Squadron, Age 23, Death 10/05/1940, Service nr 90497, Mentioned in Despatches, Husband of Priscilla Ann Anderson (nee Troughton) of Kingston nr Lewes Sussex, Commonwealth War Dead, Grave 26, Spijkenisse General Cemetery. HAWKINS HERBERT CHARLES WILLIAM, H.C.W., United Kingdom, Leading Aircraftman, RAF AuxAF, 600 Squadron, Death 10/05/1940, Service nr 800567, Commonwealth War Dead, Grave 25, Spijkenisse General Cemetery. Spijkenisse is 20 kilometres south-west of Rotterdam and 35 kilometres west of Dordrecht. The cemetery is on the southern edge of the village and near the entrance are the graves of two airmen from the United Kingdom. Since the first visit of the Squadron Association the Squadron and the Association take part in the 4th of May War Dead Memorial ceremonies in the town. They participate in the church service, march through town with the Mayor and Councillors and hundreds of towns people. They lay a wreath at the town war monument which also bears the names of the two airmen from England and lay wreath at the graves. After I handed responsibility for the participation of the Squadron over to the people of WO2GO, the foundation that research the air war over their part of the world and honours the casualties with markers and information boards, the remembrance of two once unknown airmen has become that of two of the 600 Squadron 'townsmen'. Fortunately Anderson's widow lived to see her husband's grave and visited it several times. I am grateful to have played some part in this. It has been my attempt to repay my personal debt of honour to the GENTLEMEN IN BLUE..



Aircraft of the London Auxiliaries - No.2 Westland Wapiti IIA by Ian White

History



(RAF Museum via 604 Squadron Association)

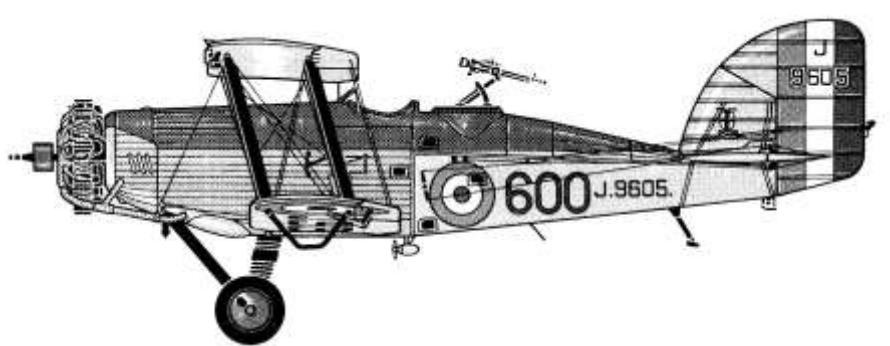
Westland Wapiti IIAs of No.604 Squadron, circa 1931 - 1934. The aircraft in the foreground is K1318 that was built as a part of the eighth production batch (K1316 - K1415) between 1930 and 1931.

Following the end of the First World War and the period of austerity that accompanied it, the RAF's role abroad was one of Empire policing, for which the non-specialist 'general purpose' aircraft held a great attraction for the service's senior officers and officials. Based on the assumption that Britain would not be called upon to fight a major war for some considerable time in the absence of a credible enemy, the Air Ministry's procurement and equipment arms survived on the large stocks of wartime aircraft - mainly D.H.9As and Bristol F.2B Fighters. However, by early 1926 it was becoming apparent to the Ministry that the D.H.9A, which was then operating in considerable numbers in the Middle East and India, was in need of replacement. To this end the Ministry issued Specification 26/27 that called for a two-seat, general purpose aircraft capable of fulfilling the bomber, reconnaissance and Army Co-operation roles 'with equal facility'. Further, with the large stocks of D.H.9A components and spares available in RAF depots and maintenance units, the Ministry stipulated that as many as possible of these parts be incorporated into the new aircraft. The specification also indicated the need for an all-metal fuselage and the fitting of a Napier Lion in-line engine, quantities of which were again available in large numbers. Whilst the latter were not compulsory, the performance and load carrying capabilities of the 26/27 aircraft were to be superior to that of the D.H.9A.

With aircraft orders then being in short supply, seven companies - Armstrong Whitworth, Bristol, de Havilland, Fairey, Gloster, Vickers and Westland - submitted proposals, of which only two offered the Lion engine. In its position as a wartime developer and supplier of D.H.9A aircraft, the Yeovil-based Westland Aircraft Works Ltd and its chief designer, Mr Arthur Davenport, proposed a single-engined biplane that incorporated '9A wings and tailplane and mated these to a wider and deeper fuselage that raised the position of the pilot and observer/gunner and placed them behind the upper wing centre section. In this position and with an increased wing stagger (compared to the D.H.9A) the pilot and observer/gunner were provided with 'an excellent all-round view'. The fuselage was built in three parts, with the forward section comprising the engine mount and the first bay, the centre section the pilot's and observer's cockpits and a rear section aft the cockpit to the sternpost. The engine plate, to which the mounting was fitted, was carried by six square-section steel tubes that were themselves incorporated into the forward section built from steel and duralumin to form a very strong box girder structure. The form of the centre and rear structures were built up from D.H.9A-like components, that included the four longerons, which were shaped by metal and/or wooden formers to give the fuselage its profile. By these means the engine thrust line and the position of the crew were raised with respect to the D.H.9A. Power was provided by an uncowled



420-hp, 9-cylinder, Bristol Jupiter VI radial engine driving a 12 feet 6-inches (3.81 metre) diameter, two-bladed wooden propeller, as the designers believed the Lion was reaching the end of its development life. A 15 gallon (68.19 litre) oil tank was located immediately aft the engine plate along with a cooler and was covered by removable aluminium panels. The upper portion of the centre section between the two cockpits was plywood covered and attached to the upper longerons, whilst the lower part was fabric covered. The rear fuselage was also fabric covered. The wooden fin assembly was attached to the fuselage longerons at the sternpost by a multi-plywood assembly, in which the base of the fin was in line with the top longeron. In the prototype, J8495, the tail unit was that of the '9A, but was later changed in profile and area.

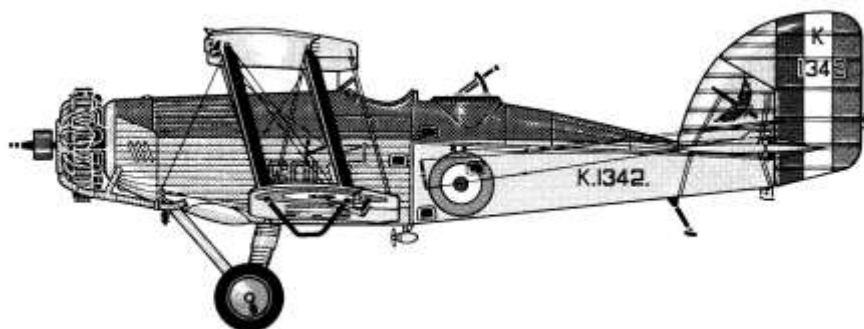


*(The late Mike Keep)
Westland Wapiti IIA J9605 of 'A' Flight, 600 Squadron circa 1929 - 1930.*

The two-bay wings were D.H.9A components, fabric covered and virtually unaltered from their original design except for a reduction in the upper centre section and lower wing root cut-outs to slightly increase the wing area. These were later replaced by all-metal wings in the Wapiti Mk.II which incorporated automatic Handley Page leading edge slats. Armament comprised the mandatory fixed forward-firing 0.303-inch (7.69mm) Vickers machine-gun on the port side and a 0.303-inch Lewis gun on a Scarf ring in the rear cockpit. Bombs up to a maximum of 580-lbs (263 kg) could be carried on racks under the wings and centre fuselage. A 40 gallon (182 litre) gravity fed fuel tank that was shaped to fit the top of the fuselage was located immediately behind the engine on the top longeron behind the oil tank. A cylindrical 68 gallon (309 litre) auxiliary fuel tank was carried on the lower longerons just forward of the pilot's cockpit, along with oxygen, a wireless telegraphy (W/T) set, photographic equipment, spares, tools, food, water and the crew's personal kit. A prone bomb-aiming window was located in the cockpit floor and fitted with a hinged window for the observer's use.

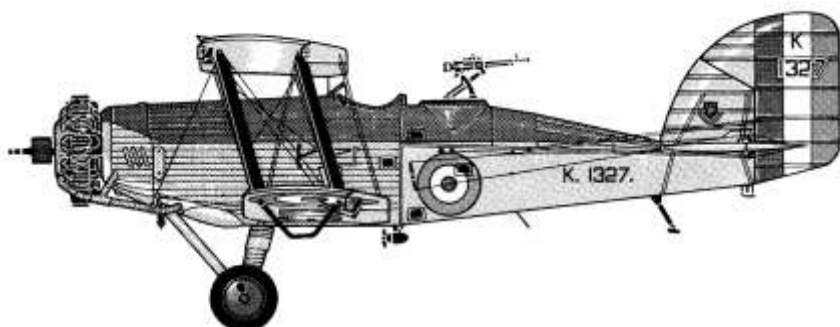
The prototype Westland 26/27, J8495, was completed in Westland's Yeovil factory during the first week of March 1927 and flown by Mr Laurence Openshaw on the 7th, during which he found the rudder to be 'almost completely ineffective'. Modifications were immediately set in hand by the company's Experimental Department under Mr Victor Gaunt, who increased its area until it was some 22 percent greater than that of the original D.H.9A component. This modification in addition to the installation of horn balances on the upper ailerons to reduce their 'undue heaviness', proved sufficient for the type's factory tests. Later that month J8495 was flown to the Aeroplane & Armament Experimental Establishment's (A&AEE) airfield at Martlesham Heath, Suffolk, for competitive trials against the Gloster Goral, Fairey Ferret Mk.III, de Havilland Hound, Vickers Valiant and Bristol Beaver, by which time it had been named 'Wapiti'. Following flying trials that lasted until June 1927 and an evaluation of its structure and maintainability by RAF engineers, the Wapiti was judged the winner and with a modified fin and rudder Westlands were awarded a production contract for twenty-five aircraft (J9078 - J9102) as the Wapiti Mk.I.





(the late Mike Keep)
Westland Wapiti IIA K1342 of 'C' Flight 601 Squadron.

With production of the Mk.I underway at Yeovil, Davenport's design team continued the development of the type with the object of producing an aircraft that met the original specification for an all-metal aeroplane. Designated Wapiti Mk.II, the new type featured the replacement of the mixed construction of the Mk.I with an all-metal fuselage designed by Westland and wings designed and built by the Steel Wing Company, a subsidiary of the Gloster Aircraft Company, with both having the profile of the Mk.I aircraft. A 550-hp geared Jupiter VIII¹ replaced the earlier Mk.VI and the definitive large 'D' rudder was also fitted. Ten Mk.II aircraft (J9237 - J9246) were built between 1928 and 1929 as a precursor to the mass production of a slightly modified version, the Mk.IIA. The prototype, J9247, was a Mk.II that was fitted with a control column in the rear cockpit (but no rudder bar) to provide the observer with a rudimentary form of control. The Mk.IIA retained the Jupiter VIII engine, but was also fitted with the similarly powered Mk.VIIIF. The first order for thirty-five aircraft (J9380 - J9414) was a precursor to a further eight production batches that would see 430 Wapiti IIAs delivered to the RAF between 1929 and 1932.



(the late Mike Keep)
Westland Wapiti IIA K1327 of 'A' Flight 604 Squadron .

The first squadron to receive the Wapiti IIA was No.60 at Kohat, India, during March 1930, followed by No.27, also at Kohat, in April. A total of ten regular RAF squadrons (Nos.5, 11, 27, 28, 30, 31, 39, 55, 60 & 84) in Britain, the Middle East and India and nine Auxiliary/Special Reserve squadrons (Nos.501, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 607 & 608) were equipped with the IIA. A dual-control version, the Mk.VI, (K2236 - K2251) that was unarmed and powered by a 525-hp Jupiter IXF engine, was also used by the Regular and Auxiliary units for flying training, with the majority going to the Auxiliary and Special Reserve squadrons (Nos.501, 502, 503, 601, 602, 605 & 608). The Wapiti had a long life in RAF service, during which it fulfilled the bombing, supply dropping, Army co-operation, training and target-towing roles. The final aircraft (Mk.IIA, K2305) was delivered to No.31 Squadron in India in 1932 and the last was withdrawn from front-line service with No.5 Squadron at Quetta, India, in June 1940.

¹ Some sources state this engine to have a rating of 480-hp.



The first Auxiliary unit to receive Wapiti IIAs was No.602 (City of Glasgow) Squadron, which took delivery of its aircraft at Renfrew in July 1929, followed by 600 (City of London) Squadron at Hendon in August and 601 (County of London), also at Hendon, in November. The third of the London Auxiliary wing's squadrons, 604 (County of Middlesex) had to wait until the following year, when it too received Wapitis at Hendon in September. In all cases the Wapiti replaced D.H.9As in the bombing role. Unlike the '9A the Wapiti was regarded as an operational type, with which, if necessary, the squadrons would go to war in. Fortunately for everyone concerned, in 1933 the Air Ministry and the Air Staff approved the transfer of the Auxiliary Air Force units from the day-bomber to the day-fighter role and began the replacement of the Wapiti with something a bit more warlike in the shape of Hawker's Hart and Demon. The first to dispose of its Wapitis to the Maintenance Units was 601, which received its first Harts for training in February 1933 and had flown-out its Wapitis by August - the same month it took delivery of the two-seat Demon fighter. 601 was followed by 604 which likewise received Harts and Demons in September 1934 and June 1935 respectively. 600 gave up its Wapitis in January 1935, the same month it received Harts in replacement.

It is known that the following Wapiti IIAs served with the London Auxiliaries:

600 Squadron: J9601, J9603, J9604, J9606 - J9610, J9613, J9615, J9870, J9871, J8678, K1334 & K1339.

601 Squadron: J9101, J9612 & K1342.

604 Squadron: J9095, K1318 & K1325 - K1328, K1335, K1336 & K1379.

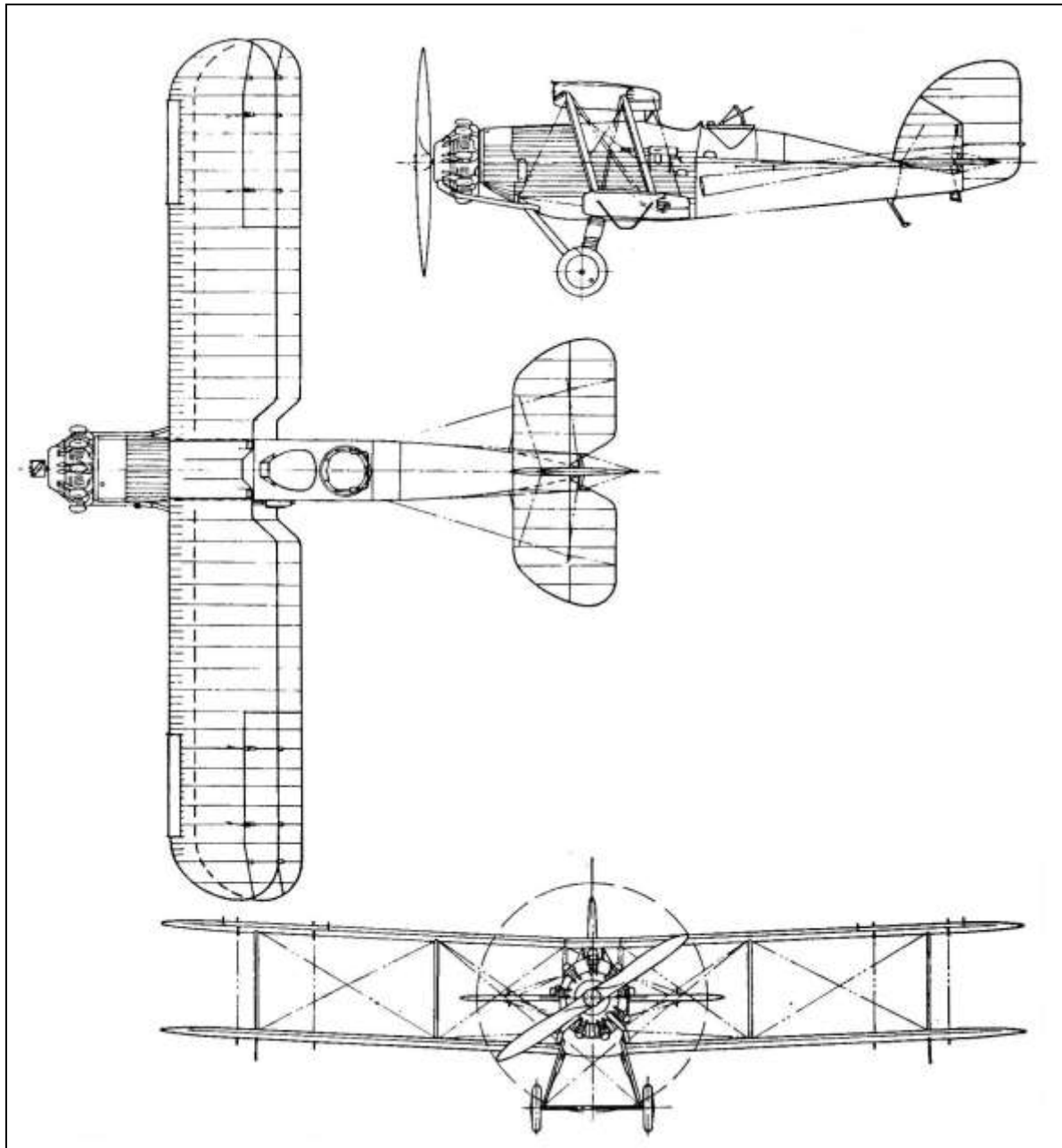
Description & Technical Details

The Westland Wapiti IIA was a single-engined, two-seat, general purpose aircraft of doped fabric-covered, all-metal construction, powered by a 550-hp Bristol Jupiter VIII or VIIF radial engine. The crew comprised a pilot and observer/gunner accommodated in tandem cockpits, with the latter being provided with a 0.303-inch (7.69mm) Lewis machine-gun mounted on a Scarf Ring and his pilot a forward firing 0.303-inch Vickers machine-gun. A bomb load of up to 580-lbs (263 kg) could be carried on racks under the wings and fuselage. The Wapiti IIA had the following dimensions, weights and performance:

Length:	31 ft 8-ins (9.65 m)	Empty Weight:	3,800-lbs (1,724 kg)
Height:	11 ft 10-ins (3.61 m)	Loaded Weight:	5,400-lbs (2450 kg)
Wing Span:	46 ft 5-ins (14.15 m)	Fuel capacity:	108 gals (490 litres)
Wing Area:	488 sq ft (45.34 sq m)		

Max speed at 5,000 ft (1,524 m)	135 mph (217 km/hr)
Cruising speed:	110 mph (177 km/hr)
Initial rate of climb:	1,140 ft/min (347 m/min)
Time to 10,000 ft (3,048 m)	9.5 mins
Service Ceiling:	18,800 ft (5,730 m)
Range:	360 miles (580 km)





(Copyright C M B Barrass 2001- 2008)



Ian White, BA(Hons), IEng, AMRAeS.

Ian White was born in the West Riding of Yorkshire in 1947 and educated at secondary schools in Rotherham and later in Ilford, Essex. He joined the Post Office Engineering Department (GPO) in August 1963 as an apprentice and later served as a technician in the City of London. In 1973, on promotion to engineer, he was appointed to the Post Office's Air Defence (AD) Group in London to provide landline and ground-to-air communications for the Royal Air Force (RAF) in the UK, Germany and Cyprus. The latter part of this period was spent in the provision of special-to-type communications equipment for Royal Signals, the Royal Observer Corps and a number of police forces. It was whilst serving with the AD Group that he first became interested in the technical aspects of airborne radar and the history of British night-fighters.

In 1974 he began his research into the history of the development and deployment of air intercept (AI) radar and its role in the night air defence of the UK. His research has expanded since then to take account of the development of the British night-fighter and especially the role played by night-fighters in the home defence of the UK in both world wars and the Cold War.

In 1979 Ian was seconded to the Army's School of Signals at Blandford, Dorset, to act as the liaison officer between the Post Office and Royal Signals on telecommunications' matters. During this period he was involved in the communications planning aspects of the Falkland's conflict following the restoration of the Islands in 1982 and proposals to introduce fibre optic communications into the Army and RAF airfields in Germany.

Ian returned to what was now BT in April 1984 and joined the Company's Defence Sales Organisation as a Senior Systems Engineer and later as an engineering manager. The final three years were spent as a liaison officer within the defence and law enforcement community. Ian retired from BT in May 2000, following which he attended Anglia Polytechnic University (now Anglia Ruskin University), Cambridge, as an undergraduate history student. In 2003 he was awarded an honours degree in Modern European History.

Ian joined the Royal Aeronautic Society in 1977 as an Associate, before being appointed an Associate Member (AMRAeS) in 1984. He was awarded Incorporated Engineer (IEng) status by the Society in March 1999. He is a member of the Royal Air Force Historical Society, Air Britain and an associate member of No.604 (County of Middlesex) Squadron Association.

He has written a history of No.604 Squadron (*If You Want Peace, Prepare for War*, 2005) and a history of the British night-fighter (*A History of Air Intercept Radar and the British Night-Fighter, 1936 - 1959*, Pen & Sword Ltd, 2007) and is currently engaged in writing a history of the Vickers Wellesley bomber for Warpaint Publications.

Ian, in association with the late Douglas Fisher, FRPS, has prepared the draft for a book on the history of the RAF's radar research flights and recently part wrote the history of the Post Office/BT's contribution to UK defence, *A Call to Arms*, published by Focus Publishing in February 2001. He has also prepared and presented papers at Bournemouth University on the history of IFF (1998) and the History of British Night-Fighters, 1940 - 1955 (2001) and others on behalf of the Royal Aeronautical Society Branches at Cranwell, Brough & Yeovil.



(Copyright C M B Barrass 2001- 2008)



Trivia - Suicide Dog Bombers. The Soviet Red Army once trained dogs to destroy enemy tanks. The dogs were trained to associate the underside of tanks with food and were fitted with a 26lb explosive device strapped to their backs. Once the dogs crawled under the tanks, the device was triggered and exploded destroying the tank (and of course the dog). Unfortunately this didn't always work as planned as the dogs were trained using Soviet tanks so were more likely to run under these than the German tanks. As many as 25 German tanks were put out of action this way during the battles for Stalingrad and Kursk.



The Airmans Prayer

If I climb up into heaven, thou art there

If I go down to hell, thou art there also

If I take the wings of the morning

And remain in the uttermost parts of the sea

Even there also shall thy hand lead me

And thy right hand shall hold me

- O -

*The above prayer is inscribed upon the chapel windows of the
Air Forces Memorial at Runnymede*



Trivia - Army Bear. Amongst the methods of transport used by the 2nd Polish Corps fighting the battle of Monte Cassino was a brown bear called Wojtek who helped to move boxes of ammunition.



'DIXIE' – Flg.Off. F.G.Grisley

Although the jet familiarisation course consisted mainly of newly qualified Pilot Officers converting onto type, there was a fair sprinkling of higher ranks including a couple of Wing Commanders and a Group Captain. These were war veterans with thousands of hours propeller time getting their first jet experience; and great men they were, wonderful company. We fledglings had tremendous respect for them.

One chap on the course stood out: Flg. Off. Dean, known as 'Dixie'. He was of average height, very good looking, and the nicest chap you could hope to meet. He had several hundred hours on Tempests, Mosquitos and Hornets, wore the purple and green Malaya ribbon beneath his wings and was a damn good pilot. But it was not these attributes alone which set him apart. It was his lifestyle.

At a time when most people didn't own a car he had two! One was a pre-war Le Mans-type Bentley and the other was a brand-new Riley saloon which even in those days could do 100mph. He was known to have a small cruiser at the RAF Yacht Club on the Hamble and was believed to have a cottage in the West Country. But what had us gasping with admiration when we weren't grinding our teeth with envy was his stable of fillies. Blondes, brunettes, red-heads, each a stunning beauty, looking as if she had just stepped out of a fashion magazine. Some had! Yet Dixie was not of the landed gentry. His father was not a rich industrialist, nor did he have a doting maiden-aunt. His background was, like most of us, middle-class, grammar school, university. So how did he do it?

The Groupie found himself standing next to the Station Adjutant in the bar one evening and broached the subject.

"He's a betting man" said the Adj, "hardly ever loses".

"Oh" said Groupie, "got connections with the trainers and stable-lads has he?"

"No, that's the odd thing," said the Adj, "he never bets on sporting events at all. He takes on seemingly impossible wagers which he can't possibly win, so he has no trouble finding takers. Yet, as I said before he hardly ever loses".

While Groupie was digesting this bit of information, who should come into the bar but Dixie himself. Groupie immediately engaged him in conversation.

"I understand you're a betting man Dean".

"Yes sir, I do engage in the odd wager".

"So I've heard," said Groupie, "I hear your wagers are very odd indeed. I'd be most interested to know about them. By the way, what are you drinking?"

"Thank you sir," said Dixie, "Mine's a beer".

The Adjutant had the same. Dixie took a good swig, then gazed reflectively into the depths of his glass. The other two waited expectantly.

"Tell you what sir. I could suggest a wager between the two of us and you could decide whether to take it on." Groupie was intrigued.

"Say on," he said.

"OK," said Dixie, "I will bet you £10 that by this time tomorrow you will have changed into a woman".

It was unfortunate that Groupie was in the middle of a draught. He was reduced to incoherent spluttering as he choked on his beer.



"Impossible," he said when he recovered his breath, "unfair. I can't possibly take that on. You haven't got a chance!" Remember also that in those days a tanner was about a week's pay for a junior officer.

"Well you did ask me sir and that's my wager," said Dixie in his most charming manner, yet with a hint of a challenge; enough to make Groupie pause.

"Oh, very well then," he said, "but when I win, the drinks are on me."

"Done," said Dixie. They both handed over the stakes to the bar-man to hold in the till and arranged to meet at the same time next day.

Of course the word went round, so the bar was pretty crowded as the appointed hour approached. Groupie was there already, spending some of his certain winnings in advance. He was in merry mood. At the last moment, Dixie threaded his way to the bar.

"Hello sir," he said, "sorry to be late."

"No, no," said Groupie, "you made it and I wouldn't hold you to a time limit anyway. Well now, have a look at me. I have very definitely not changed into a woman, have I?"

Dixie's composure was remarkable. He looked slightly puzzled, nothing more.

"I must say sir, on the face of it you're right. Strange, very strange. I could have sworn ----." His voice trailed off as a sudden thought struck him.

"Sir, I am not convinced. I never take on bets unless I'm sure I can win. I really would like to make absolutely sure."

Groupie followed Dixie's gaze which was firmly fixed six inches below his waste-band. Now Groupie was one of those great Air Force characters tempered and honed in the fires of war and a leader from the front who knew when and how to party without losing an ounce of respect or authority. With a broad grin, he reached down and unbuttoned. Dixie carefully inserted his fingers, felt gently and withdrew. His face was stricken.

"I've lost," he said with a slight catch in his voice. He was obviously struggling to maintain his composure. Groupie was moved.

"Drinks on me," he said sympathetically, not realising the incongruity of the situation. After all, how could he possibly lose? But that was the sort of effect Dixie had on people. As I said, he was an awfully nice chap.

Some minutes later, Groupie noticed a lull in the conversation. A lot of people had left the bar or were preparing to do so. He glanced in the mirror behind the bar where there was a clear reflection through the double doors into the next room. What he saw there caused him to spin around, his jaw dropping with amazement. Dixie was surrounded by people either laughing or on the verge of tears, some trying to do both at once. They were engaged in handing over fistfuls of notes or coin which Dixie checked off in a little book before placing them in a hold-all.

"What the hell is going on?" he exclaimed.

"He hedged the bet," said the Adjutant, "He took everyone in sight that he'd have you by the balls by six o'clock this evening!"

© Flg. Off. F.G. Grisley BSc MIPI (Retd)

604 (County of Middlesex) Squadron

Royal Auxiliary Air Force



The Royal Navy's Grand Union Fleet by Kevin O'Shaughnessy QVRM AE

The Royal Navy has a vast concrete battleship permanently moored in Northwood, Middlesex. It's called HMS Warrior and having passed through many incarnations (Coastal Command HQ during and after World War II, when it was an RAF station, and the NATO HQ of CinC Atlantic and CinC Channel) it has now reverted to national rather than NATO command as the Permanent Joint HQ of the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force.

When I worked there during the Cold War as a member of No 1 Maritime HQ Unit RAuxAF, (the precursor of the re-formed 600 Sqn) tasking RAF Nimrods and their NATO equivalents to go looking for nasty Soviet submarines coming round the North Cape, through the Iceland/Faeroes Gap and thence who-knows-where (we knew!), HMS Warrior, or rather its Welfare Department, owned two narrowboats, moored at Uxbridge on the Grand Union. One was called Viking Warrior and the other, Zulu Warrior. They were available for anyone based at HMS Warrior to borrow for a week's holiday, for a nominal charge of a few pounds, or free if they were being used for military purposes. During the season they could be anywhere on the canal system. The procedure was that on the penultimate day of your trip you phoned Warrior and told them where the handover would be the following day. The next group drove a RN minibus with all their luggage out to that point, everybody swapped over and you drove the minibus back to Warrior. It made for an interesting holiday, because you never knew in advance where you were going to be; only that it would be on a narrowboat somewhere in the UK.

I used to borrow Viking Warrior twice a year, at the beginning and end of the season, when it was back at Uxbridge. I would have it just for a weekend each time, and use it as a floating base for leadership training exercises for those in my RAuxAF squadron who were either newly-promoted Corporals or SACs in the running for promotion to Corporal. Viking Warrior was an eight-berth boat, so there would be myself and another officer and six students. We would spend Saturday morning getting to the boat at Cowley Lock and motoring up to somewhere around the A40, where we would all get off after lunch (prepared by the students) and traipse around the countryside in a circular route for the first exercise. Back to the boat, evening meal, debrief in the pub. Sunday morning, the second exercise, but this time a horseshoe-shaped route led by the other officer, while I took the boat single-handed further up the cut to (I think) the winder just north of Widewater lock. I remember that this part of the route involved Denham Deep Lock, which at over 11 feet deep is interesting to pass through single-handed. I seem to remember it involved nosing up to the top gates, leaving the throttle open just a little to keep the boat there and then climbing from the bow up the inside of the lock gate to get off and work the lock. (I was younger and fitter then!) Sunday lunch in the Horse & Barge at Widewater lock, debrief, Sunday afternoon and evening getting back to Cowley and home. Hard work during the exercises - reasonable distances to walk, navigate between grid references, retrieve information or objects prepositioned by me the weekend before, all against a time limit which I could change to put additional pressure on if needed, and each of the students taking a turn to lead the group. All that, contrasted with the relaxing Saturday evening in the pub and Sunday afternoon sailing down the cut, made for a very instructive yet enjoyable weekend, especially as most of the students had never been on a narrowboat before.

On the first of these weekends I had to do a spot of quick thinking when we arrived at the boat, which I hadn't seen before. I was a veteran of many narrowboat holidays, and knew what the configuration of an eight-berth boat would be - a four-berth cabin and two two-berthers, or maybe four two-berthers - so I had planned the make-up of my group accordingly; six males and two females. I was surprised to find that Viking Warrior had a four-berth cabin, a three-berth cabin and a single bunk in the dining area. Fortunately I had already appointed one of the girls as Boatmaster, responsible for all the domestic arrangements (cooking and washing-up rosters, menu choices etc) so I told her that deciding who slept where was part of her duties and sat back to see what she would come up with. She went off into a huddle with the other girl, then they both came to me and said, "Sir, you're supposed to be an Officer and a Gentleman. We know you're an Officer; here's your chance to prove you're a Gentleman. You can share the three-berth cabin with us." She earned points for reaching a workable solution to a potentially embarrassing situation, and yes, I did provide them with the proof they'd asked for.



Another time I borrowed the boat for a pleasure weekend, my girlfriend and I and another couple from the Squadron. We got beyond Rickmansworth, turned at the winder just below bridge 170 and spent the night just north of Batchworth Lock. Next morning - totally dead battery. No, I hadn't left the ignition on overnight, despite all the accusations. In accordance with standing orders, we phoned HMS Warrior for assistance. I should point out that there was nothing obvious to show that Viking Warrior was a Royal Naval vessel - she wasn't painted battleship grey; she had roses and castles and everything else you'd expect on a traditional narrowboat. So it was quite a surprise to the hordes of gongoozlers out on that sunny Sunday morning watching the activity from the lockside when a dark blue van turned up with ROYAL NAVY painted in huge white letters on the side, and out jumped two sailors in full Sunday bell-bottomed rig, with two pairs of jump leads to stretch from the van's battery to ours to get us going again. The whole thing only took a couple of minutes, and after the van had gone, one of the gongoozlers asked me, "Was that really the Navy?" When I nodded as nonchalantly as I could, he said, "Bloody hell! What are you, an admiral or something?" We were just coming out of the lock at this point, so I was able to leave him open-mouthed as I replied, "I don't know what all the fuss is about. If my car breaks down I call the AA, so if my boat breaks down I call the Navy. Doesn't everybody?"

People used to ask me if those leadership exercise weekends really provided genuine training or whether they were just a free jolly. Yes, they were enjoyable, for both students and instructors, but worthwhile and effective training? Well, one of my students was SAC Sean Ahearn, later Wg Cdr Ahearn, AE, past OC 600 Squadron, and currently Chairman of our Association. I like to think I played some little part in getting him there.

.....

A short note of interest from Peter Moore 504 Sqn Assn....

Sometime during the 80's an ex pilot of ours taped some memories of pre-war and war time members - all have now passed on. However, the recorder started to play up part way through this particular meeting and was a little difficult to hear. It would appear that this gentleman was privileged to fly with S/Ldr S Collett just before the fateful accident. Both squadrons would be flying the same type of aircraft at the time.

Kind regards.

Peter

This is a short extract from a poor taped recording of the memories of one of our pre war Air Gunners and it reads as spoken.....

"There was scheme called the A.D.G.B. Air Defence of Great Britain.

504 took part in the Hendon Air Display the year before I joined. Every year after I joined. I attended Hendon in the rear cockpit with S/Ldr Collett as pilot. His father was Lord Mayor of London. He was in this formation and he was juggling with his throttle at a low height, you could hear the motor was playing up and he was going straight for a crowd so he dug his wing in and swung his aircraft away from them.

We had Air Gunners up to 1938 when the squadron transferred from bombers to Hawker Hinds.

In recent times one of our ex 2504 gunners who is still with us used to fish on a stretch of water in Scotland owned by Sir Christopher Collet.

There is also a building in the Loughborough University named after David Collett.

.....



'Charlie' Cooper, Sergeant in waiting by Brendan Greaney



Pic – Charlie Cooper

In the spring 2010 edition of the Battle of Britain's Historical Society's publication "Scramble", an on-going campaign was highlighted to rightly upgrade AC2 Charlie Cooper, who was killed in October 1940, to his correct rank of Sergeant. Despite letters to the MOD however, their response was rather indifferent to the situation and thus everything remains very much unchanged. However, recent research has revealed further details of the tragic deaths of Charlie Cooper and the crew that were with him that tragic night of the 3rd October 1940.

Charles Frederick Cooper was born in Wolverhampton in March 1920, known affectionately by his family as 'Charlie', he joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in June 1940 as an Aircraft Hand. However, following a short radar course, he was immediately posted to 600 Squadron based at Redhill in Surrey on the 26 September 1940. The 600 (City of London) Squadron was initially based at Manston, but after a series of movements, was eventually based at Redhill. By the time the Squadron had moved there it had become a night fighter unit and a number of senior RAF Officers visited the Squadron to stress the vitally important role that the night fighters were expected to play in defending the country. Because of the rather slow cumbersome speed, the Blenheim's were no match for German Messerschmitts during daytime; therefore their benefits during night time against German bombing raids became far more effective. 600 Squadron was one of the first Squadrons to be equipped with an early version of airborne radar but unfortunately this was not terribly efficient at the time.





Pic – Tony Hobson

In the early hours of 03 October 1940, AC3 Charlie Cooper took off from Redhill. The aircraft he flew in was Bristol Blenheim 1F (BQ-M) L4905, virtually identical to the Blenheim Mk1F (pictured below).



The above picture shows L8679 BQ-Q of 600 Squadron at Redhill in 1940, a sister aircraft of L4905 BQ-M in which Tony Hobson, Charlie Cooper & David Hughes were lost.

Also part of the aircrew that night was Sgt David Ernest Hughes, the air gunner, who was a New Zealander.

The weather was extremely bad that night with heavy rain. Not long after take-off P/O Hobson reported to base that one of his engines was running badly, but that he intended to continue his patrol. However, at 03:45hrs, he reported that his engine was unserviceable and was returning to base immediately. Tragically, approximately 10 minutes later, the Blenheim crashed into trees on high ground at a height of 700 feet at Broadstone Warren, Forest Row, all on board were killed. Charlie was just 20, Tony Hobson 21 and Sgt David Hughes, 28.



Following the accident, the then OC 600 Squadron, Sqn Ldr H.L. Maxwell DSO, issued an order that aircraft must not fly below 2000 feet until in sight of the airfield.



Far left: The faded stone of AC2 Charlie Cooper, buried in Heath Town, Wolverhampton, and right, that of P/O Colin Hobson buried in All Saints Church, Banstead, Surrey.



The stone of Sgt D.E. Hughes, St Luke Churchyard, Whyteleafe, Surrey, Plot: Row G. Grave 32.



HOBSON, Colin Anthony - (Shown as B A Hobson on the Banstead War Memorial).
Pilot Officer 42566
Royal Air Force
Died 3-October-1940 aged 21
Son of George Colin and May Victoria Hobson nee Shuter, of Monxton, Hampshire.
Brother to Olive and Guy Hobson.

Tony Hobson, as he was always known, was educated at Eastbourne College, 1932-1935, and on leaving school worked in a City accountant's office and subsequently as a clerk in a City stockbrokers' office until 1939. He always enjoyed sports activities especially rugby, rowing and squash.

The family had lived at Laleham, Furze Hill, Kingswood, since 1925. However, the parents moved to Monxton near Andover, Hants, early in the war years. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission Memorial record for Tony, shows Monxton as the family address.

The Hobsons had been Cutlers for several generations but neither Tony nor his brother entered the family business.

Whilst still at work, Tony joined the Territorial Army, enlisting as a Gunner in the Royal Horse Artillery, but was discharged in 1939 when he joined the RAF. On the 10th May 1939 an RAF Medical Board classified Tony as fit to become a pilot and he was posted to the Civilian Flying School at Redhill in June 1939 for his initial training.

In September that year he moved to No.14 Flying Training School at Kinloss, Scotland for training on more advanced aircraft, including the twin-engined Airspeed Oxford. By the 3rd November he had gained his 'wings'. His course, which he passed with a score of 72%, ended in January 1940 and his final report rated his flying ability 'average'. He had no outstanding faults and "he will make a good Officer with experience"

Tony was then posted to No. 12 Group Pool, at Aston Down, Glos to complete an Operational Training Course. This is where he would have undertaken conversion to the Bristol Blenheim - the aircraft he was to fly once qualified.

Following that course, he joined No. 600 "City of London" Squadron on May 3rd at Manston.

Pilot Officer Colin Anthony Hobson is shown on the Battle of Britain Roll of Honour at the RAF Museum at Hendon and was one of ('The Few') 2353 young men from Great Britain and 574 from overseas, pilots and other aircrew, who are officially recognised as having taken part in the Battle of Britain. Each flew at least one authorised operational sortie with an eligible unit of the Royal Air Force or Fleet Air Arm during the period 10 July to 31 October 1940.

544 men including P/O C A Hobson lost their lives during the period of the Battle. A further 791 were killed in action or died in the course of their duties before the war ended.

Since Tony would have known the Banstead area well, for most of his short life, it seems entirely fitting that he should have been laid to rest in All Saints churchyard, Banstead.

http://www.bansteadhistory.com/Memorial/2_H.html

Source : Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Roll Of Honour information from : RAF Battle of Britain.

Crash details from 'The Battle of Britain Then & Now' - Edited by Winston G Ramsay

Various notes from the Banstead British Legion.

Photograph of Pilot Officer Hobson supplied by John Renyard.(John is the son of Olive, Tony's sister)

Family research by Christine Kent

Personal details and service history supplied by Mike Osborn and his wife, Jennifer, who was Tony's cousin.

Photograph of 600 Sqn Blenheim from Camouflage & Markings 2 - For the Battle of Britain (RAF) - by Paul Lucas - Guideline Publications, Luton, Beds.

Wrote to Nat West Bank re the possibility of Mr Hobson Senior working at Banstead Branch - 15 March 2010

This article is kindly reproduced from The Summer 2011 edition of the Battle of Britain Historical Society's publication "Scramble" by kind permission of Bill Bond MBE, the Society's General Manager and Editor of "Scramble".



A short note from Richard Swale....

As we are somewhat isolated and at 900' we are occasionally buzzed by Chinook choppers who seem to use us as a check point. As the whole building shakes I am concerned about damage to the fabric of the building. I had to complain some time ago when the same thing happened with four engined Hercules. They were good enough to stop doing it that time so perhaps they will stop doing it again.

It did remind me of an incident during the war when a flight of Beaufighters were on a low flying exercise. They climbed up and reformed after the exercise and it was noticed that the tail wheel of one of the Beaus was missing. The flight leader asked the pilot if he knew where it had gone? He was assured it retracted (some did). It was only when he landed that he found his didn't! A short time later the squadron got a phone call from an irate retired colonel saying, that if they wanted their tail wheel it was in his garden with his chimney!!

I am hoping something similar doesn't happen here.

You may recall a story about a pilot who accidentally shot down the CO of 600 Sqdn., this was the same chap.

RS

.....

And this from Richard as well.....

I have three short off-beat yarns for you.

Early in the war a mechanic, starting a Spitfire, pulled the starter lead out and stepped back. Unfortunately he stepped through the prop arc. Incredibly it missed him. Standing back and realising what he had just done he dropped dead from shock!

About the same time, on Bomber Command the rear gunner of a Whitley noticed the aircraft was steadily losing height. What he didn't realise was his intercom wasn't working. He just assumed they were coming in to land and thought no more about it, that is, until they did a belly landing in a field. Brassed off because he hadn't been told what was going on, he climbed out and went round to the cockpit only to find he'd been on his own - the rest of the crew had baled out!

The next event happened to a night fighter navigator when we were in Italy. They'd landed and taxied into dispersal, he climbed out and was walking away from the aircraft when he felt a tug on his sleeve. Moving into the light he looked down and found he had lost his Flight Sergeant's tapes and crown off his right sleeve which had happened as he passed the still rotating prop in the dark. Wasn't he a lucky chap? Another couple of inches and he could have lost his arm, or worse!

There were many similar stories circulating from time to time.

Richard Swale 2011

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A letter from P.L. Lovegrove

Andy Cameron
53 Telford Crescent
Woodley
Reading
Berkshire
RG5 4QT

26th September 2011

Dear Andy

We spoke Thursday 22nd September, for which many thanks. The latest "News Letter" brings back many memories and sees me delving into my records to make a few corrective suggestions. And so, to various observations, particularly Pages 55 to 64, Plus 122 / 123 / 133.

1. Pages 55/ 60 & 64 H.M.The Queen's inspection of the Squadron - Took place 29th October 1949, as reported in 'Flight' magazine 3rd November 1949.
2. Page 56 Thorney Island, June 1949 - Aircraft H LA323 - Date ? sometime after 17th June '49. The aircraft was flown by 'Pike' Reckitt, stalled on finals - landing.

In the lower picture, the person behind the wing could be 'Doc' Patrick, or perhaps Hugh Cole Baker. Behind John Wright's left shoulder is an aircraft landing. This is me in either LA192 or LA228, depending on the date of the incident. *Ed. Bob Beckett by cockpit.*
n.b. The Squadron returned to Biggin Hill on 25th June 1949.

During my three years of active involvement with No.600 Sqn. (i.e. before I returned to the R.A.F. in 1951) there were two other Spitfire accidents:

3. Date unknown - winter, fog conditions - MK21 flown by a No.615 Sqn. pilot - flew into the pub at the Leaves Green end of the road beside the airport.
4. Date unknown, but after 29th January 1950. The runway was being extended prior to the issue of Meteor MK4 aircraft to the Sqn. John Cormac (was this his 1st Spit solo?) went off the end of the existing runway and into the deep excavations, watched by Sammy Osborne and myself. Poor chap damaged his face/nose on the gunsight, and I think nothing else. Aircraft MK21 LA328 'J'.



The early Spring of 1950 saw the Sqn. being issued with new Mk4 Meteor aircraft. Jack Meadows , Tim Clutterbuck plus ? had previous experience on Beaufighters and/or Mosquito aircraft. Most of us had been Fighter trained, I.E high powered single piston. My own background had been one of lots of Harvard time, small amount of Oxford, and the F4U Corsair, carrier aircraft with the Navy, (plus others in training).

My conversion to the Meteor, when it was my turn took place on 12 March '50 with a flight in Spitfire MK22 PK392 in the morning and a sortie with Jack Meadows after lunch. From then on no more Spitfire flying.

We all quickly converted and consolidated our new experience at Thorney Island in June 1950. The formation (Page 62) was I think one of two we carried out for John Yoxall of Flight Magazine, could be either 13th or 16th June 1950. The following year, when the Sqn was at Acklington, I was at C.F.E. West Raynham, Fighter Leader School. Thereafter I was back in the R.A.F.

As to the other references:

Page 122 -- Blackburn Shark 111.

Page 123 -- Supermarine Walrus (cant read the number)

Page 133 -- Bristol Type 163, Buckingham

Trust I have got my facts correct and hope the foregoing will be of some help and interest.

Very Best,
Peter L.

P.L.Lovegrove

No. 600 (City of London) Squadron, 1948 to 1951.

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Trivia - Nazi Salute. Despite what you might see in the movies, the regular German Army (Wehrmacht) did not usually use the Nazi salute. Only after the July 1944 attempt on Hitler's life were they forced to use the Nazi salute as standard.



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And if you're not already a member.....



RAF Association History

It began in the Sergeants' Mess at RAF Andover in 1929 with the 'Comrades of the Royal Air Force' and a conversation between three men, Vernon Goodhand, Joe Pearce and Warrant Officer Bartlett. Their conversation focussed on the numerous small organisations that had grown up since the end of WW1 to keep former members of squadrons and units in touch with each other. They debated whether it was time that one great organisation dedicated to this work and to the welfare of serving and ex-serving RAF personnel should not now be born.

By 1930 a provisional committee was formed, the title 'Comrades of the Royal Air Forces' was adopted and three months later the first general meeting was held at the Queen's Hotel, Leicester Square, London. Air Ministry support for the 'Comrades' came in 1933 when the Air Council officially recognised the organisation and Lord Trenchard accepted the Presidency.

The new Association was to make rapid progress in the early thirties, although membership remained fairly small. Benevolent schemes began and Christmas hampers were sent to unemployed members in those difficult days.

One very important event in the Association's history came in 1936 when King George V gave his patronage, the Association has been honoured with Royal patronage ever since.

The size of the RAF remained modest until the effects of the re-armament programme began to be felt in 1938. However, the strength of the 'comrades' never grew beyond 10,000 in pre-war days.

The outbreak of war in 1939 and the re-forming of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in July of that year, led to the Women's Royal Air Force Old Comrades Association (that had been formed in 1919) opening its membership to all ranks of the new women's service. The two old comrades' organisations for airmen and airwomen were amalgamated in 1941, with a combined membership of nearly 20,000.

By 1943, with more than a million serving in the RAF, it became clear that if the Association were to play an effective role in the post-war era, it would need to be organised on a much sounder basis. The Association's Central Committee, in studying the organisation's future role, concluded that its aims and objectives should be extended beyond its original purpose.

1943 also marks the year that the name was changed to The Royal Air Forces Association. A National council, under the chairmanship of ACM Sir John Steel was formed to replace the Central committee of CRAFA. Its first meeting was on 24 August 1943 in a London hotel and Lord Trenchard, as President, gave the address of welcome.

The foundations of the present structure were laid in the remaining wartime years, so that when demobilisation began in 1945 the Association was able to cope with the situation. Welfare officers, employment officials and legal advisers were appointed both at national headquarters and at Branch level and, at the Air Ministry's invitations, officials went to Release Centres to tell those being demobbed how the Association could help them.

The growth of membership reached a peak around this time. In 1947 there were about 200,000 members with some 565 Branches throughout the UK and in some overseas territories. Enrolment of members reached the staggering total of 10,000 a month! There was a danger that the organisation would be swamped and it was decided to distribute much of the administrative work over nine separate areas, each with its own HQ.

Today The RAF Association still has a wide network of over 500 Branches worldwide with a membership of 79,000. However, enrolment has not maintained at the dizzy levels of the 1940's and we now have a major challenge encouraging serving RAF personnel to support their Association. Much work by our Membership department is being done to talk with all new recruits and sign up new members at the end of the initial training.



Our Homes

February 1958 saw the opening at Lytham St Anne's, Lancashire of the Association's first convalescent and rest home, named Richard Peck House in honour of Air Marshal Sir Richard Peck, who had become President of the RAF Association in 1949. We continue to run this home today in conjunction with our sister charity, The RAF Benevolent Fund.

In 1962 the Association acquired Sussex down in Storrington, West Sussex as part of a plan to have a residential wing as well as providing convalescent facilities. This home has been the subject of a major review and to secure a viable future will change its status from a nursing home to a residential care home and has now been transferred in a long-term lease to a not-for-profit organisation, namely Care South who will continue to provide long term residential care as well as short term respite and welfare breaks. The ex-RAF will receive nomination rights for applications made to the home.

During 1996 a second convalescent and respite care home opened in Rothbury, near Newcastle upon Tyne and in 1998 a third, Flowerdown House in Weston Super Mare, Flowerdown also has a Malcolm Apartment that can be utilised by families. These facilities continue to assist the RAF Family in association with ourselves and The RAF Benevolent Fund.

What We Do

We provide friendship and welfare support to serving and ex-serving members of the RAF and their families. Each year we help tens of thousands of people by offering a wide range of welfare services that include home and hospital visits from a volunteer field force; long-term residential care; short-term convalescent and respite breaks; sheltered housing' resettlement advice and advice on war pensions.

Continuing to branch out in many directions, the Association is striving to diversify in its support to our members by enhancing the services we provide. New initiatives include the initiation of a new website entitled RAF-Comrade-Contact (<http://www.raf-comrade-contact.co.uk/>) which will reunite RAF personnel and encourages members to chat and submit stories and information through the website; opening of internet facilities on RAF bases, most recently at RAF Cottesmore called Mokarabia which hopes to encourage a safe and welcoming atmosphere for personnel to meet and talk to loved ones through the internet facilities provided.

The People We Help

There is a widely held perception that we only help airmen and airwomen who fought in World War II. Nothing could be further from the truth! As well as supporting the whole RAF Family we are increasingly supporting those people who are serving and have served in more recent conflicts in Korea, Borneo, the Falklands, the Gulf War, Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo and the latest conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan.

How We Fund Our Work

The RAF Association receives no Government funding so we are entirely dependant on the generosity of the public and our own members to raise the funds that will enable us to continue our work for the RAF family. The demand on our resources continues to grow.

www.rafa.org.uk

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Some VERY impressive pictures sent to me by Desmond Peters (Major Rtd)



Summer Camp – Tangmere, June 1948 © Flight 216885

F – Sgt Peters

G – Sgt Tindall

K – Sgt Webster

J – Sqn Ldr Hayes, OC 600 Sqn.





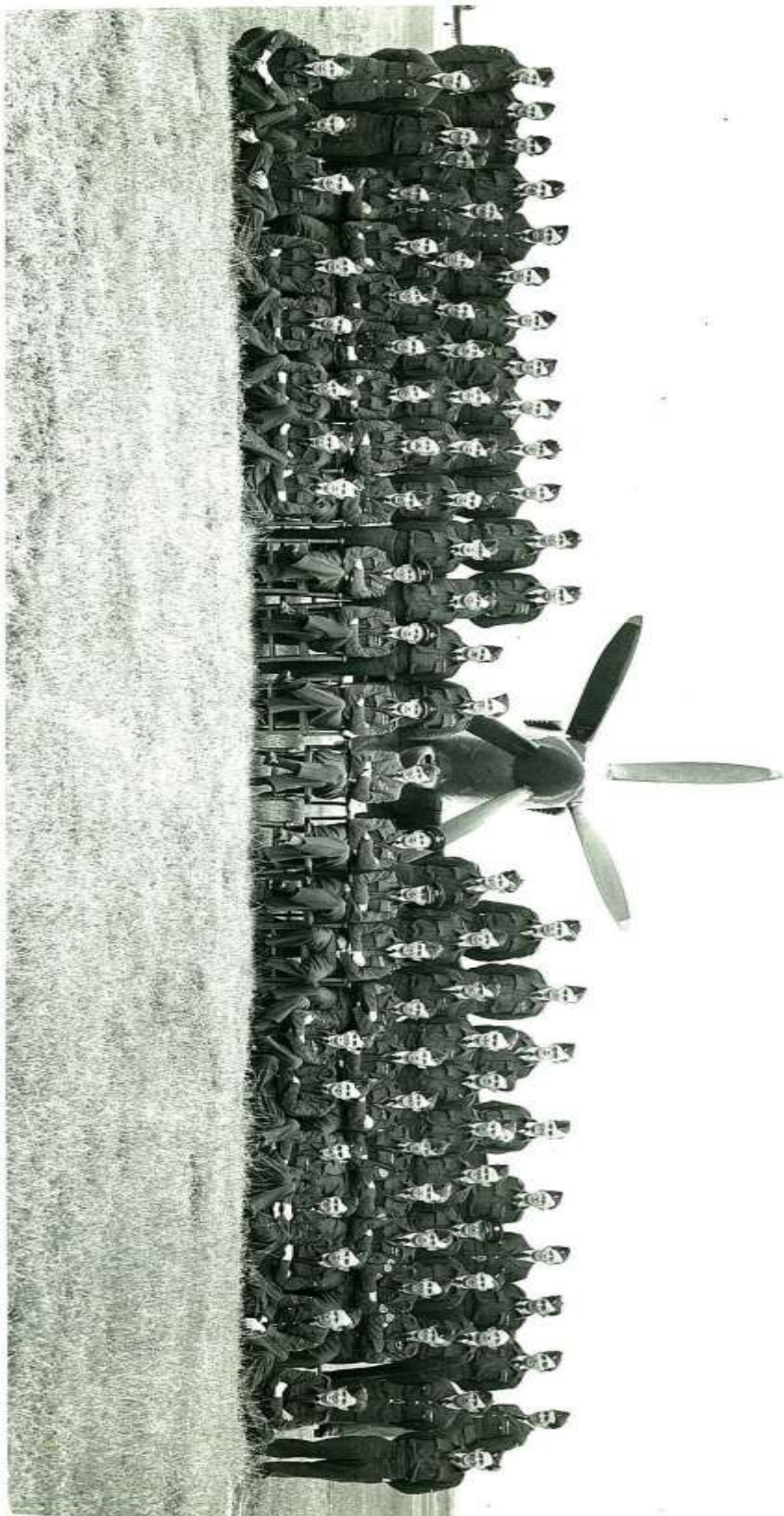
*Summer Camp – Tangmere, June 1948 © Flight 216935
SqN Ldr Norman Hayes*





Summer Camp – Tangmere, June 1948 © Flight 216905





600 Squadron RAuxAF 1948 © 600 Squadron Association



National Service 1951 – 1952 by Michael Allen 604 Sqn.

Most people's memory of their National Service is like the "curate's egg" they know that only some part of it was good. However, with time the bad parts seem to fall away and so what follows, whilst being a true memory, does not pretend to be a fair summary of the experience.

I was called up early in 1951 when the Korean War was in progress and it was thought that a 3rd World War might start at any time. I was instructed to report to RAF Padgate, near Warrington. There I joined a group who were mainly deferred electrical apprentices. We received our uniforms, had our first military haircuts and started to learn the elements of drill. After some weeks those who had volunteered for aircrew service were called out on a special parade to receive instructions for our trip to RAF Hornchurch, the Aircrew Selection Centre. Formed up in two ranks the Flight Sergeant informed us that as well as receiving travel warrants we would be provided with 'sandwiches' for the journey which we should put in our backpacks then asked whether there were any questions.

One of our platoon, who had already gained a reputation for being something of a joker, took a pace forward and asked 'Sergeant, how much room shall we leave in our backpacks for sandwiches?' The rest of us, appalled at the stupidity of the question, stood rigid with trepidation expecting the worst. The Flight Sergeant, who had been dealing with recruits for months if not years, seemed unmoved. However, he marched directly up to the recruit and halted with a thump of boots that measured high on the Richter scale, his nose about an inch from the recruit's. He provided the following memorable answer in a voice that could be heard well beyond the parade ground 'Airman, you will leave **sufficient** room in your backpack for sandwiches'. Flight Sergeant one, airman nil.

This reply has entered our family lore. We find that most questions that require a numerical answer can readily be answered by the Flight Sergeant's reply of 'sufficient'.

After a further short delay spent at RAF Driffild I joined a group who had been selected as potential aircrew and was posted to RAF Digby near the RAF College at Cranwell. There as well as being taught to be an 'officer and a gentleman' we undertook the first steps in learning to fly.

Grading School at RAF Digby, March 1951



Instruction was by civilians at the No 2 Grading School which was equipped with Tiger Moths. The school provided some three weeks of pilot training with progress checks after 5hrs, 8hrs and at 12hrs. On the final day of the course, 29 March 1951, my log book shows that I completed my first solo flight, one circuit around the airfield with a total duration of 10 minutes.

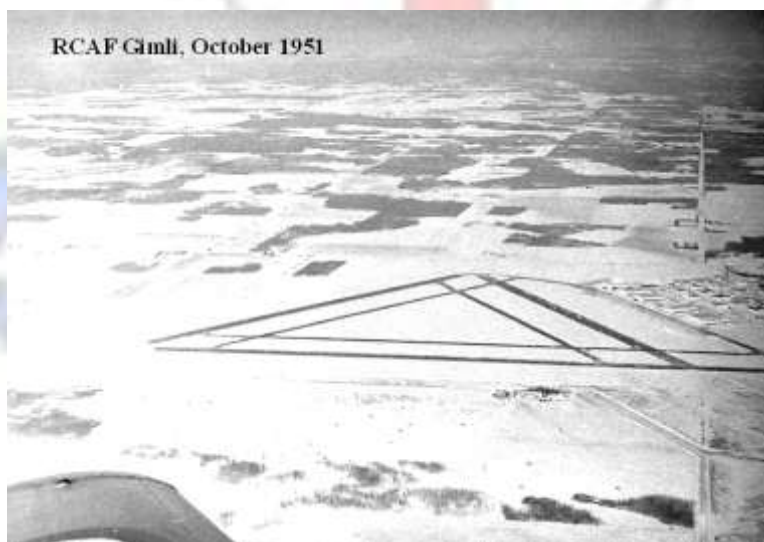


I left RAF Digby in early June as a Pilot Officer and was delighted to join a group which had been selected for flying training in Canada. We crossed the Atlantic as passengers in a BOAC Stratocruiser.



Air travel was at that time all First Class and I can remember eating a steak for the first time in my life (the UK still had rationing!) . The plane had a bar downstairs reached by a spiral staircase. On the return flight, in a similar plane, I recall the captain exhorting the passengers shortly after takeoff not to all rush to the bar as it upset the trim of the aircraft.

After an Acclimatisation Course in London, Ontario we were sent for flying training to RCAF Gimli an airfield some 60 miles north of Winnipeg.



The airfield with its distinctive double triangle of runways and taxi tracks became famous many years later as the location chosen for an emergency landing by Air Canada Flight 143 when it ran out of fuel on a flight from Montreal to Edmonton on 23 July, 1983. (Wikipedia – Gimli Glider)



In 1951 RCAF Gimli was a NATO training base with student pilots from Great Britain and France as well as Canada. The base was equipped with a substantial fleet of Harvards. The noise level at Gimli was always high. Harvards were notorious for the din produced by their propellers the tips of which travelled faster than the speed of sound. The noise was compounded by the large number of planes in action. It was not unusual for there to be 10 to 12 planes in the circuit with others waiting to take off. Both the runways and the parallel taxi tracks were used for landing and takeoff. Landing planes took the broad runway or the narrower taxi track in turn. Student pilots manoeuvred constantly to try to line up on the broad runway as experience had taught them that it was not always easy to stay on the narrow taxi tracks.



The RCAF had chosen to start flying training for all their pilots on the 550 HP Harvard in contrast to the British approach of starting on smaller, less powerful planes such as the Chipmunk. Whatever the merits of the different systems we found that after a short while we were totally at home in the Harvard and learned to love it. That is not to say that it did not have its own characteristics such as a determination to swing wildly on takeoff and landing. Also when flying slowly and approaching its stalling speed one wing would suddenly drop and the plane would make a determined attempt to dive into the ground. However, pilots learned to tame it like a thorough bred horse and to revel in its performance and reliability.



RCAF Gimli was also used as a staging post for squadrons going on to the 'firing ranges' in the more distant parts of Canada. One squadron that put in regular appearances and gave thrilling



aerobatic displays was the 402 "City of Winnipeg" RCAF Reserve Squadron. We were always excited to see their appearance.



I cannot imagine how we could have had a more exciting or challenging form of National Service. Nevertheless we did have one long running gripe. When we were commissioned our uniform was tailor made for us by Gieves of Bond Street at considerable expense. However the conflict in Korea had had a major impact on the price of wool and as a result our uniforms cost very appreciable more than the sum provided by the Air Ministry. We were all immediately thrown into debt; a state which we had been taught at RAF Digby was unacceptable for a commissioned officer. We pressed various visiting officers on this subject but as now Government departments move extremely slowly. Ultimately this worked to our advantage because the new uniform allowance, when finally agreed, was at a figure considerable greater than that we had paid!

At the end of National Service I had the epaulettes and buttons removed from my great coat and had it converted to a more civilian look. The tailor noted that it was made of 'Crombie Fleece' and said that I would never have an overcoat of that quality again in my life. I took up his challenge and I'm glad to report that some 40 years later was able to afford a camel coloured coat in the same material. One of the successes in my life!

I cannot speak too highly of our instructors, many of whom had wartime experience and were determined that we should be trained to look after ourselves in any eventuality and were not too concerned with peace time order and precision. One of them took me low flying south of Winnipeg. We flew alongside Route 75 which runs south from Winnipeg to the US Border. We soon came up on a large truck and trailer making a good 80 mph. As the highway at this point was built up on a levee to prevent it flooding when the Red River over-flowed it was possible to fly in formation with the truck for miles with our wing tip just feet from the driver's cab.

They also appeared to have no fear. When I first landed with my instructor in a strong cross wind the plane bounced as usually but the runway just seem to slide sideways from under us. The plane bounced again on the grass and next on the parallel taxi track before I gave up and opened the throttle and abandoned any idea of landing. All I heard from my instructor was hoots of laughter and at no time did he touch the controls. One learns from one's mistakes if one is allowed to!

As winter progressed we became accustomed to the white, snow covered landscape and very short days. In December we started night flying and could see how sparsely populated that part of Manitoba was with miles between little clumps of lights. One night returning from a cross country



flight of about 2 ½ hours duration an oil seal in the hub of the propeller started to leak. Oil streamed across the windscreen cutting down visibility to nearly nothing. I soon found that the view sideways was unaffected so was little concerned. After all when the Harvard was landing the nose of the plane came up so much that you could never see forward over the engine. Nevertheless I couldn't help feeling that it was an odd way to spend the evening of my 20th birthday.

Throughout the course we all had just one objective to be awarded our 'wings'. High ranking officers always attended the ceremonies that accompanied the presentation of 'wings'. They made every effort to commend the achievement of course members and ensure that it was a memorable occasion.



They even involved the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Band in the parades. In marked contrast the completion of our course No 26 was much more subdued. King George VI had died in February and the 'wings parade' was held during the period of official mourning and we were all wearing black arm bands when our 'wings' were presented.

On returning to the UK we were posted to RAF Cottesmore in Rutland to become acclimatised to UK conditions. The course, flown on Harvards, was principally directed to instrument and bad weather flying. We had, in fact, had very little experience of bad weather in Canada as throughout most of the year the weather was settled with wonderful sunny days despite the biting cold in winter time. When it did snow the weather was so bad that it was unsafe to fly. In UK on the other hand some instrument flying was necessary on most days.

From RAF Cottesmore I was posted to RAF Oakington outside Cambridge for jet conversion. The course was flown in dual controlled Meteor 7s and a mixture of elderly Meteor 3s and 4s some of which had seen service during the 1939 – 1945 war. These early Meteors had a variety of features that affected their landing speed. Some had longer wings than others and some had larger engine nacelles than others. Before taking off one walked around the machine adding or subtracting 5 knots of landing speed for each feature that had been built into that particular plane.

Another unusual feature of the Meteor 3 was that although its brakes were operated by compressed air there was no air compressor in the plane. It relied on pressure stored in large bottles. As a result on taxi out one used the brakes as sparingly as possible to ensure that air pressure was still available for braking on landing.





My course at RAF Oakington finished in September, 1952 and the next stage of my training would have been at an Operational Conversion unit but I had a place at University and the RAF arranged an early release for me.

National Service personnel were required to complete some Reserve Service for several years after returning to civilian life. I could see that I should have a considerable amount of time off during the University year so I decided I would try to obtain a commission in the Royal Auxiliary Air Force.

The RAF station at North Weald was very well situated for access from Cambridge so I approached the Adjutant of 604 Squadron to seek a place on the squadron. Thankfully I was accepted and this started a long association with the squadron and subsequently the 604 Squadron Association.



M. Allen October, 2011



*On Weald of Kent I watched once more
again I heard that grumbling roar
of fighter planes
yet none were near
and all around the skies were clear
Borne on the wind a whisper came
Though men grow old They stay the same
And then I knew unseen to eye
The ageless Few were sweeping by.....*

Lord Balfour of Inchrye 1945

SPITFIRE SONG.

*The soft murmur of voices drifts on the dawn
As the aerodrome wakes for another morn.
Fuelled and armed, they wait at their stations,
The Spitfires flown by men of all nations.
British, Frenchmen, Czechs and Poles
Most of them young and yet all of them old.
The pilots assemble down at dispersal
Almost as if it's just a rehearsal.
Now there's time to sit and wait...
Will Jerry be early or will he be late?
Some sit in silence, locked deep in thought
Trying to remember the lessons they're taught.
Then the telephone rings, an innocuous sound,
Yet up from their deckchairs the pilots bound.
Always ready they never gamble
On whether it's routine or if it's a scramble.
This time it's breakfast brought down from the mess,
But most of the pilots couldn't care less.
As the morning wears on and the sun rises
Games and horseplay become their disguises.
Then the bell rings - again and again,
This time it's the real thing - "pukka gen!"
The pilots clamber into their kites,
Fasten the harness - pull the straps tight,
Plug in the R/T, turn on the sight...
"God, I hope I've done everything right!"
Now, as one, all twelve Spitfires move
As though they're running along a groove,
Then they take flight with a final roar
The squadrons Spitfires are off to war.
The airfield returns to a state of calm
Time for erks to relax in the sun's golden balm.
The Spitfires climb southwards, clawing for height
They'll need the altitude if they're to fight.
The controller's voice comes clearly through...
"Mongoose leader I have trade for you,
One hundred plus bandits heading your way!"
The pilots turn to meet their prey.
Climbing and turning, their backs to the sun,*

*"Tally Ho!" called as they dive on the Hun.
Calmly the enemy hold their formation
To strike at the heart of this island nation.
Down they dived, engines screaming,
Opening fire, their tracers streaming.
Heinkels and Dorniers returned the fire,
Their tracers arcing as if held by wire.
A blinding flash, a Heinkel explodes!
The bombers haphazardly release their loads.
Red three jinks wildly, searching behind,
He never saw the one-oh-nine
That crept up behind him and showered him with lead,
As the first shells hit him he was already dead!
The formation is scattering, leaving stragglers behind,
Crews dead and wounded, maimed and blind.
The Spitfires are through, regrouping en masse
Hoping to make another pass.
They curve in again to attack from the beam,
Tracers hit engines, cause glycol to stream.
Over their headphones there's excitable chatter,
Barely heard as machine guns clatter.
"I got one! A flamer-look at the blighter!"
"Cut out the noise and watch out for the fighters!"
Blue two's on his own as he makes an attack
On one of the stragglers falling back.
The Heinkel fills his armoured screen,
Its surfaces dappled black and green.
He picks out an engine and sets it alight...
There's no return fire-it can no longer fight.
He sees the gunner slumped over the guns
As oil from the engines streams and runs.
He flies past the bomber and turns to see
If he can claim a victory.
The Heinkel force-lands in a farmer's field,
Shedding pieces of wreckage, aluminium and steel.
Blue two climbs to rejoin the fight
But there's not another aircraft in sight.
Now he checks ammunition and fuel -
Both of them low, not enough for a duel.
He searches for landmarks to guide him home,
Hands shaking, mouth dry as a bone.
Looking for churches, railways and rivers,
Soaked in sweat he can't stop the shivers,
Then in the distance he sees the 'drome
Thank God for that! Almost home.
Down on the 'drome, the erks hear them coming
In twos and threes, their Merlin's humming.
The sibilant song of the wind through the gunports
Gives them warning a battle was fought.
Into the circuit, wheels and flaps,
Down and stopped, undo the straps.
Jump down from the cockpit and walk away
Erks rush to make sure the Spitfire's okay.
The pilots gather to see who's returned -
Greene got out but he's badly burned.
Smith was last seen heading for France
Chasing a straggler who hadn't a chance.
"Who was Red three? I saw him go down..."*



*His kite was burning when it hit the ground."
No one remembered the new pilot's name
Who died in action the day he came.
His car remained parked by the mess for a week,
Bags still packed upon the back seat.
Not that people were heartless or didn't care,
They just didn't have the time to spare.
Three times more that day they were scrambled
And against incredible odds they gambled.
As night drew near and they stood down at last
They had time to reflect on the day that had passed.
Twelve had assembled that morning at dawn,
Only eight would be there to face the morn.
The C.O. (an old man of thirty-two)
Takes them down to the pub for a pint (or a few.)
Time to go wild, let off some steam.
Thoughts of the day, remote, like a dream.
Back to the station, their spirits high,
Hopefully to sleep as the new day draws nigh.*

*"It can't be morning! - Your clock's not right...
It's the middle of the bloody night!"
"It's three a.m. sir, It's getting light."
"God! I think I must still be tight!"
Struggling into flying clothes
And cursing the world in the choicest prose
He steps into the cold light outside
And waits for the transport to arrive.
The chill of the air misting his breath
As he tries to banish all thoughts of death.*

*The soft murmur of voices drifts on the dawn
As the aerodrome wakes for another morn.....*

*Those who live, what lies before them?
Poverty, perhaps, and woe.
Though their loved ones still adore them.
Their dreams are shattered by the foe.
Yet their spirits still unshattered.
And before the impulse cools,
They start to mend their castles battered,
With all that's left of broken tools.
Remember, in the Peace that's after,
The price we paid to win the Quest;
Forget not midst rejoicing laughter,
The thousands in Eternal Rest.*

***P/O Peter Edward George Carter, 73 Sqn in France, Killed on the 18th October 1940 with 302
(Polish) Sqn.***

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The Society was set up around 1995 by Bill Bond MBE.

Bill was concerned that young people were not being taught about 20th Century history in general as a result of which they knew little about World War Two and almost nothing about the Battle of Britain. Whole generations of British people were unaware of the significance of the Battle of Britain and how through the success of the brave pilots in the Battle the planned invasion of Britain was cancelled. It was felt that too many people did not understand just how our lives would have changed had we failed in the Battle.

The Society's activities, therefore, are primarily educational. The principle aim is to 'perpetuate the memory' of the Men of the Battle and the projects that the Society has developed are concerned entirely with that aim.

Perhaps the most spectacular project was the commissioning of the Battle of Britain Monument which is on the Victoria Embankment in London. This was funded by public subscription and with donations from the families of the Men being honoured. Being situated in the centre of the Capital the monument is seen regularly by many thousands of visitors from within Britain and from overseas.

The School Plaques Project is a rolling programme of presenting Commemorative Plaques in honour of the Men of the Battle to the schools where they had been educated. This serves two purposes.

Firstly, it honours a brave former pupil of the school. Secondly, it provides a focus within the school for current and future generations to help them understand the significance of the Battle of Britain.

The Society works hard to find relatives of the men being honoured and invites them to the presentation ceremony – they are most grateful to the School and the Society for having given their brave relative a permanent and visible memorial whereas previously, in too many cases they had just been names in a dusty archive.

The School Films Project. This is the latest project and ties in quite neatly with the Plaques Project in that the film will be about the Battle of Britain but presented in an interesting manner and suitable for the learning process in school today.

Something else with which the Society is heavily involved is the maintenance of the graves of Battle of Britain men that are in private graveyards. This is all done by volunteer members of the Society who often have to completely restore the grave thereby returning to the lost man some respect and appreciation.



Profile — Group Captain Charles Patrick “Paddy” Green, DFC, DSO, AE, Mentioned in Dispatches (USA DFC, Soviet Order of the Patriotic War) - 600 Sqn by LAC S. Edwards 600 Sqn RAuxAF



Introduction

Paddy Green was an exceptional fighting leader, who commanded 600 Squadron in its Mediterranean adventure. Through his high standards, personal example, physical courage and tough leadership, he inspired a transformation in the Squadron's fortunes. He had a pivotal role in creating, from a meagre war record; a unit that would end the Second World War with the honour of being the leading night fighter unit in the Allied Air Forces. An intrepid pilot, he flew ops from the start to the end of the war, both by day and by night. His score stood at 14 kills. He won the DFC and the DSO.

Background

Paddy was born in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa on 31/03/1914. His father was Major Charles Green who was sadly to be killed in action in East Africa in 1917. Paddy was 3. His paternal grandfather was Sir Fredrick Green who was a prominent member of Lloyds of London. One of his grandmothers was Alice Cooper, a prominent philanthropist who dedicated her life to the poor of Australia and after whom the town of Alice Springs is named.

As a boy, he travelled all over Europe with his mother, who re-married. Paddy was sent to Harrow School, and later went up to Cambridge. He was extremely athletic and held records for High Hurdles set while at Harrow which stood for 40 years. He was an athletics blue and also skied for Cambridge. He won a bronze medal at the 1936 Winter Olympics as a member of the British four-man bobsleigh team. Later, he competed as a member of the British ski team at Innsbruck. Remarkably, no slouch academically, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society while a young undergraduate.

Green, learned to fly as a lark while studying and travelling in California. His friend, who took lessons with him, was Billy Fiske. Fiske would later have the distinction of being the first US citizen to die in WW2 while flying as an RAF officer. By 1937, both were commissioned into the AAF as fliers, taking up a posts with 601 Squadron at Hendon – also the base of 600 Squadron, and the paths of Paddy Green and 600 would continue to cross...



World War 2

On the outbreak of war, he was called up to full-time service. With 601, then equipped with Bristol Blenheims, he took part in the first intruder mission of the war, when the squadron attacked a seaplane base at Borkum in the East Frisian Islands. He was posted to 92 (East India) Squadron at RAF Tangmere, as a flight commander. The Squadron transferred to Spitfires in March 1940, and Paddy was involved in May of that year in the desperate attempts to provide air cover for the Dunkirk evacuations a few months later as the Blitzkrieg raged.

On May 20th, he had just claimed his first kill, an Me109, when over the channel he was attacked, hit, and badly wounded. He suffered a severe cannon wound to the thigh, leaving a compound fracture and severe bleeding. He calmly thrust his fingers into the open wound to stem flow of blood, and navigated back to RAF Tangmere with his one good hand. He made a perfect landing. He was laid up for several months and only returned to operational flying late in the Battle of Britain. In October 1940, he was posted to command 421 "Jim Crow" Reconnaissance Flight at Hawkinge. The unit operated a mixture of Hurricanes and Spitfires. He was then almost instantly shot down on October 12th suffering more wounding and parachuting into a field of angry young bulls. He was rescued by men from a New Zealand artillery battery who tended him.

On November 25th, with the Blitz in full swing, he gained his second kill, a Do17. Soon, he had also claimed 2 probable Me109s, and in early 1941, when the flight was expanded to become 91 (Nigeria) Squadron, he was appointed to command it.

As per 421 Flight, it appears that the Squadron was largely funded by subscription from the government and people of Nigeria - perhaps leading to the (by contemporary standards) unsavoury nickname that the press had bestowed. 91 soon re-equipped entirely with Spitfires and were engaged on highly dangerous low-level strafing attacks on enemy shipping and in lone, armed reconnaissance over the coast of enemy occupied France. By the time he left 91 Squadron, he was an ace with 5 confirmed kills. He was already gazetted DFC. Such was Paddy's influence that 91 Squadron developed a reputation for ferocious fighting prowess that is still semi-legendary, and persisted long after he had departed.

However, by November 1941, Paddy was at 600 as a Flight Commander. He flew on sorties from RAF Predannack in Cornwall, flying Beaufighter II's. These were fitted with Rolls Royce Merlin engines rather than the Bristol Hercules that they had been designed to take. This was due to a shortage in the supply chain due to the need to fit the Bristol engines onto the new Sterling bombers then rolling off the line. Paddy however described the combination as "the most dangerous aircraft to fly that was ever made". This was no mean feat on the part of Bristol, as the Beaufighter generally has a mixed reputation, both as a superb war-winning aircraft, but also as a death-trap to the unwary or unskilled pilot.

He was then dispatched to 125 Squadron in June 1942, still on Beaufighters. However, this was not the last 600 would see of him. Meanwhile, as an interlude, Paddy made a fleeting appearance in the 1942 film "First of the Few" – bizarrely as an enemy bomber pilot!

With the "Gong Squadron"

By Christmas 1942, Paddy was back at 600. The City's Own flew Maison Blanche in Algeria, via Gibraltar. They were now to form part of the pursuit of Rommel's Afrika Korps to Tunis. During this period, the Squadron became prolifically high scoring - the press christening 600 "The Black Knights", "The Fright in the Night", and "The Gong Squadron" on account of the number of medals won by aircrew and ground crew alike.

From Algeria, Paddy moved the squadron on into Malta in 1943, and from there to Italy, all the time increasing his own score, and driving up the squadrons score as he went. Operating from Malta to cover the invasion of Sicily, a highlight occurred in July, where he accounted for 7 enemy aircraft in 3 nights, claiming 4 of them in one evening. This led to the awarding of a DSO.



From there, the Black Knights moved along through the Italian campaign, supporting the Allied advance, working in harness with The USAAF's 12th Air Support Command. The reputation earned then was so severe, that it is thought that as a disinformation exercise, the presence of 600 Squadron was broadcast openly in areas and at times when they weren't in the line of battle - but nonetheless, the Luftwaffe would not fly missions to avoid meeting the "Fright in the Night". The Squadron took an exceedingly heavy toll, and in particular against the previously menacing and all-pervasive JU87 Stuka, which were "blasted wholesale from the sky" by the Squadron's "Ten-gunned terrors". There are reports that, when one ex-600 pilot was captured after bailing out over Germany, his interrogating officer wanted to know - "So where are the famous 600 these days??"

Reputation and character

One infamous incident in early 1943 illustrates Paddy's commitment to the highest professional standards for himself and his men, when he reprimanded savagely a squadron pilot who had failed to shoot down Paddy himself!

Flying Officer Rob Sprag, a robust South African mistook Green's mount in the darkness for a Ju88. Opening fire, he was amazed to find his victim deftly avoiding the incoming rounds. While aware that it was easy to mistake a Beau at the right angle for the German machine, was now convinced that this was a German machine. Even more so when Green fired off the wrong coloured recognition flare.

Sprag went in again, committed to downing the German intruder. He closed in, fired again, and observed rounds going in to the target – however he was more horrified as the plane swung across his field of fire, and revealed itself to be a Beaufighter like his own!

Returning to base, he reported angrily to the ops staff that he had been forced to have a go at "some bloody fool in a Beau" who had fired off the wrong flares.

Unbeknownst to Sprag, Green had landed, unharmed, some time before and was bristling for a fight. He had a reputation as a tough, no-nonsense man – the kind of man who didn't suffer fools gladly. As his obituary states, he regarded any mistake by any officer or rank, no matter how minor "as an unforgivable incompetence". There was an immediate inquiry, and Green was heard telling Sprag, "You're a bloody bad pilot," and "You should be ashamed that I'm still able to talk to you – from where you came up behind me you should have destroyed my Beau with your first shot . The wrong identification is forgivable, bad shooting isn't!!"

Of course, no mention was made of Green firing the wrong colour flare! However, on May 5th, the CO made up for things by correctly spotting a Ju88 over Tunis. Despite receiving heavy return fire.

After 600

Paddy made his final claim on 25/01/1944 - his 14th, and yet another Ju88. Had he stayed, no doubt his score would have been higher - but it must be made clear, that as with the other Pilot's of 600, Paddy was not operating on his won, and his success as a pilot was shared with his Radar Operator, R. J. Gillies - himself hugely respected.

However, so successful were 600, that there was little left to do - the priorities of the campaign shifted from air superiority to close support of the advancing armies. Paddy found himself promoted to Group Captain in the summer of 1944, after which he commanded 1 Mobile Operations unit of the Desert Air Force, before moving to the command of a wing of Boston bombers.

Post RAF

Post-war he assisted in the development of jet tactics at the Central Fighter Establishment. He left the Royal Air Force in 1947, married and went back to South Africa. His wife Ruth, was a Canadian nurse, whom he had met in Italy in 1946. Ruth passed away in 1981.



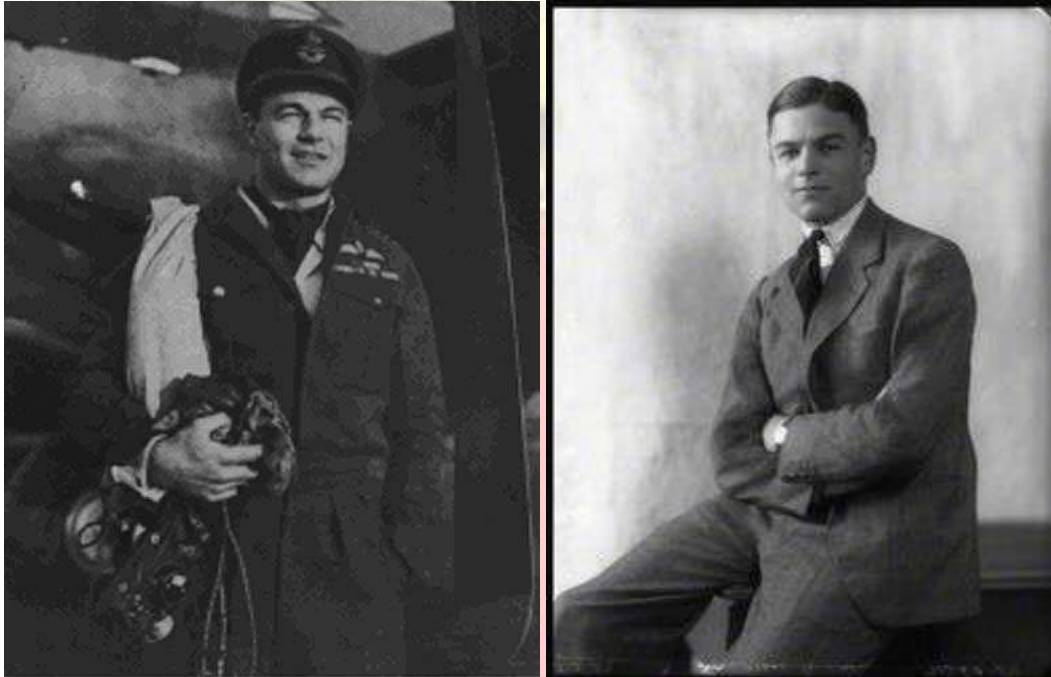
For the next 26 years he worked for the giant Anglo-American Mining and Trading Corporation until retiring in 1977 to a farm, near where Ruth had grown up at Owen Sound near Collingwood, Ontario. With Ruth, he had a son and 2 daughters. He passed away on 10/04/1999, aged 85.

LAC EDWARDS SR , 600 Squadron

1st Draft: 15/03/2011

Daily Telegraph obituary, 17/05/1999, Times Obituary, 06/05/1999

Profile - G/Capt The Hon Max Aitken, DSO, DFC, - 601 Squadron - by Ian White



The Honourable Sir John William 'Max' Aitken was the son of the Canadian newspaper magnate and businessman, William Aitken, the 1st Baron Beaverbrook, and his wife, Gladys Henderson Drury. Max was born in Montreal, Canada, on 15th February 1910, but was educated in England at Westminster School and Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he proved to be a talented sportsman, gaining a University blue for soccer, and a scratch golfer. Aitken joined the Auxiliary Air Force (AAF) in 1935 and was awarded an Auxiliary commission as a pilot officer with 601 (County of London) Squadron on the 11th September. A noted socialite and keen sportsman, Max Aitken embodied all the attributes and advantages of the 1930s Auxiliary officer; handsome, a reputable family background, financial independence and a good social standing.

At the time of his joining, 601 was based at Hendon, North London, where he was taught to fly the unit's Hawker Harts and Demons. By the outbreak of war the Squadron was equipped with twin-engined, Bristol Blenheim Mk.II long-range fighters. Along with the rest of the Squadron Flying Officer Aitken was mobilised for war service during August 1939. Following a move to Biggin Hill, Kent, in September 1939, Aitken took part in the Squadron's first operational sortie on the 27th November, when six Blenheims joined six others from No.25 Squadron in an attack on the German seaplane base at Borkum. Shortly after 601 was redesignated as a day-fighter unit and moved to Tangmere, Sussex, where it was equipped with Hawker Hurricane Mk.IIs in February 1940. On the 16th May, Aitken joined the Squadron's 'A' Flight on detachment to Merville airfield in France, to reinforce No.3 Squadron that was a part of the fighter element for the RAF's Advance Air Striking Force.



Whilst in France the by now thirty-year old Flight Lieutenant Aitken had some success, destroying a Heinkel He 111 and possibly another over Brussels on the 18th, another Heinkel and a Junkers Ju 87 'Stuka' the following day, the probable destruction of another Ju 87 and a Messerschmitt Bf 110 later that same day and damaged a Bf 109 on the 23rd. On his return to Tangmere Aitken was promoted to Acting Squadron Leader and given command of 601. His successful run continued with the destruction of an He 111 over Brighton on the night of the 25th/26th June, after which he was awarded the DFC on the 9th July for his work in France and England. Squadron Leader Aitken's final victory with 601 occurred on the 7th July when he shared a Dornier Do 17 over the English Channel with four other pilots. On the 20th July he handed 601 to Squadron Leader W.F.C.Hobson and was posted to non-operational duties, where he remained until February 1941.



Max Aitken with his father Lord Beaverbrook. Max senior was Churchill's Minister of Supply & Minister for Aircraft Production

That month Wing Commander Aitken was posted to command No.68 Squadron at Catterick, north Yorks, that was working up in the night-fighter role with radar-equipped, but nevertheless, obsolete Blenheim Ifs. Manned mainly by Czech aircrew, No.68 received its first AI Mk.IV equipped Beaufighter Mk.Ifs during May, which by the month's end had completely replaced the old Blenheims. Although declared operational during April 1941, the Squadron did not claim its first success until the 17th June, with Aitken claiming a Bf 109 on the 25th during a sweep over Northern France in a Spitfire borrowed from No.610 Squadron.

During March 1942 the Squadron moved to Coltishall, Norfolk, from where the CO claimed his first night victory, a Do 217 on the night of 30th April/1st May, followed by another on the 29th/30th May and damage to a Ju 88 the same night. On the night of 23rd/24th July a second Ju 88 and another Do 217 fell to Aitken's guns, which brought the award of the Czech Military Cross on the 11th August, the DSO on the 14th August and the Air Efficiency (AE) award on the 1st January 1943. With his tour coming to an end Wing Commander Aitken was posted away from 68 Squadron during January 1943 to join the Fighter Tactics Branch of HQ RAF Middle East. Whilst there he borrowed a



Beaufighter from No.46 Squadron and claimed two Ju 52 transport aircraft destroyed, another probably destroyed and forth damaged, on the night of the 5th March 1944.

These were his last air-to-air victories for on leaving HQ Middle East Wing, Group Captain Aitken was posted back the UK and then north to Scotland to take command of the Banff Strike Wing comprising Nos.143, 235, 248 & 333 (Norwegian) Squadrons. The Bannf Wing undertook anti-shipping and anti-submarine operations in Norwegian waters with rocket projectile (RP) armed Mosquito FB Mk.VI fighter-bombers. Group Captain Aitken remained in command of the Wing to the War's end and was released from the RAF early in 1946.



Aitken with his wife after receiving his DFC at Buckingham Palace in 1940

Post war Max Aitken entered the family newspaper business, his father owned the Express Group and Beaverbrook Newspapers, and was elected the Member of Parliament (MP) for Holborn with a small majority (925 votes), but lost this at the 1950 General Election to a Labour candidate because of boundary changes. He served as Chancellor of the University of New Brunswick and participated in the 1951 Miami Nassau Offshore Powerboat Races with is wife, Lady Violet, before establishing the Cowes Torquay Offshore Powerboat Race to encourage the design and construction of fast cruising boats. In 1954 using his father's Daily Express newspaper as sponsor, Max helped to establish the London Boat Show at the Empire Hall, Olympia.

With the re-establishment of the AAF in June 1946, Max Aitken was awarded an Auxiliary Squadron Leader's commission and took command of 601 Squadron when it was reformed at Hendon that same month. Squadron Leader The Hon Max Aitken, DSO, DFC, MP, guided the Squadron through its first post-war years until June 1948, when he stood down in favour of Squadron Leader Hugh Dundas, DSO*, DFC, and formally retired from the RAF.



In 1968, Max was appointed to the Chair of Beaverbrook Newspapers following the death of his father in 1964 and was made President in 1977. He also succeeded his father as Baron Beaverbrook on the 9th June 1964, but five days later disclaimed the barony on the grounds that there should only be one Beaverbrook in his lifetime. However, on his death on the 30th April 1985, his son Max succeeded to the title.

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BACK THEM UP!



Profile - W/Cdr Michael Constable Maxwell, DSO, DFC - 604 Squadron - by Ian White



(IWM Neg No.CH14100 via 604 Squadron Archive)

Wing Commander Michael Constable Maxwell, DFC, took command of 604 Squadron at Scorton in late April 1943 and remained as CO until July 1944, when he was succeeded by Wing Commander Desmond Hughes.

Michael, Hugh, Constable Maxwell (usually known as Mike Maxwell) was born on the 3rd June 1917 at Beaulay, Invernessshire. His father, Bernard, was the fourth son of the tenth Lord Heries and Alice Fraser, the second daughter of the thirteenth Lord Lovat and his elder brother served with distinction in the Royal Flying Corps during the First World War. Maxwell was educated by monks at Ampleforth College, Yorks, and later at Hertford College, Oxford, where he read Modern History and joined the University Air Squadron (UAS) despite holding a Territorial Army (TA) commission in the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders. Learning to fly on Avro Tutors at nearby Abingdon, Maxwell attended TA and UAS summer camps, before applying for a university direct entry permanent commission in the RAF in March 1939. His application was granted and he was awarded a pilot officer's commission on the 7th November 1939.

Mobilised as an Army officer on the outbreak of war, Maxwell spent a few months with his battalion (the 4th) before resigning his commission and reporting for flying training at No.9 Flying Training School (FTS) at Hullavington, Wilts, on the 10th October, where he undertook his instruction on North American Harvards. On the completion of his course, Maxwell was posted to No.7 Bombing & Gunnery School (BGS) at Stormy Down, Glam, for air-to-air gunnery instruction, after which he reported on the 20th April 1940 to No.56 Squadron flying Mk.I Hurricanes at North Weald, Essex.



Following the German invasion of France and the Low Countries in May 1940 and the British Army's retreat to Dunkirk, 56 Squadron was involved in providing an air defence over the beaches by means of a series of detachments in France and Biggin Hill, Kent. On the 27th May Flying Officer Maxwell shared in the destruction of a Heinkel He 111 over Dunkirk, but was hit by Belgian anti-aircraft (AA) fire and forced to bail out of his Hurricane. It later transpired that the AA battery was commanded by Prince Charles of the Belgians, who apologised in person for hitting Maxwell's Hurricane. Taken by staff car to Ostend he was repatriated to England by trawler and returned to North Weald. Maxwell was wounded in the leg and foot by cannon shell splinters following an engagement with Messerschmitt Bf 109s on the 8th June, which damaged his aircraft that burst a tyre on landing resulting in his admission to Epping Hospital.

Discharged and fully fit to fight, Maxwell returned to 56 Squadron on the 9th July to continue his fight with the enemy with 'unbelievable courage amounting almost to foolhardiness', to quote one of his fellow pilots, Sergeant George Smyth. Maxwell was able to claim a Bf 109 probably destroyed on the 28th August and a Dornier Do 17 confirmed and a Bf 110 shared on the 27th September. On the 30th September when he was engaged in a combat with Do 17s and Bf 110s over Portland, his Hurricane was damaged and he was forced to make a crash-landing on Chesil Bank, writing-off his Hurricane (L1764) in the process, but escaping unscathed. One of the Dorniers was not quite so lucky. Being at the end of a formation of twenty-five to thirty bombers, whilst Maxwell watched the Do 17 crashed with no survivors - something that he later reflected upon by saying there were 'four human beings in that plane'. His respect for his fellow human beings was a part of his deeply held Catholic views and his education in Ampleforth College.

Promoted to Flight Lieutenant on the 7th January 1941, Maxwell returned to operations and was credited with a Bf 109 probably destroyed on the 7th October. He remained with 56 Squadron until the 21st February 1941, when he was posted for a rest to No.52 Operational Training Unit (OTU) at Debden, Essex, as an instructor to teach recently qualified pilots how to fly and fight the Hurricane. The following month (March) he attended the Central Flying School (CFS) to attend an instructor's course, before returning to Debden and then to No.60 OTU at East Fortune, East Lothian, during July, where he instructed on Boulton Paul Defiants in the night-fighter role. On the 8th October 1941, Flight Lieutenant Maxwell was posted to 604 Squadron at Middle Wallop where he was teamed with Sergeant John Quinton as his radar operator (R/O).

Maxwell's tenure with 604 was remarkably short, for on the 1st March 1942 he was promoted to Squadron Leader and along with Sergeant Quinton was posted back to 60 OTU to command its Air Interception (AI) Flight. Again his tenure was short, for in August he moved to No.54 OTU at Charter Hall, Berwickshire, to take command of its 'B' Flight. Like 60 OTU, 54 was tasked with the training of night-fighter crews and their teaming-up prior to posting to an operational squadron.

In December 1942, Maxwell and Quinton were returned to operational flying following a posting to No.264 Squadron at Colerne, Wilts, where Maxwell took charge of one of its flights. 264 was tasked with the protection of Coastal Command's aircraft from intruding Luftwaffe Junkers Ju 88 long-range fighters over the Bay of Biscay, by which time it was equipped with de Havilland Mosquito Mk.IIs. It was also involved itself in intruder operations over Occupied Europe. The pair's first claim occurred during a night intruder sortie over Holland on the 21st/22nd January 1943, when Maxwell claimed a Do 217 damaged over Deelen airfield. On the 30th March the pair (by this date John Quinton had been commissioned and was a flight lieutenant) destroyed an He 111 in daylight, before



Maxwell was promoted to acting wing commander and given command of 604 Squadron on the 23rd April in place of Wing Commander Wood, DFC, who failed to return from a sortie over the Channel on the night of the 16th/17th April. At this juncture the Squadron had recently moved from Ford, Hampshire, to Scorton, Yorks, to begin their re-equipment to the Beaufighter Mk.VI fitted with AI Mk.VIII. At that time 604 had been 'at war' for three and a half years, during which time it had acquired the reputation as one of the best night-fighter units in Fighter Command with a 'tally' of more than seventy enemy aircraft destroyed. It was now to enter a new period with a new aircraft and equipment and a new Commanding officer (CO). On the 3rd May Maxwell was informed of the award of the DFC for his work with 264 Squadron.

The CO and his R/O claimed a Do 217 'damaged' on the night of the 26th/27th July over Yorkshire. Their first confirmed victory with 604 occurred on the 22nd August, when in company with another Beaufighter flown by Flight Lieutenant Sturman and Flight Sergeant Weston, they intercepted an enemy weather reconnaissance aircraft some 150 miles (240 km) off the English North Sea coast. Flying straight and level and attacked by both aircraft, the weather-plane was shot down with the credit being awarded to Maxwell and Quinton. The following year (February 1944) the Squadron received its first examples of the de Havilland Mosquito NF Mk.XII and XIII fitted with AI Mk.VIII, whence it moved to Church Fenton, Yorks, and then to Hurn, Hants, in May. This was a quiet period as far as the CO was concerned and it was not until the night of the 15th/16th May that he and Quinton claimed a Ju 88 shot down into the English Channel off the Isle of Wight. On the night of the 2nd/3rd July he called for volunteers to flying in appalling weather and despite an order to the contrary grounding the Squadron, every crew's hands went up. He chose just one to accompany him and Quinton and both claimed an enemy aircraft destroyed - in his case another '88 brought down in the vicinity of Le Harve. A second was claimed on the 8th/9th along with a Do 217 claimed as a probable. The Ju 88 was the 100th enemy aircraft destroyed by 604 and the twenty-third under his command. These were the last victories claimed by Mike Maxwell and John Quinton² before the CO was replaced by Wing Commander Desmond Hughes during July 1944 and he posted to the Far East to take command of No.84 Squadron at Charra, Bengal, flying Mosquito fighter-bombers (FB.VI). However, before he could begin operations the Japanese surrendered, but he remained in command of 84 Squadron at Seletar, Singapore, until December 1946 before moving across the island to take over 60 Squadron at Tengar whilst it converted from Republic Thunderbolt IIs (P-47D) to Supermarine Spitfire Mk.18s.

Maxwell remained with 60 Squadron for a year after which he was posted to the UK, arriving 'home' early in 1948 and taking four months leave before entering Ampleforth Monastery as a novice on the 27th April on leave of absence from the RAF. He stayed at Ampleforth for the next four years, but left in 1952 to rejoin the RAF in the November in the rank of squadron leader, where he converted to jets and learned to fly Gloster Meteor, the de Havilland Vampire and the Venom. In January 1954 Squadron Leader Constable Maxwell assumed command of No.23 Squadron, a Venom NF.2 night-fighter unit based at Coltishall, Norfolk. Whilst there he acquired the nickname 'the mad monk' because of his habit of clasping his hands in front whilst undertaking briefings. On relinquishing command a year later he returned to Oxford to command the UAS for two years and then moved to the Central Fighter Establishment (CFE) to study and develop fighter tactics. From March 1960 he spent an enjoyable six months as the Station Commander of RAF Gan, the RAF staging post in the Indian Ocean, where he reputedly plied senior officers with a 'ferocious'

² Flight Lieutenant John Quinton survived the war and remained in the post-war RAF. He was killed after giving his parachute to an Air Cadet, when the Wellington in which they were flying got into difficulties. He was subsequently awarded a posthumous George Cross for his great gallantry.



cocktail made from a concoction of gin and coconut oil! Maxwell's final posting as a wing commander was in Scottish Command before he retired from the RAF on the 3rd June 1964.

In 1960 he attended his brothers wedding and met Susan Davies, whom he married in 1962 and by whom he had two sons. After retirement he joined the family business of Robert Stuart Ltd, contracting to companies within the aircraft industry, of which he became chairman. Wing Commander Michael Constable Maxwell, DSO, DFC, died on the 31st August 2000.



904230 Flight Lieutenant Harry George Whittick. 604 Squadron 31.12.19 to 12.5.06

Harry George Whittick was born in Norfolk on 31st December 1919 and spent the last 3 years of his elementary education at Thames Ditton Boys School (Surrey), leaving in 1934 to take up an apprenticeship at AC Cars. In the spring of 1938 the family moved to 'Foxbury' Estate, Chislehurst, NW Kent, where Harry's father had been appointed Head Grounds man at Middlesex Hospital Medical School's new sports ground. Harry's interest in aircraft and flying grew during 1938 and 1939 and he pursued further education – and made a decision to learn to fly. This activity engaged him in driving down to Gatwick airfield at the weekend in his baby Austin 7 (bought for £12.10 shillings) and receiving flying instructions in a Tiger Moth. He gained his Civil Pilot's "A" Licence in 1938, joined the Civil Air Guard and became an RAF Volunteer Reservist in 1939.

Harry was enlisted into the RAF on 5th October 1939 and via AC Selection Board was recommended for training as an Air Gunner/WOP. After training was completed in July 1940, he joined '604' Squadron 'County of Middlesex' at Middle Wallop aerodrome (Hants) under the leadership of Squadron Leader John Cunningham.

The Squadron was equipped with 'converted' Blenheim's which had a crew of two. Harry was teamed up with Pilot Officer Keith Geddes as his leader and the two flew together until February 1941. During their time on operations, they had no luck with any 'kills', but on two separate 'ops' they reported damaging two enemy aircraft, one significantly; there was no 'confirmation' that either aircraft had crashed in the UK – often a difficulty for 'Night-fighters'.

In March 1941 '604' Squadron had begun receiving the new 'Beaufighter' equipped with better Air Interception, but in April 1941 Harry left the Squadron to receive further instruction courses in Air Interception equipment and Air Gunnery. On 1st February 1941 he received Commissioned Rank and briefly joined 228 Squadron and 209 Squadron before settling with 230 Squadron (Sunderland Flying Boats), operating in the Middle East from Aden, Abukir etc., from around mid-1942. 'Operations' from 230 were varied and included 'U' Boat surveillance and convoy protection as well as support on 'Combined Operations; the Squadron was involved in the 1943 'Sicily Landings' operation. Harry had been reunited with one or two of his '604' colleagues during his time serving in the Middle East Command.

Correspondence from Harry back home was sparse and one letter revealed that he and his crewmen, whilst returning to their quarters, had been attacked by a German bomber and their MT 'Truck' was 'blown-up'. Several were injured and spent some time in hospital. A more optimistic letter was received some months later stating that Harry had been temporarily appointed Squadron Leader for a short period.

Returning to the UK in early 1945 and engaged in Gunnery Training Courses in the North of England and Scotland, Harry was demobilised in February 1946. In 1941-42, whilst on training courses at RAF Leuchars in Scotland he had met his future wife, Mary (Maysie) Barlow of Dundee and they married in August 1945. Post 1946 Harry pursued a commercial business career in Timber and Rubber, exporting from West Africa to Europe and beyond with some good success. He later moved into senior accounting roles in Local Government before retiring in 1980 and he is survived by Maysie and his two sons, Graeme and Donald and four Grandchildren.

Thank you Paul and thanks to Donald for allowing me to reproduce Harry's story.

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Book Corner

'If You Want Peace, Prepare for War': A History of No. 604 (County of Middlesex) Squadron, RAuxAF, in Peace and in War by Ian White

- **Hardcover:** 288 pages
- **Publisher:** 604 Squadron Association (Feb 2005)
- **Language** English
- **ISBN-10:** 0954961609
- **ISBN-13:** 978-0954961602
- **Product Dimensions:** 24.2 x 16.6 x 2.4 cm

The History of the Air Intercept Radar and the British Nightfighter 1935-1959 by Ian White



- **Hardcover:** 340 pages
- **Publisher:** Pen & Sword Aviation (17 May 2007)
- **Language** English
- **ISBN-10:** 1844155323
- **ISBN-13:** 978-1844155323
- **Product Dimensions:** 24.6 x 19 x 2.6 cm
- **Available via** www.amazon.com for around £15.00 plus P&P

This is the history of Air Intercept (AI) radar and its use in night-fighters in defence of the UK and in the protection of RAF bomber forces. It is set against the political, military, economic and technological background of world events. Beginning in 1935, it describes the events leading up to the creation of the Air Ministry Research Establishment and the work of the Establishment's Airborne Group under Dr Edwin Bowen and the building of the first 1.5 metre AI Mk 1 and later versions that saw use during the winter Blitz in Blenheim night-fighters and Mosquito during the Baedeker Raids. It covers the introduction of centimetric technology at the Telecommunications Research Establishment and the creation of centimetric AI (Mks VII – IX) and their installation in the Beaufighter and later marks of the Mosquito. It describes the creation of the Radiation Laboratory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the development the SCR 720 radar and its adoption by the RAF.

The final section describes the Cold War and the development of jet-powered night-fighters and the changes in the air defence situation with the introduction of strategic bombers by the Soviet Union and the atomic bomb.



"An outstanding combination of the many aspects involved with air intercept radar. The author is very successful in blending technical, operational and military aspects of the subjects into a very interesting book."

Air Power History, winter 2008

The Flying Sword: The Story of 601 Squadron by Tom Moulson



- **Hardcover:** 184 pages
- **Publisher:** Macdonald; 1st edition (1964)
- **Language** English
- **ASIN:** B0007J3592
- **Product Dimensions:** 21.8 x 13.7 x 2.3 cm
- **Available on** www.amazon.com for around £30.00 plus P&P

www.amazon.com – buyer review – “Tom Moulson’s history of 601 Squadron, Royal Auxiliary Air Force, is a solid, small history of this famous unit. The book is what I would call a concise history of the squadron with an emphasis on the pre-war and early war years. The author was a pilot with the squadron post-war and his enthusiasm and pride in serving with 601 is apparent throughout. Although hardly hefty and exhaustive, the book covers the complete history of the squadron and includes a great many anecdotes and recounting which are not seen in other titles. This is a specialised work and one which will really only be of interest to those with more than a passing knowledge of 601. Recommended for those readers with a particular interest in 601 and its members”.



Wg Cdr Oliver Wells, Night Flying Instructor, Pathfinder, P.O.W., Flying Boat Pilot & Author

Pitch Black to Plane Fare



World War Two continues to bring to the surface many untold stories of remarkable courage in the face of danger. Many of these stories have remained locked away for several years. This one has stayed untold for over fifty. The text of Pitch Black To Plane Fare is directly from the pen of Oliver Wells, ex-night flying instructor, pathfinder and flying boat pilot. It has not been altered significantly in any way. It concentrates on three periods in his flying career, all different, yet unique experiences.

You will learn about his time teaching trainee night fighter pilots to fly in the dark. You will marvel at his near death experience as his crippled Lancaster plummeted to earth. You will be gripped by the tale of his five months' working through the Comet Line under the nose of Nazi occupying forces only to be caught by the Gestapo, and his subsequent incarceration and forced march with thousands of other prisoners. Finally you will take great pride in the part that he played in Operation Plane Fare, perhaps the largest humanitarian airlift in history. His story is remarkable, yet he tells it simply in precise detail without a shred of line-shooting or false bravado.

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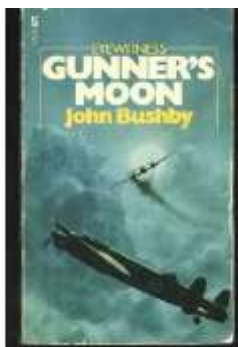
Twenty-one Squadrons: History of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, 1925-57 by Leslie Hunt



- **Hardcover:** 432 pages
- **Publisher:** Garnstone Press; First Edition edition (13 Nov 1972)
- **Language** English
- **ISBN-10:** 0855111100
- **ISBN-13:** 978-0855111106

Foreword by Air Chief Marshal Sir Christopher Foxley-Norris. A history of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force Squadrons, formed after World War I, maintained during the inter-war period, and active in all theatres of war during World War II. There is a history of each squadron integrated with the unit crest, black and white photographs, and representative squadron aircraft.

Gunner's Moon: Memoir of the R.A.F. Night Assault on Germany (Eyewitness of World War II) by John Bushby



- **Hardcover:** 192 pages
- **Publisher:** Littlehampton Book Services Ltd; First Edition edition (21 Aug 1972)
- **Language** English
- **ISBN-10:** 0711003726
- **ISBN-13:** 978-0711003729



- **Product Dimensions:** 21.8 x 14.5 x 2.5 cm

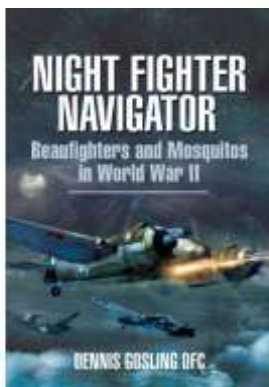
Gunner's Moon tells the story of how the author jointed the famous 601 (County of London) Fighter Squadron before the outbreak of war. It offers a fascinating account of life as a "Saturday afternoon airman" in those days of biplanes and open cockpits and offers some interesting sidelights on long forgotten Service lore and customs.

With his squadron the author served throughout the Battle of Britain at a south coast airfield and here he records, for the first time, something of the story of the men and women who worked through the bombs and the blitz to keep the Hurricanes and Spitfires flying for "The Few".

The book graphically recounts the story of almost forty successive operations over Europe as a rear gunner. The author is one of the very few survivors of those who flew the illfated Manchester bomber, fore runner of the Lancaster. He became a Gunnery Leader and was among the earliest crew members to gain the coveted Pathfinder badge. This part of the story conveys what it felt like to operate night after night against heavily defended targets at a time when bomber losses were as high as ten percent of the attacking force; and when the odds against aircrew survival were assessed as ten to one against. It tells of the human stresses involved and the relationships between crew members in the air and on the ground.

Published in hardback by Ian Allan in 1972. This book contains 16 pages of black and white photographs.

Night Fighter Navigator: Beaufighters and Mosquitos in WWII by Denis Gosling



- **Hardcover:** 208 pages
- **Publisher:** Pen & Sword Aviation (18 Feb 2010)
- **Language** English
- **ISBN-10:** 9781848841888
- **ISBN-13:** 978-1848841888
- **ASIN:** 1848841884
- **Product Dimensions:** 23.6 x 15.8 x 2.6 cm

This is a personal account of one man's war and of the aircraft in which he served. Much has been written about "fighter aces" and, as far as I am aware, to become an Ace, a pilot had to have a minimum of 5 confirmed enemy kills to his credit. Many famous pilots who claimed the Ace distinction failed to achieve such a number. Dennis Gosling received his DFC for being present as a



navigator when that number of kills were confirmed.

This book takes the reader through his service, as a sergeant navigator with the Beaufighter - which includes the defence of Malta at a time when his squadron was often reduced to a single aircraft. It also includes a certain amount of ill-feeling towards the RAF and its class system for rewarding officers and not those in the ranks.

Nevertheless, he recounts the constant enemy fire, the stress of flying impossible missions and the health problems he endured whilst flying. Reduced to starvation level at one point, he is finally repatriated by way of Brazil and Canada on no less a ship than the Queen Mary after which he undertakes a spell of instructing. Promoted to Warrant Officer, he returns to active flying duties just as his squadron are equipped with Mosquitoes.

Curious how he misspells "Mosquitoes" on the book's front cover - but Inside the book he refers to these aircraft as Mossies.

This is a particularly interesting account, an intriguing work which demonstrates how the history of WW2 is still written by those who took part and had their own peculiar role to play. It forms, therefore, an essential part of our ever-growing understanding of who did what during this time of global conflict.



TITLE: Men of the Battle of Britain

AUTHOR: Kenneth G.Wynn

ISBN: 1 902074 10 6

PUBLISHER: CCB Associates

This is the ideal book if you are researching those pilots that served operationally during the Battle of Britain. We have found that one or two lesser known names have been missed, but this book lists a short profile with all the relevant information on each pilot. Name, rank, serial number, squadrons served in, number of claims, status and personal history if he survived the war including promotions and dates and awards and dates. A hard cover book containing 584 pages published by CCB Associates 7 Ravenshead Close, Selsdon, Surrey England.

TITLE: Battle of Britain - Then & Now

EDITOR: Winston Ramsey

ISBN: 0 900913 46 0

PUBLISHER: After The Battle Press

What has become one of the most popular books in recent years is this book which is one of many in the 'Then & Now' series. Used by all serious enthusiasts of the Battle of Britain this book has to rank as one of the best research tools that covers this historical period. It is very accurate with very few errors and is a chronological daily listing of every day of the Battle of Britain providing details of just about every crash or loss of both the RAF and the Luftwaffe. A hard cover book that contains 816 pages of which 219 of them provide airfield histories. Also included is over 1,700 photographs of images taken during 1940 and the same location today as a comparison.

Buy it--it's worth every penny.





TITLE: The Blitz-Then & Now

EDITOR: Winston Ramsey

ISBN: 0 900913 45 2

PUBLISHER: After The Battle Press

Another great reference book in the "Then & Now" series. This book can be treated as a companion book to "Battle of Britain - Then & Now" as this book covers the same period. Starting on September 3rd 1939, this book gives a day to day account of damage done by German bombers all over Britain, crash sites of German aircraft, type and amount of bombs that were dropped and air raid warnings were given and where. As well as this, there are 19 separate articles ranging from evacuation through Hitler's Secret Weapon to all the different types of bombs that were dropped and their construction. There are three volumes in this comprehensive series. Sept 3 1939 - September 6 1940, September 7 1940 - June 21 1941 and June 22 1941 - May 8 1945. With 336 pages and over 1,000 photographs in hard cover this first volume is the ultimate reference tool.

TITLE: Battle of Britain

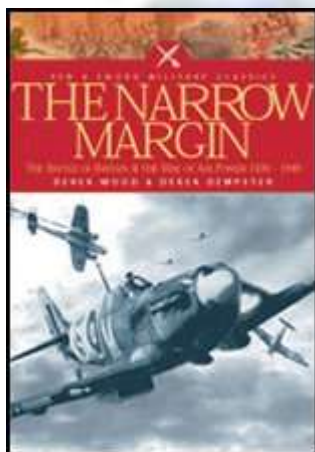
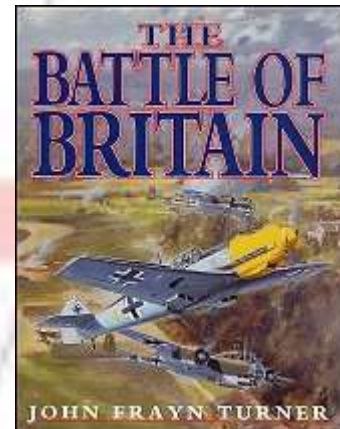
AUTHOR: John Frayn Turner

ISBN: 1 85310 994 0

PUBLISHER: Airlife Books

Written by a man that served with the Royal Navy and this book is one of 24 books authored by John Frayn Turner. Ten books in this collection relate directly with the Royal Air Force and WWII. Although very well written, contains a number of rarely seen photographs it does itself relate closely with the squadrons associated with the Duxford Wing. It is a book worthy of being in anybody's collection but it does not fall into the category as a full Battle of Britain reference book. The pilot accounts are excellent and most are told in first hand and John Frayn Turner has done well in his description of many of the day to day events. The book does not include any appendices containing the fine details of the Battle, but then...these are often repeated over and over, same details but figures that can often be disputed.

176 pages in a hardcover bound book.



TITLE: The Narrow Margin

AUTHOR: Derek Wood & Derek Dempster

ISBN: 0 85052 915 8

PUBLISHER: Pen & Sword Books

Possibly the first complete account of the Battle of Britain that was first published in 1961 and has now been reprinted. Often called "The Bible" because of all details and most of the 1969 film was inspired & based on this book. Still one of the best reference materials available, it still contains much information that present day accounts do not cover. It must be realised that a lot more information has come to light since this book was first published. Everything is covered; aircraft, personnel, tactics, aircraft and pilot losses as well as a day to day account of the battle. Also includes a full listing of "The Few". Available from [Pen and Sword Books](#) Barnsley, South Yorkshire and possibly from all good bookstores throughout GB.



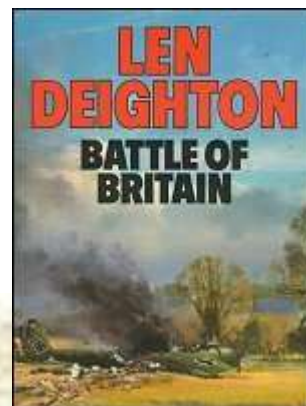
TITLE: Battle of Britain

AUTHOR: Len Deighton

ISBN: 0 224 01826 4

PUBLISHER: Jonathon Cape Books

Len Deighton has written some great books over the years, "Fighter" is one of his best and is reviewed below. This book is possibly aimed at the young, and/or the uninitiated as it much easier to read than most research books on the market today, including others written by Len Deighton. There is a history of the Battle of Britain, the rise of both the RAF and the Luftwaffe, the aircraft and weapons of both sides, a considerable amount of quotes by pilots of both sides, plenty of diagrams and cutaway drawings and a brief look at the events after the Battle of Britain. Hard cover book with 224 pages. Recommended although there is not enough information for the advanced student.



TITLE: The Few: Summer 1940, The Battle of Britain

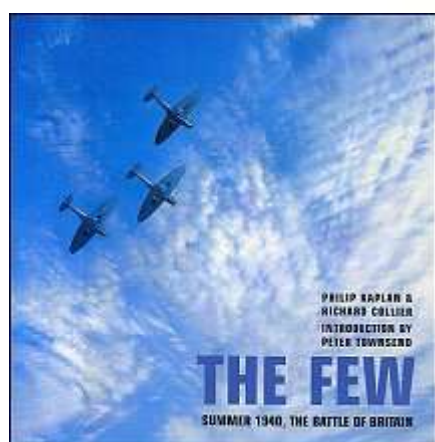
AUTHORS: Philip Kaplan & Richard Collier

ISBN: 0 297 84345 1

PUBLISHER: Orion Publishing

This very interesting book was first published in 1989 but this special edition co-written with Richard Collier was published in 2002 making one of the later books on the Battle of Britain. Not only is this book well written, it is also superbly laid out with an informative, easy to read text, aircrew quotes and antidotes and comments on the left or right hand side of each page, over 70 historical photographs and drawings and over 100 coloured photographs of the various locations of battle scarred buildings that we have to come to accept that one day progress will take them away for ever.

Many old wartime posters are reproduced, torn and tattered as the years past have eaten their quality away but are reminders of how life was seen in that summer of 1940. This is a must read book, it is packed with information such as reports and and extracts from the diaries of "The Few"



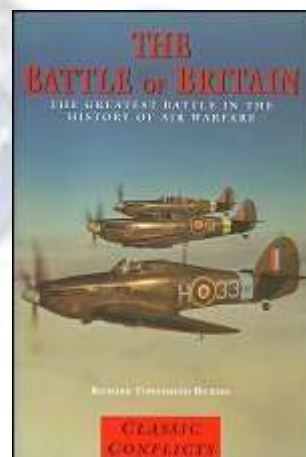
TITLE: Battle of Britain

AUTHOR: Richard Townshend Bickers

ISBN: 1 84065 081 8

PUBLISHER: Salamander Books

This title comes in two versions, one is a text only publication (cover shown) with only 18 photographs, while the other contains numerous charts, diagrams and many photographs. The diagrams of aircraft flight paths on heavy combat days shown in this book are some of the best you will see. The text appears to be a rather updated version of that of "The Narrow Margin" and has been very well researched and written. It is not a complete chronology as the dates are embedded into the text so one has to search for any particular date. But it is worth having in the collection as it ranks in the 8 out of 10 category. Soft cover and 272 pages or hard cover and 208 pages although the hard covered book is much bigger.



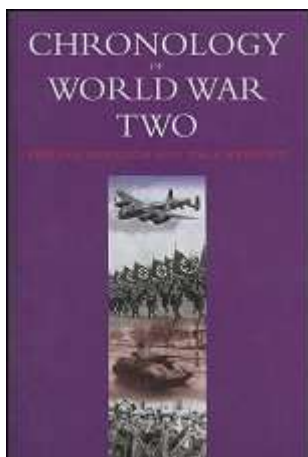


TITLE: **Fighter**
AUTHOR: Len Deighton
ISBN: 0 7126 7423 3
PUBLISHER: Pimlico

This is arguably Len Deighton's finest book on the Battle of Britain and ranks up there with the best. It gets technical at times but is very easy to read. It covers everything from the leaders to the tools of trade, an account of the actual battle and the final chapter is devoted to something unlike a discussion paper on the results. Like many reference books, it lacks the all-important quick reference appendix's so you have to delve through the pages to find small snippets of vital information quickly. Very well written in a way that is easily understood and like the book above, falls into that 8 out of 10 category. Soft covered version has 261 pages and 74 photographs.

TITLE: **Finest Hour**
AUTHOR: Tim Clayton & Phil Craig
ISBN: 0 340 75041 3
PUBLISHER: Hodder & Staughton

The period of the Battle of Britain comes to life in this book with a difference. It is the book of the BBC television series of the same name. It is not a book about tactics, it is not concerned about aircraft and bombs. It is a book about people. Basically it is a big collection of people's stories, what they done, how they reacted, how they felt and how they went about their duties during this period of the war. Interviews and stories from Denis Wissler and Paul Ritchie of the RAF, Marion Holmes who was Winston Churchill's secretary, Peter Vaux and Ernie Leggett from the army, Ian Nethercott who was in the navy and WAAF Edith Heap who was engaged to Denis Wissler just prior to his going missing as well as many others. Excellent reference if you are looking for feelings and personal quotes. The personal testimonies are excellent in this hard cover book of 418 pages with numerous photographs.



TITLE: **Chronology of World War Two**
AUTHOR: Edward Davidson & Dale Manning
ISBN: 0 304 35309 4
PUBLISHER: Cassell

Not exactly a Battle of Britain reference book, but one that is very handy to have to find out what else was happening in other parts of the world at the same time. It is a book that once in a collection will very often be used. It covers the entire period of the second world war from 1939 to 1945. It is a hard cover book of 286 pages and is also illustrated. Not essential to have, but a complete diary of events that would most certainly be used at some stage or another.



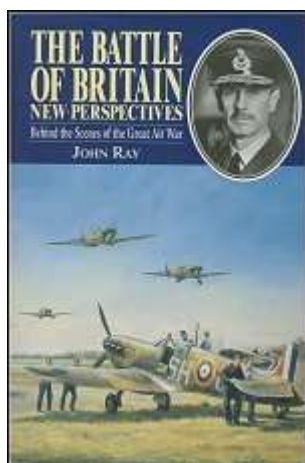
TITLE: Dowding and Headquarters Fighter Command

AUTHOR: Peter Flint

ISBN: 1 85310 534 1

PUBLISHER: AirLife

We read so much about the Battle of Britain, fighter tactics and "The Few" have been synonymous with this period. Hugh Dowding and sometimes Bentley Priory are mentioned by name only. At last, Peter Flint has given us a deep look into the history and reconstruction of Bentley Priory and discloses much that is unknown to the average reader. An even greater insight into the life and time of ACM Sir Hugh Dowding discloses what sort of man he was, how he thought, what motivated him and the reasoning behind his many decisions. There is so much in this superb book that you will not find in other books on the Battle of Britain. A hard cover book with 222 pages and illustrated with 47, some very rare photographs.



TITLE: Battle of Britain - New Perspective's

AUTHOR: Dr John Ray

ISBN: 1 85409 229 4

PUBLISHER: Arms & Armour Press

Ten out of ten for this behind the scenes look at what went on in Fighter Command during the Battle of Britain, and congratulations to Dr John Ray for many months of researching to not only bring to light many instances that had not been told before, but to elaborate further on many issues that other historians had mentioned only briefly. This book is compelling reading because we are enlightened of new facts that have come to light. It is well written and at most times is easily understood as it does become technical in places. This hard covered, 222 page book with 32 excellent photographs is a must for the serious and advanced researcher who needs to go deeper than normal.

TITLE: The Hardest Day - 18 August 1940

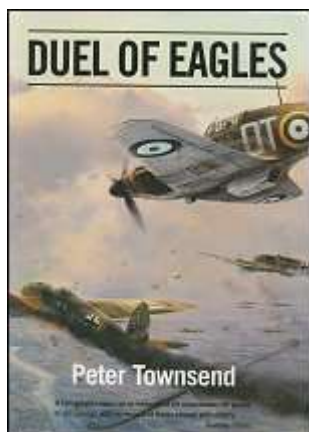
AUTHOR: Alfred Price

ISBN: 0 304 35081 8

PUBLISHER: Cassell

Alfred Price has given us quite a number of books in the past, but this is the only one that is the story of just one day during the Battle of Britain. The author gives us in exceptional detail the events leading up to the attack on Kenley and Biggin Hill on August 18th 1940 both from the Luftwaffe point of view, the planning and the tactics to be used, and Fighter Command, totally unprepared yet were equal to the task at the moment of the attack. There are stories and interviews with many that were on duty that day and you can share the heartbreak and sorrow as they saw their airfields almost totally destroyed. Believed to be only in paperback with 223 pages, 84 photographs and 17 excellent diagrams make this an excellent research tool if you are making a study of the events at Kenley and Biggin Hill on August 18th 1940.





TITLE: Duel of Eagles

AUTHOR: Peter Townsend

Many of the Battle of Britain pilots have taken the task of writing books on their experiences. Richard Hillary wrote "The Last Enemy" in 1942 before he was killed the following year, and "Johnnie" Johnson wrote "Glorious Summer". Peter Townsend has written a couple of books, but this one, not based on personal experiences but based on the experiences of many of his colleagues plus the results of research into a number of events. "Duel of Eagles" looks at the air forces of both Britain and Germany and as it is all based on fact, is a true account, and the characters are all real. It can therefore be used as a reference book, and a good one at that. Exceptionally good reading and a worthwhile addition to any collection.

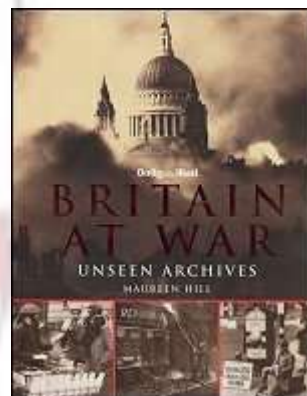
TITLE: Britain at War - Unseen Archives

AUTHOR: Maureen Hill/London Daily Mail

ISBN: 0 75255 661 4

PUBLISHER: Paragon

Britain was bombed during the Battle of Britain and it was to continue until the end in 1945. Anyone who is of British stock will most certainly be interested in this book, while anyone interested in the Battle of Britain may be interested in the effects that the bombing had on the British people. All the photographs, and there is over a thousand, and are from the archives of London's Daily Mail newspaper which most of these photographs have never been seen since their publication in the newspaper during those war years. Some were not even published because of censorship so this is the first time that they have been released. Each photograph is accompanied by a story or an extended caption that makes for interesting reading. We have read so much about the German bombing of Britain, now, through these wonderfully produced photographs we can see the results of that bombing and the destruction that they caused. But not all are about the bombing. Many are of life as it was, how the people coped in times of loss and hardship. A hard cover book of 390 pages and countless photographs. This is a gem.



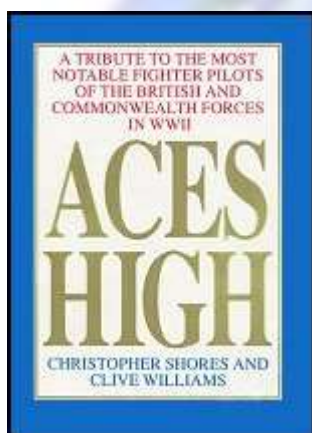
TITLE: Aces High

AUTHOR: Christopher Shores/Clive Williams

ISBN: 1 898697 00 0

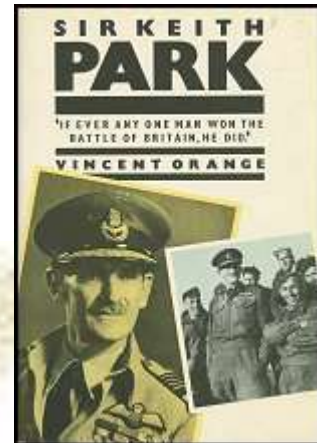
PUBLISHER: Grub Street

The very first edition of this book was published in 1966 and it created so much impact, especially amongst aviation enthusiasts that it quickly sold out and at much the same time went out of print. This original is now regarded as a collectors item. Then with a lot more information, far more accurate records this second edition of "Aces High" published in 1994 is a researchers dream. The book lists all those pilots that are regarded as 'aces' during WWII. Each listing has the pilots name, rank and serial number above his profile. Underneath this is the full listing of all that pilots credits, including date, enemy aircraft type, damaged or destroyed, the pilots aircraft and number, where the action took place and the squadron the pilot belonged to. Essential to any enthusiast and historian. Also includes squadron histories. Hard cover of 664 pages with many photographs.

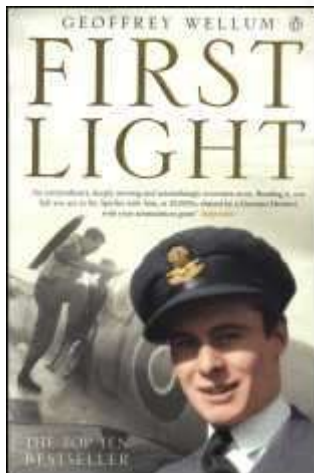


TITLE: Sir Keith Park
AUTHOR: Vincent Orange
ISBN: 0 413 49770 4
PUBLISHER: Methuen

No book collection on the Battle of Britain would really be complete without the autobiographies of the leaders. This is the complete story of Air Vice Marshal Sir Keith Park from his days as an artilleryman in 1915, a fighter pilot in 1917 through to taking control of 11 Group in Fighter Command, through the Battle of Britain period, his conflicts with Leigh-Mallory, his dismissal after the battle then right through until past his 80th birthday in New Zealand. It's an incredible story about a man who rose to power then the quick slide down. An early book of 1984 vintage, hard cover of 301 pages with 13 photographs.



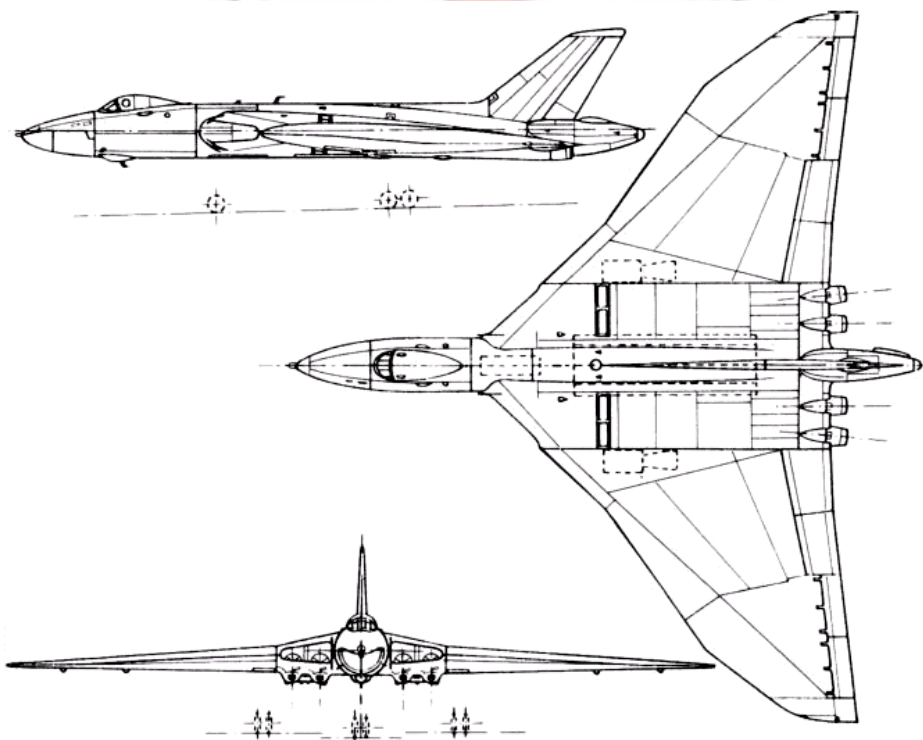
TITLE: First Light
AUTHOR: Geoffrey Wellum
ISBN: 0-141-00814-8
PUBLISHER: Penguin



If ever there was a Battle of Britain fighter pilots story written in his own hand, then FIRST LIGHT has to be one of the best that has ever been seen on the bookshelves. That is, not to put down any of the other books written or based on the experiences of fighter pilots, but this book FIRST LIGHT is written in such a way that it is so easy to visualise what Geoffrey is experiencing; you are there with him in every minute detail. Once you commence on the first chapter you will not want to put this book down until the very last page. From being a seventeen year old who simply wanted to fly and that he had just written to the Air Ministry and when Geoffrey walks down High Holborn and down to The Kingsway begins his deeply moving, often horrifying, often exciting yet compelling self portrait of Geoffrey Wellums' RAF experience through the Battle of Britain and continuing on throughout WWII. This Penguin book was published in 2003, contains 338 pages and includes 41 original B&W photographs.



Trivia – Himmler. Heinrich Himmler, the evil head of the Nazi SS, was once a chicken farmer.



RAF Luqa - Malta

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



RAF Luqa crest

Royal Air Force Luqa was a flying station and location of RAF Mediterranean Command headquarters of the Royal Air Force on the island of Malta during World War II. Particularly during the Siege of Malta from 1941 to 1943, RAF Luqa was a very important base for British Commonwealth forces fighting against Italy and Germany for naval control of the Mediterranean and for ground control of North Africa. Air combat over and near Malta was some of the most ferocious of the war, and a series of airfields were built on the small, rocky island: at Luqa, Ta'Qali, and Hal Far, plus satellite fields at Safi, Qrendi and on Malta's second island of Gozo.

After the war, Luqa remained an important RAF base, serving during the Suez Crisis of 1956, but also served as Malta's main civilian airport. Nowadays, the location has been developed into the main entry point of the modern, independent country of Malta, under the name Malta International Airport. It is sometimes still referred to as "Luqa Airport" or "Valletta Airport".

The RAF left in 1979 following a British government decision not to renew the lease on the station from the Maltese. The payments demanded were several times the previous payments under the previous lease. It is also possible that the Avro Vulcan crash over the village of Żabbar led to the Maltese decision to effectively get the RAF to leave by raising the proposed lease payments to what was known to be a level unacceptable to the British.



RAF Luqa in 1941.



Nowadays known as

Malta International Airport (IATA: **MLA**, ICAO: **LMML**) is the only airport in Malta and it serves the whole Maltese Archipelago. It is located between Luqa and Gudja. It occupies the location of the former RAF Luqa and was completely re-furbished, becoming fully operational on 25 March 1992. It is still referred to by locals as **Luqa Airport**, and sometimes as **Valletta Airport** internationally, as it is located 5 km (3.1 mi) southwest of the Maltese capital Valletta.

The airport serves as the main hub for Air Malta, though many other airlines also fly to the airport, including many holiday airlines. The airport is operated by Malta International Airport plc, a public limited company. It also hosts the Area Control Centre. The airport hosts the annual Malta Airshow, visited by military and civil aircraft from various European and other countries.

On 4 March 2010, Ryanair announced the reaching of a 5-year agreement to make Malta International Airport its 41st base. One aircraft was based as of 17 May 2010.

MIA's core air terminal operations include general passenger services, and the operation of an extensive range of retail services at the airport, airside and landside shops, restaurants and other outlets, which are all operated on concession agreements. MIA also leases office space to airlines and other travel related operators at the airport. Malta International Airport is a member of the ACI-EUROPE (Airports Council International - Europe) and a number of company officials sit on specialised committees and working groups within this council.

In 2010 Malta International Airport was awarded the title of "Most Noteworthy Airport for a New Small Budget Programme" by *Passenger Terminal World*

History

The first civil airfield was constructed at Ta' Qali, followed by others at Hal Far (RAF Hal Far) and Luqa. During the Second World War, the airfields at Ta' Qali and Hal Far were severely battered and civil operations subsequently centred on Luqa Airport.

The increase in passenger handling and aircraft movements necessitated the construction of a civil air terminal. Preparations started in 1956 and the British Government mainly financed what was then a Lm 300,000 (approx €700,000) project. Malta's new passenger air terminal at Luqa was inaugurated on 31 March 1958 by the then Governor of Malta Sir Robert Laycock. The air terminal consisted of two floors including some basic facilities such as a restaurant, a post office, a cable and wireless office and a viewing balcony for the public.

Air traffic constantly increased and new airlines with larger aircraft started operations. The introduction of jet aircraft decreased flying times and consequently attracted more people to travel by air.

In October 1977, a new and longer runway was launched and works commenced on the extension and refurbishment of the air terminal. An arrivals lounge and another lounge dedicated to VIPs were added and the original part of the terminal building was used for departures.

This refurbishment was not enough as it still lacked certain essential facilities. Immediately after the change in Government in 1987, the new administration decided that the 35-year-old terminal was past its time and therefore gave the green light for the construction of a new air terminal along Park 9.

Until the construction of the new air terminal was completed, the Government embarked on a further upgrade of the old air terminal. The facilities introduced included air conditioning, new baggage carousels, flight information monitors, computerised check-in desks, a new floor surface and new retail outlets including a larger duty free area.



The foundation stone of the present air terminal was laid in September 1989 and inaugurated in record time 29 months later in February 1992. Malta International Airport became fully operational on March 25, 1992, and the old Luqa passenger terminal was effectively closed down after 35 years.

Awards

In 2010 Malta International Airport was awarded the title of "Most Noteworthy Airport for a New Small Budget Programme" by *Passenger Terminal World*, the international review of airport design, technology, security, operations and management. The airport is classified among the top 15 airports worldwide, joining Dubai, Brussels, San Francisco, Stockholm, Heathrow, Changi, Barcelona and Vienna, which were also awarded.

The *Passenger Terminal World Annual 2010* said "When a new terminal can cost US\$1.5 billion it is hard to think that many wonderful airports are being developed for a fraction of that sum, but Malta Airport is one such. With its current development programme it is a small airport with big plans – improving the commercial offer, enlarging security and other essential services, and gaining plaudits from the country's population."

In addition it also won Best Airport in its category (1-5 million passengers) at the ACI Europe Awards and the Best Airport in Europe across all categories in the ACI Airport Service Quality (ASQ Survey).



Terminal as seen from the tarmac



The old passenger terminal at Luqa Airport was converted into an air cargo terminal when the completely re-furbished Malta International Airport became fully operational in March 1992.



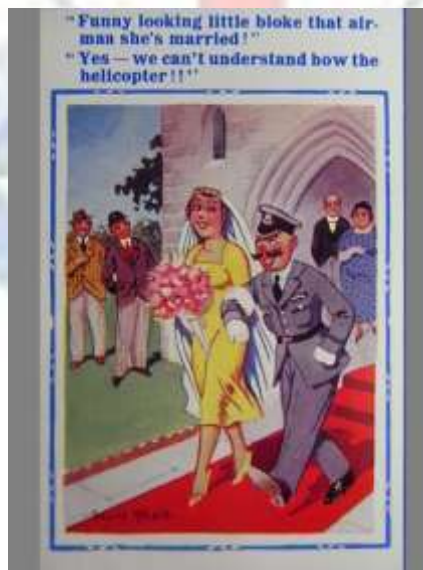
A Lufthansa Airbus A319 in a maintenance hangar in Luqa



Incidents and accidents

- On 5 January 1960, Vickers Viscount G-AMNY of British European Airways was damaged beyond economic repair at Luqa when it departed the runway after landing following a loss of hydraulic pressure.
- On 25 November 1973, Luqa Airport witnessed the landing of KLM Flight 861. The aircraft named "Mississippi", was a Boeing 747 hijacked by three young Arabs over Iraqi airspace on a scheduled Amsterdam-Tokyo flight with 247 passengers on board, after the hijackers threatened to blow up the plane when no country would grant landing permission. Most of the passengers and the eight stewardesses were released after negotiations with the Maltese PM Dom Mintoff who argued with the hijackers that the plane could not possibly take off with both the passengers and the 27,000 gallons of fuel they had demanded given the (then) short runway. With 11 passengers on board the jumbo jet left Malta to Dubai where the incident ended without fatalities. The hijack was claimed by the Arab Nationalist Youth Organization.
- On 23 November 1985, Luqa Airport was the scene of one of the deadliest aircraft hijackings in aviation history. **EgyptAir Flight 648** was forced to land in Malta en-route to Libya. Unit 777 of the Egyptian counter-terrorism forces was dispatched to deal with the incident. Storming of the Boeing 737, reluctantly authorised by Maltese officials after five hostages were shot, resulted in the death of over 60 passengers plus several security personnel, aircrew and members of the hijackers, the Abu Nidal Organization.
- Abdelbaset al-Megrahi was convicted for the Lockerbie bombing on the theory that he loaded a bomb onto Air Malta Flight KM180 Malta-Frankfurt at Luqa Airport which it is alleged found its way via the interline baggage system onto Pan Am Feeder Flight 103A Frankfurt-London and eventually onto **Pan Am Flight 103** London -New York.
- MLA was the origin airport of the **Air Malta Flight 830** Malta-Istanbul hijack which ended in Cologne.
- On February 21, 2011, two Libyan fighter pilots, both claiming to be colonels, defected and landed their Mirage F1 jets at the airport after refusing to carry out orders to fire upon a group of civilian Libyan protesters in Tripoli. On the same day two Eurocopter Super Puma helicopters registered in France also landed carrying seven French nationals who were under Italian contracts to work in Libya.

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How SaBRE can support you

What is SaBRE?

SaBRE, Supporting Britain's Reservists and Employers, is a Ministry of Defence marketing and communications campaign. Set up in October 2002, it was created with the belief that if an employer understands the role of Reservists and is aware of the skills they develop their support for their Reserve Forces employees will be that much greater.

The National Employer Advisory Board

The National Employer Advisory Board (NEAB) is a lower tier advisory Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), and is responsible to the Secretary of State for Defence through the MOD. Its key functions include:

- Providing informed but independent advice to the Secretary of State for Defence on issues surrounding the employment of Reservists
- Providing advice on the development of the strategy, content and directional focus of the SaBRE Campaign
- Advising on the efficiency, effectiveness and conduct of the SaBRE Campaign

Who supports the SaBRE campaign?

Supporters of the SaBRE campaign include the major political parties, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), the Institute of Directors (IOD), the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), the Engineering Employers' Federation (EEF) and the Trades Union Congress (TUC).

What we can do for you

SaBRE is here to provide you with any help and support you need regarding Reservist employment. This can cover:

- General advice about employing a Reservist including developing a Reservist HR policy
- Information on anything from a Reservist's training obligations to an employer's legal rights and responsibilities
- Help in understanding the many benefits of employing Reservists
- Regional SaBRE Campaign Directors who can help with specific enquiries
- Advice and guidance of good practice for employers on Reservist employment matters
- Awareness-raising events, such as opportunities to see for yourself what Reservists do in the field
- Conduit for feedback to the MOD on behalf of Reservists and their employers

How to get in touch with us

- Call our helpline **0800 389 5459** (open Monday to Friday 9am-5pm; closed weekends and bank holidays)
- Email us
- Contact your Regional SaBRE Campaign Director

<http://www.sabre.mod.uk>



Event – Trip HQ 11 Gp Bunker, Uxbridge Barracks, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB10 0RZ

The Association is *still* considering arranging a private tour of the old HQ 11 Group Bunker at the former RAF Uxbridge.



The bunker is the fully restored WW2 War Operations bunker where much of the Battle of Britain was controlled from. Adjacent to the entrance is a monument dedicated to those who fought and died in the Battle of Britain;



If anyone is interested, please let me (Andy Cameron) know. We are at this stage gauging the level of interest and if we have enough, will set it all up and no doubt have a great day.



Personal Details updates.

Please (print off) complete and return the form below (address at end of newsletter) for confirmation and all updates of your personal contact details. It is the only way we can communicate with our members and so would be grateful if you can confirm to ensure we have the correct details on our files. If you know of any member changes that we may not, please do let us know or ask the member to do so.

Personal Details Update Request

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Email address (if applicable):
Date:

For the attention of the Secretary, 600 Squadron Association.

Dear Secretary,

I have noticed from your records that you are holding certain information on me that is incorrect. Please find details of how this information should be amended.

Current details held:

Amendments:

I would be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of my request, and notify me once the necessary amendments have been made. I look forward to hearing from you.

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Andy Cameron, 53 Telford Crescent, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire, RG5 4QT

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Registered Charity No. 248203 ("The City of London Squadron Central Fund") to assist with the funding of the Association.

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601 Squadron Association News



A Hawker Hurricane Mk 1 in 601 Squadron markings

Motto:No Motto

Badge:A winged sword

No.601 Squadron was formed at Northolt on 14 October 1925 as a light bomber unit of the Auxiliary Air Force. A nucleus of permanent staff was posted to the squadron and on 4 December the first Auxiliary personnel were enlisted. Flying did not begin until May 1926 and it was the following year before the Avro 504Ks were supplemented by D.H.9A light bombers. In January 1927 the squadron moved to Hendon, which was its base up to the outbreak of war, apart from a few days during the Munich crisis in September 1938. In November 1929 Wapitis began to arrive and a year later had replaced all the D.H.9As. These were in turn replaced by Harts by June 1933 and on 1 July 1934 the squadron was redesignated a fighter unit. The Harts were retained until replaced by Demons in August 1937. In November 1938, No.601 converted to Guantlet single-seat fighters, but in January 1939 began to receive Blenheims. It was with these that fighter patrols began when World War Two broke out in September 1939 but in March 1940 the squadron had converted to Hurricanes. During the German invasion of France, a detachment operated from French soil for a week, followed by defensive duties during the Battle of Britain while based in southern England.

In February 1941, the squadron began taking part in offensive sweeps over northern France which continued until August, when re-equipment with Airacobras began. These proved useless and were discarded in favour of Spitfires in March 1942, but after only a few minor operations. In April the squadron sailed for the Middle East and re-assembled in Egypt on 25 June. Fighter sweeps over the Western Desert started a few days later and after the rout of the Afrika Corps at El Alamein, the squadron moved westwards to Tunisia, where it was present at the end of the North African campaign in May 1943. Next month it flew to Malta to cover the Allied landings in Sicily moving into captured airfields in mid-July. In October No.601 moved to Italy, where it spent the rest of the war flying ground attack missions in support of the Allied armies. On 14 August 1945, the squadron was disbanded.

On 10 May 1946 the Auxiliary Air Force was reformed and No.601 began to recruit personnel at Hendon in June. In October it commenced flying Spitfires, but moved to North Weald in March 1949 where it converted to Vampires in December. These it flew until re-equipped with Meteors in August 1952. On 10 March 1957, the Royal Auxiliary Air Force was disbanded and No.601 ceased to exist.

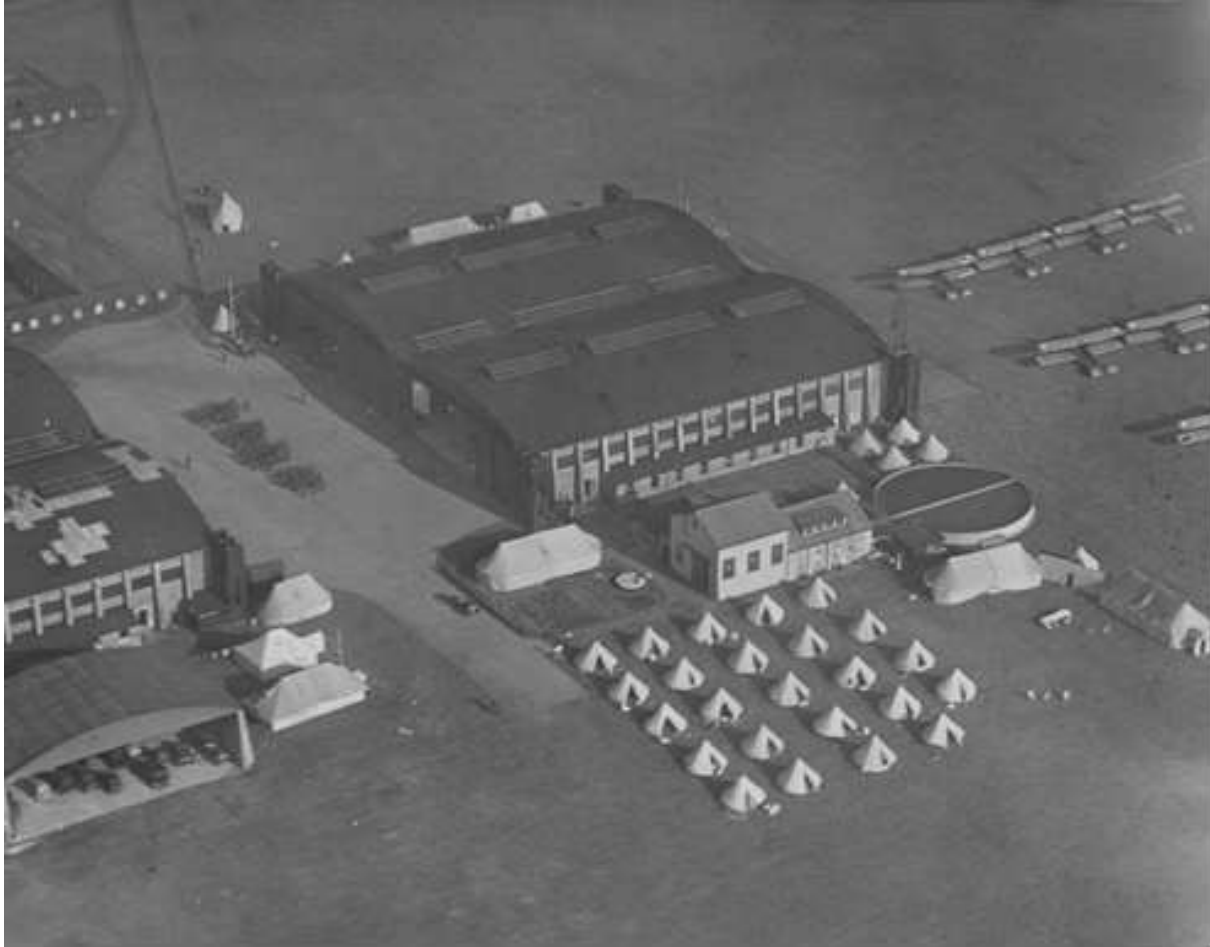
www.601squadron.com



The Wars Between the Auxiliaries: 601 and 600 Squadron by James Ivers 601 OCA

Each summer starting in 1927, 600 Squadron would go to Hawkinge and 601 to Lympne for their annual two week summer camp trainings. Due to the strong rivalry between the two Squadrons, simple pranks between the two turned into a full on "war" by the summer of 1936, with each Squadron retaliating with a more elaborate scheme.

The first attack was lead by 601 Squadron in 1928 when they rounded up forty sheep from local fields and herded them into the 600 Squadron's tents while they were at a party in Folkestone. In retaliation 600 waited for the lights to go out in the 601 tents and then loosened the guy ropes and pegs leaving each sleeper covered in mess of damp canvas.



*601 Squadron Summer Camp at Lympne c.1930
601 OCA Archives*

By the summer of 1933 many of the summer camp dinners held by the 601 Squadron officers were held at the house of Sir Philip Sassoon (Honorary Air Commodore of 601). Sir Philip soon found that his dinner parties were frequently ending prematurely in wild disorder after shouts of "Six Hundred raiding! Six Hundred raiding!" and learned to have his staff put all works of art in safe keeping whenever the Squadron was in attendance.





Sir Philip Sassoon's house at Lympne
601 OCA Archives

In the summer of 1936 the simple raids took on a new turn as documented in *The Evening Standard* August 15, 1936:

Territorial Airmen Pelted With Soot and Treacle "Bombs"

An intensive 'war' not in the schedule of operations has been going on between two squadrons of London's Territorial airmen, undergoing their annual training in East Kent. They are the 600th City of London Squadron of the Auxiliary Air Force in camp at Hawkinge and the 601st County of London Auxiliary Air Force unit at Lympne. On Thursday night an officer of the 600th Squadron was invited to Lympne, where he was taken "prisoner" bound and gagged, and then flown to Hawkinge, where he was dumped on the parade ground. Members of his squadron rushed out to see the mysterious bundle left by the machine when they were attacked by a dozen airplanes carrying bombs of soot and flour and balloons filled with ink and milk.

Just after 4 a.m. on Friday No. 600 Squadron retaliated with an attack on 601 Squadron at Lympne. Bombs of soot and yellow ochre, ink, eggs, old fruit and treacle were dropped from 15 machines. The officers were in their tents, and as the bombs fell, they rushed for shelter to the hangars, many of them in their pajamas. The raiders kept up the bombardment for more than half an hour. The mess had to be cleared away before an inspection by Sir Philip Sassoon, the Under-secretary for Air, which was timed for 9.30. Last night twelve raiding machines again left Lympne with a cargo of ingenious and devastating bombs. The machines flew by way of the sea round Folkestone and then crossed the coast again towards Hawkinge.

They dropped their first bombs on the Officers' Mess. The commotion caused many to rush from their tents and they were then pelted from the raiding machines with rotten fruit, eggs, and bombs made of treacle and soot. Backwards and forwards the machines zoomed dropping their unpleasant cargo, and they did not leave until 28 minutes after the attack opened. A smoke bomb fell among the tents, and for a time completely blotted out the entire camp. The raiders also dropped a number of Chinese crackers which exploded loudly. The County Squadron hope this will be the last attack for they are breaking camp with a dance to-night, but they fear retaliation. The cause of the outbreak of "hostilities" was the capture and detention by the 600th Squadron of the flying sword, which is the mascot of 601 Squadron.

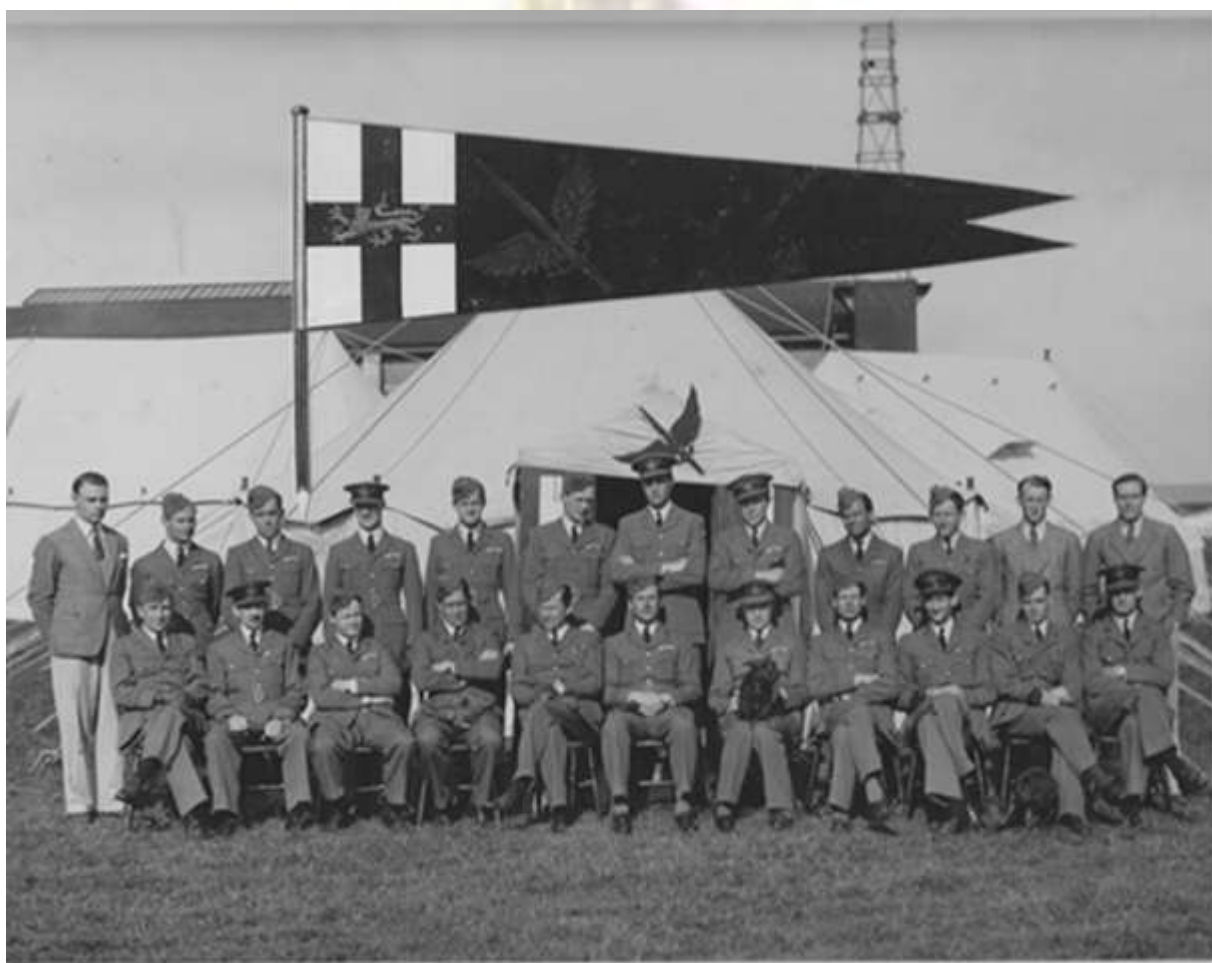
The front page of *The Daily Mirror* adds: Speaking to a 600 officer at Hawkinge, *The Daily Mirror* was told that the "attack" had taken place. "They surprised us" he said. "Their bombing was deadly accurate. We had not started dinner when we first heard the zoom of the machines. Foul-smelling bombs dropped all round us. Cars that were parked nearby were hit. There was complete chaos for a time. It was a grand leg-pull. We all enjoyed it, but could do nothing in retaliation. There was no danger to anyone. The raid was carried out in good fun and with complete



sportsmanship. "In fact, it was so awful that it was impossible to drink our sherry before dinner. That was the biggest catastrophe."

The 600 Officer that was taken prisoner by 601 Squadron was Flight-Lieutenant Campbell-Orde who flew his Hawker Hart from Hawkinge to Lymington after an invite for drinks. Campbell-Orde's drinks were laced to make him fall asleep and 601 tied him up with rope and stuffed rotten fish into his tunic pockets. His Hart was then covered in messages of insults to 600 Squadron. Campbell-Orde was transported back to Folkestone in the cabin of a private 601 plane and Ray Davis of 601 flew the Hart back to Hawkinge. Inadvertently, however Davis provided a crowning insult when he tipped the plane on its nose beside the tied up Flight Commander.

In retaliation to this 600 led an attack the next morning over Lymington and bombarded the 601 tents with everything imaginable: dead rabbits, birds and crabs, bombs containing soot and flower, balloons containing ink and milk, ochre, sacks of bad eggs, old fruit, fish, potato peelings, cartons of treacle and silk stockings loaded with cow manure. During the 15 minute attack a 600 plane managed to land and steal the 601 Squadrons wooden Flying Sword.



601 Squadron at Lymington in 1936.

From the album of Brian Thynne. The 601 Pennant is stuck onto the photo. Note the wooden Flying Sword on top of the door to the mess tent. This is the mascot that was stolen by 600, and subsequently recovered by 601.

Top Row, Ray Davis, Willy Rhodes-Moorhouse, Michael Peacock, ?, Peter Robinson Archie Hope, ?, Jimmy Little, Max Aitken, ? Paddy Green, Gillo.

Bottom Row, Doc Williams, Dickie Shaw, Henry Cavendish, Roger Bushell, Loel Guinness, Brian Thynne, Peter Clive, ? Bob Foley, ?, ?.



Brian Thynne C.O. of 601 worked with his officers of to come up with a plan of retaliation. Ray Davis thought of one where 601 would raid 600 in a similar fashion, however it would take place just before 600 Squadron's full dress dinner; a smoke screen was laid to cover the entire camp while a gas masked party would recover the Flying Sword. However, there was a problem. No one had ever created a smoke screen before, but it was understood that tannic acid in contact with air would create a dense smoke. Brian Thynne, Ray Davis, Peter Robinson and Sir Archibald Hope went to an armaments establishment to find some. They asked the stores officer for the tannic acid, who in turn asked "What on earth do you want it for?". Thynne replied "We want it to drop it on 600 Squadron". "I see," replied the stores officer, "and how much will you need?" As it turns out the stores officer had at one time been demoted as the result of an incident involving 600 Squadron and still bore a grudge. The tannic acid was placed into ice-cream cartons and dropped during the raid along with other items of garbage. The raid was a complete success and the Squadron recovered their sword.



1933 Brian Thynne's Spartan at Lympne.
From the album of Brian Thynne.

LtoR Brian Thynne, Drogo Montague, Reggie Elsamie, Dickie Shaw, Nigel Norman, Terrie, Nigie Seeley in the Spartan.
Note Flying Sword painted onto the bell tent

The Air Ministry in view of the fact that squadron personnel were off-duty and the planes private did not take a serious view of the raids. Both C.O.s were summoned by the A.O.C. and stated that in his opinion that the contest was a perfect draw and couldn't it be left at that. Both C.O.s were relieved to leave it at that, and by this time the soles of the shoes of 601 Squadron officers had rotted off due to the acid which was used neat and should have been diluted with 10 parts water. The 600 mess kits looked like they had been attacked by a thousand hungry moths, and 30 tents were completely ruined. Additionally plants belonging to the Folkestone Corporation were extensively damaged which caused an outcry by the residents. Due to Squadron custom anything damaged by the Squadron was paid for. So in order to restore good civic-relations Brian Thynne with his pocket bulging with notes equaling 100 pounds went to the head gardener. Brian's starting offer to replace the damaged plants was 5 pounds, to which the gardener said "I am sure that will cover it nicely, sir."

Sources

The Flying Sword by Tom Moulson
The Evening Standard 15Aug1936
The Daily Mirror 15Aug1936





The P-39 Airacobra and 601 Squadron by Scott Rall

The P-39 was quite simply one of the most interesting and controversial planes of the Second World War. Proposed in 1937 and finished in 1939 the plane was labeled as an "interceptor" aircraft. The Airacobra was the first fighter to have the engine installed in the center fuselage, behind the pilot. Innovative for its time, the P-39 design was handicapped by the absence of an efficient turbo charger limiting it to low-altitude work. The Airacobra also included a tricycle undercarriage, also the first of its kind.

Britain ordered 386 P-39's with four .5 guns in the wings and a 20mm cannon in its nose in 1940. The total number ordered for Britain was 675. The first two arrived at Matlask, with great fanfare, where 601 Squadron encamped on August 6th 1941. All the pilots were eager to receive these new aircraft which superseded the Hawker Hurricane, an aircraft slowly becoming obsolete for the European theater of war. Eight days after its arrival, Sgt Briggs crash landed after tightening up in a turn causing him to black out, and Sgt Bell force landed his P-39 with a serious glycol leak.



After these experiences 601 was transferred to Duxford where more of the Airacobras arrived and at least three more crashed or were force landed due to some issue. The P-39 was flown on a routine mission to Dunkirk where they strafed German troops. Within a few days of this event P/O



Hewitt was killed whilst practicing aerobatics when his plane spun into the ground without any explanation. P/O Sewell's fuel supply failed although he landed safely. Sgt Sawyer was killed when he encountered the same fuel problem as Sewell. For the next couple of months the Squadron had to make do with this unpopular plane while it continued to persist with mechanical mishaps.

P/O Pawson tested the fighter during AVM "Birdie" Saul's visit to Acaster Malbis in February. He climbed to 27,000 feet and tried out the guns with the result of discovering that the central cannon's magazine had froze and another port gun failed with a frozen breech block. The very next day 601 also suffered another casualty as P/O McDonnell crashed after losing control of his aircraft. In fact much of the time the Airacobra was "in service" during this period saw most of the planes being non-operational due to problems also stemming from the fact that the plane was prone to electrical problems in the colder English climate. The Airacobra also suffered from persistent sinking into the mud due to their small nose wheels and heavy frame.

When S/Ldr John Bisdee arrived in March, he found the squadron despondent and in a gloomy mood due to the disappointing performance of the Airacobra. Bisdee decided that things must change for the better and after a conversation with AVM Saul was told that they initially were to receive Typhoons – also in their early stages and prone to problems - which did not seem to sit well with Bisdee who well knew that 601 needed a dependable and stable aircraft. Saul eventually gave in and announced that they were to receive a new aircraft.



That aircraft was the Spitfire, which went on to become the Squadrons mainstay from Malta through Sicily and to the end of the war.

In all, 80 P-39's were sent to 601, the only Squadron in the RAF that ever flew these unique planes. The plane was not a great success in England and was hampered by an inadequate rate of climb and performance not to mention a string of mechanical problems.

The Airacobra went on to be passed out to the Soviet Union, the USA and other countries with eventual success after its time with 601 Squadron. In total 9,584 P-39's were built during WW2.

Reference: Tom Moulson, *The Flying Sword*, 1964

Scott Rall



604 Squadron Association News



(A Bristol Blenheim Mk 1F in 604 Squadron markings)

Motto: *Si vis pacem, para bellum* - 'If you want peace, prepare for war'

Badge: A seax.

No 604, being the County of Middlesex squadron, took part of the armorial bearings of the county, a seax, to commemorate that association.

No 604 Squadron was formed on 17 March 1930 at Hendon as a day bomber unit of the Auxiliary Air Force. On 2 April it received its first DH9As and flew these till the arrival of Wapitis in September 1930. On 23 July 1934, it was redesignated a fighter squadron and received Harts as an interim type, pending the delivery of Demon two-seat fighters which arrived in June 1935. Shortly before the outbreak of war, it converted to Blenheims with which it flew defensive patrols and undertook early experiments with airborne radar.

When Germany invaded the Low Countries in May 1940, No 604 flew sweeps over the battle areas, but reverted to night patrols in July and became a full-time night fighter squadron, with Beaufighters beginning to arrive in September and by January 1941 the squadron was completely equipped with the type. Early in 1943 the decrease in enemy night raids allowed some Beaufighters to be diverted to intruder operations over enemy airfields in northern France. Conversion to Mosquitoes began in February 1944 and joined Second TAF to help provide cover for the invasion forces during the Normandy landings. In August 1944 it moved to airfields in Normandy, but returned to the UK in September for three months. From January 1945 until it disbanded on 18 April 1945, the squadron was based near Lille to provide night defence for Allied bases in the Low Countries and northern France.

On 10 May 1946, No.604 reformed at Hendon as part of the newly reconstituted Auxiliary Air Force and began recruiting in November. As a fighter squadron, it was initially equipped with Spitfires, the first of which arrived in October 1946. It converted to jet fighters with the arrival of Vampires in November 1949. These were replaced in August 1952 by Meteors which were flown until the Royal Auxiliary Air Force was disbanded on 10 March 1957.



GOOD LANDINGS by M. Allen

Pilot's Maxim - "Every landing that you can walk away from is a good one"

Below are photographs from the 604 Squadron Association Archive of "good landings". Perhaps others (crew, passengers, tax payers etc) might have different views!



(1) From 604 Squadron Summer Camp 1938.



(2) Blenheim at North Weald in 1940





(3) Archive photograph of a Liberator which executed a “good landing”.

Photographs 1 & 2 are courtesy of the late Jimmy Rawnsley, radar operator throughout the war for John Cunningham.

Photograph 3 is from the 604 Squadron Association archive and its origin is unknown.

M. Allen

.....

604 SQUADRON DEMONS

604 Squadron was equipped with Hawker Demons between June 1935 and January 1939. The pictures below give a flavour of the elegance and fragility of these planes that seem only a marginal improvement on those used in World War 1. Photographs courtesy of the late Jimmy Rawnsley.





The planes are painted in the silver grey colour with prominent squadron markings used in the period between the two world wars.

During 1938 with the clouds of war gathering the planes were repainted in drab camouflage colours and no longer exuded the light hearted spirit of the inter-war years.





A Demon landing at Hendon.

M. Allen

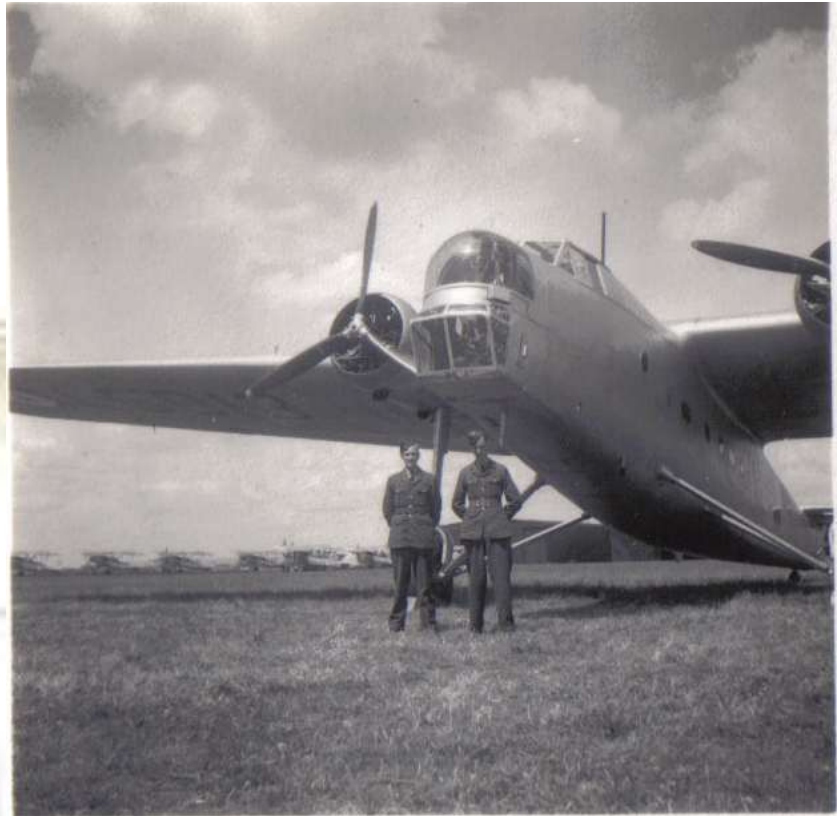


Some pictures kindly sent to me by Jim Coverdale (804363).



Some lovely 604 Squadron embroidery

















604 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION TIES

A limited number of 604 Squadron Association ties are available for purchase by former 604 Squadron Association members. The ties are the remainder of stock produced some years ago by C.H. Munday Ltd and may be purchased at a price of £10.00 per tie including postage & packing.



Former members wishing to obtain a tie should send a cheque made out to '604 Squadron Association' to:

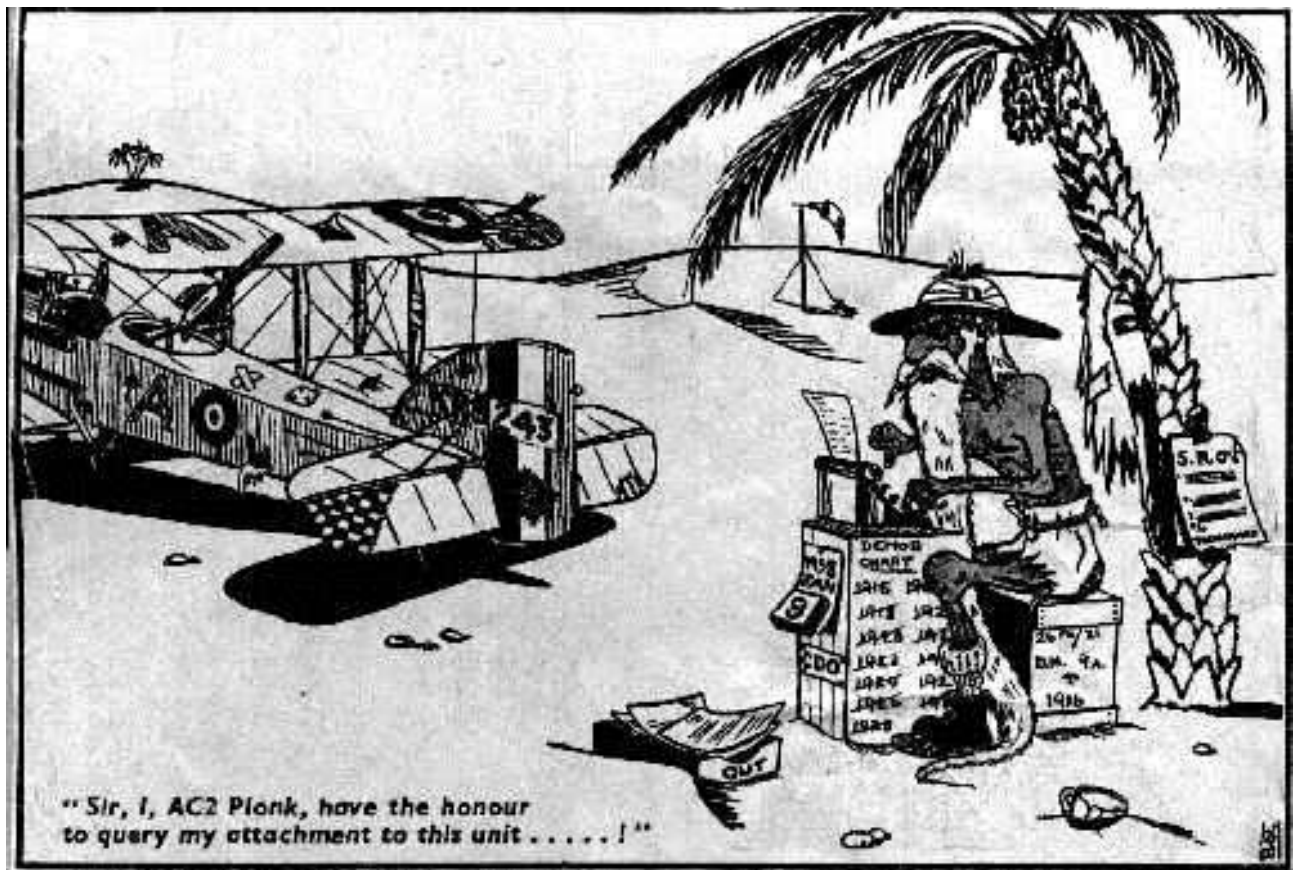
M. Allen
44 Campden Hill Court
Campden Hill Road
London W8 7HU

Ties will be despatched on a 'first come, first served' basis.

.....

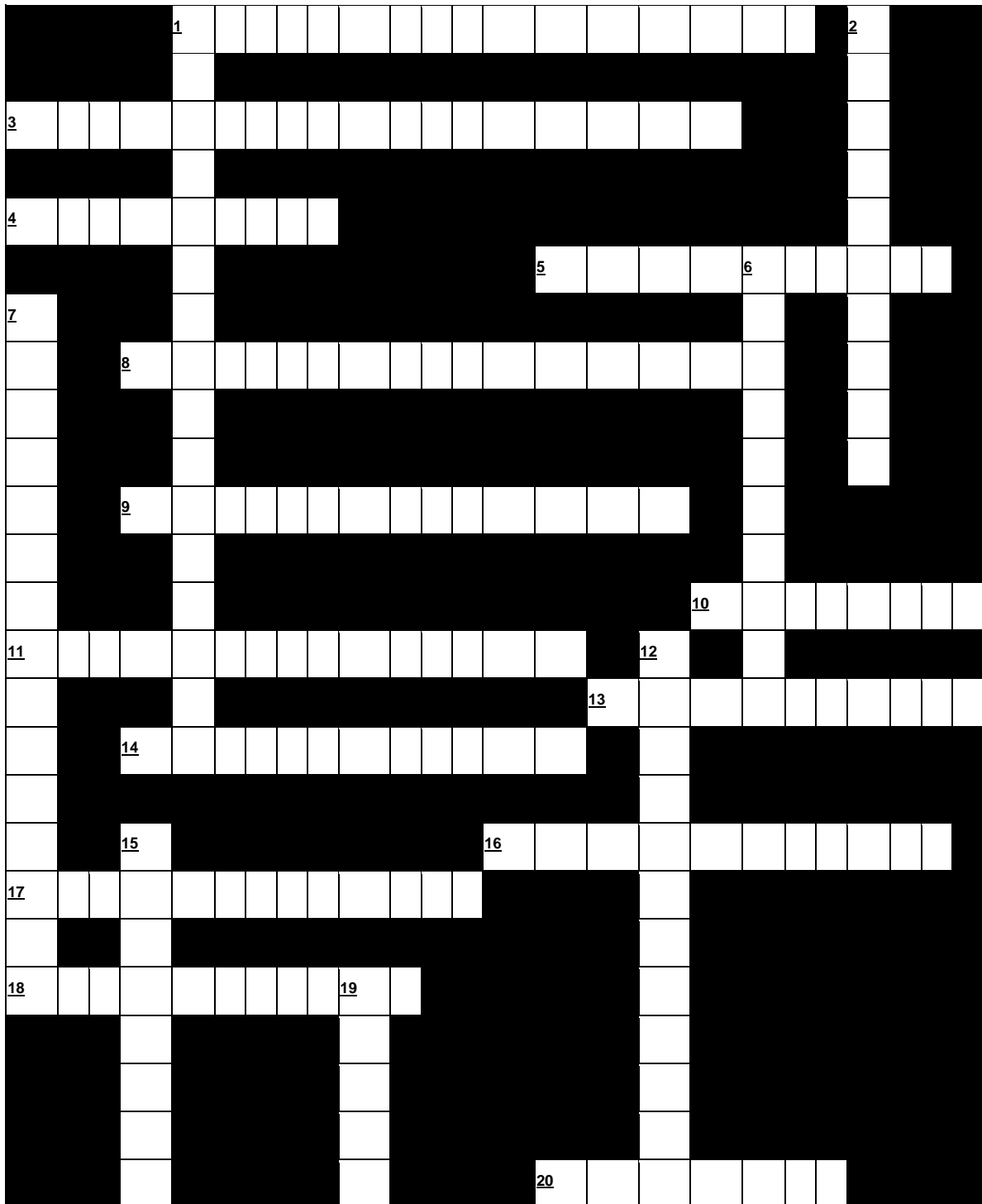


Fun & Stuff



World War II Terms

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Across:

1. Secret allied project begun in 1942 to develop an atomic bomb. (2 words)
3. FDR's foreign policy of promoting better relations with Latin America using economic influence. (3 words)
4. The Nazi's killing of some 6 million Jews and 3 million other people during WWII.
5. A nuclear weapon that produced an explosion of splitting atoms; the U.S. dropped to of them on Japan during WWII. (2 words)
8. A pact between nations not to attack one another. (2 words)
9. Four laws passed in the late 1930's that were designed to keep the U.S. out of international incidents. (2 words)
10. Deliberate murder of an entire people.
11. (1941) Pledge signed by FDR and Winston Churchill not to acquire new territory as a result of WWII and to work for peace after the war. (2 words)
13. "Lightning War"; type of fast moving warfare used by the German forces during WWII.
14. (1941) Law that allowed the U.S. to loan weapons and other war supplies to Britain and the Soviet Union. (3 words)
16. An act of giving in to an aggressor to preserve peace.
17. WWII strategy of conquering only certain Pacific islands that were important to the Allied advance toward Japan. (2 words)
18. Fortified line of defenses that France built along its border with Germany after WWI. (2 words)
20. Political theory that calls for a strong government headed by one individual and in which the state is more important than the individual.

.....



It was a dark and stormy night. The AC was on his first assignment, and it was guard duty.

A Group Captain stepped out taking his dog for a walk. The nervous young AC snapped to attention, made a perfect salute, and snapped out "Good evening Sir!"

The Groupie, out for some relaxation, returned the salute and said "Good evening Airman, nice night, isn't it?"

Well it wasn't a nice night, but the AC wasn't going to disagree with the Groupie, so the AC saluted again and replied "Yes Sir!"

The Groupie, "You know there's something about a stormy night that I find soothing, it's really relaxing. Don't you agree? "

The AC didn't agree, but then the AC was just an AC, and responded "Yes Sir!"

The Groupie, pointing at the dog, "This is a Golden-Retriever, the best type of dog to train."

The AC glanced at the dog, saluted yet again, and said "Yes Sir!"

The Groupie continued "I got this dog for my wife."

The AC simply said "Good trade, Sir!"

.....

How many Squadron Leaders does it take to change a bulb?

One, he holds the bulb and then thinks the rest of the world revolves around him.

.....

Old Airmen

Two Chelsea Pensioners were sitting outside The Royal Hospital getting a little sunshine. Albert groaned. "I'm so damn full of aches and pains these days, sometimes I can hardly stand. How about you, Cyril, you're about the same age as me, how are you feelin'?"

Cyril replied. "Like a new born baby." Albert was stunned. "Really?"

Cyril said. "Yep, no hair, no teeth and I've just filled my pants."

.....





The First Sea Lord, The Air Chief Marshall and an Royal Marine RSM all die and go to Heaven. At the Pearly Gates, St Peter informs them that only one of them can get in. However, each will be allowed to state his case before God in front of the other two. The best argument wins.

The First Sea Lord goes first: "I have commanded thousands of men and women, held ships crew's lives in my hands. I have ensured that the food is good, the clothing is acceptable and none of them have gone without. The ships spend only 4 months at sea, and 2 years in refit so the boys and girls can see their families".

God in His chair nods his appreciation.

The Air Chief Marshal steps up: "I have a budget of billions every year in which I make sure the best aircraft have been bought. I have life and death powers over the servicemen and women of the RAF and have ploughed millions into making the RAF's accommodation the best in the armed forces that everyone is jealous about, I make sure RAF bases are nowhere near a combat zone but that they still get a medal for their efforts playing volleyball".

God smiles appreciatively at this.

The RSM steps up: "Oi! You!" he shouts at God, "Get out of my chair!"

.....



Ponderings

- If someone with multiple personalities threatens to kill himself, is it considered a hostage situation?
- What was the best thing before sliced bread?
- If all the world is a stage, where is the audience sitting?
- If you try to fail, and succeed, which have you done?
- Why do you have a hot-water heater when you don't need to heat hot water?
- Why isn't phonetic spelled the way it sounds?
- Have you ever imagined a world with no hypothetical situations?
- If you are driving at the speed of light and you turn on your headlights, what happens?
- Why are they called apartments when they are all stuck together?
- Why did Kamikaze Pilots wear helmets?

.....



An RAF Wing Commander had sent some of his men off to fight for their country in the Falkland Island Crisis.

Upon returning to Britain from the South Atlantic island, three Airmen that had distinguished themselves in battle were summoned to the Wing Commander's office. "Since we weren't actually at war," the WingCo began, "I can't give out any medals. We did, however, want to let each of you know your efforts were appreciated. What we've decided to do is to let each of you choose two points on your body.

You will be given 2 pounds sterling for each inch of distance between those parts.

We'll start on the left, boys, so what'll it be?"

Airman 1: "The tip of me head to me toes, sahr!" WingCo: "Very good son, that's 70 inches which comes to 140 pounds"

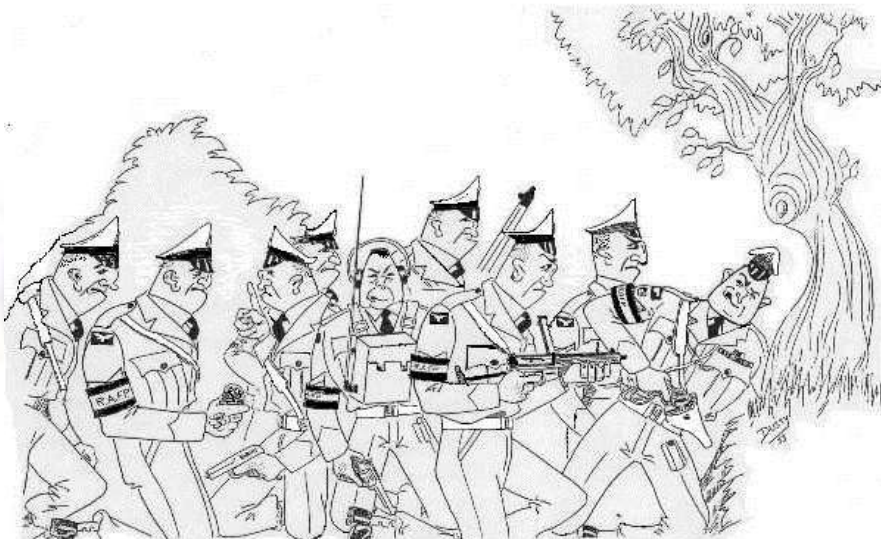
Airman 2: "The tip of the finger on one outstretched hand to the tip of the other, sir!" WingCo: "Even better son, that's 72 inches which comes to 144 pounds"

Airman 3: "The tip of me dick to me balls, sahr!" WingCo: "That's a strange request, but drop your trousers, son! As the WingCo begins the measurement: "My god, son, where are your balls?"

Airman 3: "Falkland Island, sahr!"

.....

"As others see us" A cartoon drawn in 1953 by Flight Lieutenant Dusty Millar of RAF Waddington for the RAFF Provost Parade.



"Steady chaps, this is it! Sogcroft, Oddbody, Dewslip and Carstairs, you take the WAAF riding her bike without a rear light, while the rest of us tackle the airman with his hat off!"





*"P.O. PRUNE
simply never
has accidents."*





Prisoner of War Camps in Germany Wordsearch



SERVICEMEN
CONVENTION
BARBEDWIRE
PRISONERS
LUFTWAFFE
OFFICERS
BUNKBEDS
BARRACKS
REDCROSS
ROLLCALL
BOREDOM
GERMAN
STALAG
MARLAG
GENEVA
HUNGER
OFLAG
DULAG
TRAIN

STOVE

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PILOT RULES

The PILOT always makes *The Rules*.

The Rules are subject to change at any time without prior notification

No CO-PILOT can possibly know all *The Rules*.

If the PILOT suspects the CO-PILOT knows all *The Rules* he must immediately change some or all of *The Rules*.

The PILOT is never wrong.

If the PILOT is wrong, it is due to a misunderstanding which was a direct result of something the CO-PILOT did or said wrong.

The CO-PILOT must apologize immediately for causing said misunderstanding.

The PILOT may change his mind at any time.

The CO-PILOT must never change his mind without the express written consent of the PILOT.

The PILOT has every right to be angry or upset at any time.

The CO-PILOT must remain calm at all times unless the PILOT wants him to be angry and/or upset.

The CO-PILOT is expected to mind read at all times.

The PILOT is ready when he is ready.

The CO-PILOT must be ready at all times.

Any attempt to document *The Rules* could result in bodily harm.

The CO-PILOT who doesn't abide by *The Rules* is grounded.





The U.S. Government's Next generation Stealth fighter



Causes of World War Two Wordsearch



LEAGUE OF NATIONS
 CZECHOSLOVAKIA
 ADOLF HITLER
 SUDETENLAND
 ADOLF HITLER
 APPEASEMENT
 CHAMBERLAIN
 VERSAILLES
 REARMAMENT
 RHINELAND
 ANSCHLUSS
 AGREEMENT
 MANCHURIA
 ABYSSINIA GERMANY
 TREATY
 POLAND
 MUNICH

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Quotation

"Some days you're the bug, some days you're the windshield"

—Private Johnson Beharry, VC



Aircraft Recognition.....

Last time.....

On page 122. The aircraft on page is a Blackburn Shark Mk.II (registration L2380) of the Fleet Air Arm. These aircraft preceded the Fairey Swordfish as the Navy's torpedo/spotter reconnaissance aircraft. Unfortunately it does not carry any distinguishing markings that might more accurately identify it. These were first seen at the Hendon Air Show in 1934. THE ast one built was L2387, so this one is right at the end of the production run built in 1937/8.

The second photo on page 123 is a Supermarine Walrus amphibian. The picture does not allow us to read the serial number, but the first letter would appear to be an 'L'. Fortunately only one batch of Walrus' were built in the L-series, L2169 - L2336, all of which went to the Fleet Air Arm. So she is a Navy Walrus!

Top of p133 is Not a Blenheim Mk4. It is the rebuilt "Blenheim" which was built out of Canadian Bolenbrooke parts and crashed twice.

Bottom of p133 is the second prototype Bristol Buckingham, so I guess this is the Bristol factory in 1943. The aircraft was not a success and it was cancelled in Aug 44. However, to keep Bristol's in work they built 119 of them and used them as comms, transports and trainers.

On page 134 is the engine and tail of a Gloster built meteor Mk4 which was at one time kept at Winerbourne Gunner (VT260) but I don't know where it is now.

Well done to Peter Lovegrove & Robin Van Geene for identifying the lot!

This time....



One or two of you may have seen one of these in anger.....





An easy one for those who flew in them.....



This one *may* catch you out.....





The best sort of Luftwaffe aircraft (a trashed one), but can you tell what it was?

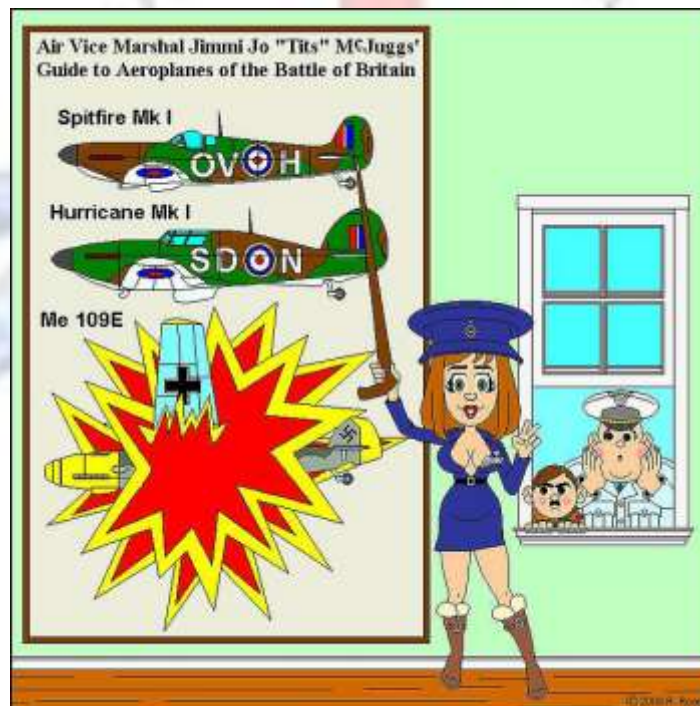


Another easy one (for some).....





Ah, the last of the REAL Fighter/Bombers.....and my favourite!





These are all too easy eh?

So what about this one then smarty pants?!



Footnote

A reminder. This is YOUR newsletter, and I hope you will both enjoy reading it, and find the content interesting. I would of course welcome your feedback.

The newsletter depends largely on YOUR contributions. Please forward any & all contributions to me (no matter how small). Photographs, articles, memories, funny stories etc. – all welcome and appreciated, especially from our older members who may like to share memories, thoughts records, pictures etc that they may wish to share with our younger members of perhaps your War time experiences?

I will endeavour to use all material provided albeit I reserve the right to edit as required. Please also note that I may not use you material in the current newsletter period, but may hold it back for a later issue.

If anyone ever spots an innocent faux-pas or technical inaccuracy, please do let me know so I can correct it.

Please send me all your material at andyandjulie.cameron@btopenworld.com if you do not have e mail, post your articles to Andy Cameron, 53 Telford Crescent, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire, RG5 4QT. If you require any originals returned, copies and will be taken and sent back, although please ensure you provide your name & address. If you wish to kindly donate any material to the archive, please do specify this and it will of course be very gratefully received!

If at all possible, electronic copies are preferred either by email or disc. Please where possible save your file to word format as it makes it quicker and easier for me to simply format and insert.

Hand written or typed are fine too – Mrs Cameron has become a dab hand at transposing onto the PC for me!

And one final reminder – can I please ask that those of you who have e-mail drop me a quick contact message with your name so that I can keep our records up to date.

I have been asked several times if I could e-mail you the newsletter so that you could get it faster and save the Association money in printing, paper, envelopes and postage. Having done it all now several times, I now find that emailing is none too easy due to the file size (average of 55mb) – It's all the lovely photos that are to blame, so for now, I will continue to mail you the hard copy. It should be noted that presently, I have a private sponsor who is providing all materials and postage costs for the newsletter by way of a donation.

And finally, you may have noticed I am still a bit of a Blenheim & Beaufighter geek. If anyone has any photos or records specific to the Blenheim, I would be very grateful for a copy. The records would be primarily for the archive, but also for my own personal interest.

Cut-off date's for Newsletter submissions to Newsletter 2012

29 February 2012

31 May 2012

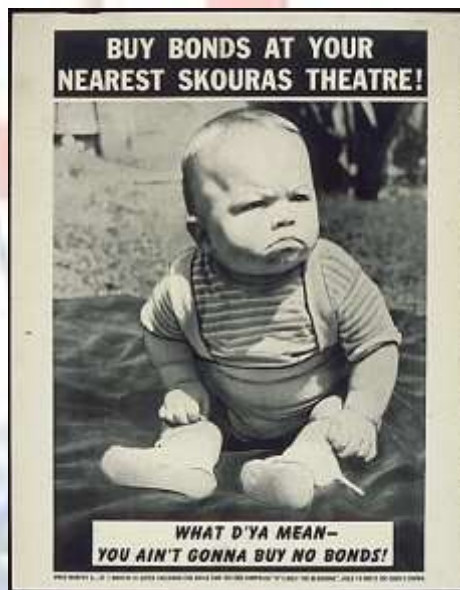
31 August 2012

30 November 2012

Andy







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