



NZ Bomber Command Association (Inc)

Patron: Sir Richard Bolt KBE, CB, DFC, AFC, pff
President: Ron Mayhill DFC, MA (Hons)
Vice Presidents: Frank Prebble DFC, pff (635Sq)
Bunny Burrows (7, 622, 487 Sq)

NEWSLETTER April 2013

NZBCA Charitable Trust 2561560



From our President:

Happy hot weather to you all –but not as hot as Melbourne, 37°C last week, nor as hot as some of you remember

Dubai!

May lots of long, cool drinks be good for you.

A lot of Bomber Command things have been going on behind the scenes, particularly with our arrangements with MOTAT and the NZ Bomber Command Memorial Trophy for the RNZAF.

Ever since the that wonderful trip to Britain last June-July, Richard Bolt and I have been trying to get the sculpture just right. After several attempts the talented people at Weta Workshops have created a real Bomber Command type.

Although the average age was 22, boys quickly became men. The pose had to be right; this is a single figure, not a crew of seven telling a story as at the magnificent memorial in Green Park, London, which already is attracting much tourist interest.

We wanted a 'Press on Regardless; type in full flying gear, casually hands-on-hips, self disciplined, not stuffy regimented, and definitely not arrogant.

I sometimes wonder if the "never shoot a line" attitude that was deeply ingrained in us, and our general reticence, contributed to the public being so ill informed about our achievements and sacrifices, for so long.

Best wishes to all, and particularly to those fortunate survivors. We have become 'national treasures,' you know.

Ron Mayhill,

President

**Chief of Air Force
RNZAF Air
Vice Marshall
Peter
Stockwell
has
graciously
accepted
the offer of
a NZBCA
Memorial
Trophy.**

**Weta will
be producing
this memorial
statue in
bronze.**

**Our
deepest
appreciation
to Ian
Kuperus
of NZ Tax
Management
for his
sponsorship.**



Diary

Wednesday May 15, 1.30pm
MOTAT Aviation Hall.

A demonstration of the new RAF Bomber Command casualties site. This large screen system illustrates details of every NZ airman lost in RAF Bomber Command over Europe, with maps and charts.

Friends and family welcome.

RSVP – Allan Taylor Phone 445 6787, email aftaylor@xtra.co.nz

Friday May 17, To recognise 617 Squadron's Dam Busters raid after 70 years there will be a special showing of the movie at MOTAT Aviation Hall.

2.30pm screening for members and friends.

6.30pm for MOTAT members.

RSVP - Henry Swan 817 4839
swans@xtra.co.nz

Sunday June 2, 10.30am Hall of Memories, Auckland War Memorial Museum Our annual formal parade, wreath laying and service.

Again this year the service will be attended by the RNZAF, RAAF, RAF and RCAF.

All friends and family welcome. Veterans will have seating priority.

RSVP – May 24 Mr P. Furner 1/276 Massey Road, Auckland
Phone 09 276 3321 email furryfil@ihug.co.nz

Dress: Blues, greys and medals

Guests and veterans will be offered refreshments after the service.

CONTACT US

President: **Ron Mayhill**
440, Edmund Hillary Retirement Village
221 Abbotts Way, Remuera, Auckland 1050
Phone: 09 570 2213
Email: ronmayhill@xtra.co.nz

Administration: **Peter Wheeler**
PO Box 317111, Hobsonville, Auckland 0664
Phone: 09 416 5302
Mobile: 021 998 255
Email: spirits@xtra.co.nz

Membership is free to RAF Bomber Command Veterans of family and friends are most welcome as associate members (\$15 fee).

Contributions to the NZBCA news are always welcome.

At MOTAT recently:

There has been plenty of activity at MOTAT in recent months with upgrades to displays continuing and lots of visitors.

MOTAT's new display team of Paul Swift and Emily Gordon have made over the Ops Room, focussing on 625 Squadrons' raid on Sturgart 19/10/44 from Kelstern. All of the target tapes showing the main force and diversitory raids are in place and the display is correct in detail even to that days weather charts, runway in use and newspapers. A very well done job.

11 OTU Westcott

A home to many New Zealand aircrew both as trainees crewing up and for the lucky ones, a spell of instructing after a tour.

Ed Andrews now runs a museum there having spent all of his working life on rocket research at Westcott. He is making contact with those who served at 11 OTU and recently provided these pictures of an RNZAF / RAF dedication service on 10 December 2012

Dear Roy

The group picture you sent me is a real treasure. I used it to help the Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust (ABCT) persuade the NZ High Commission to send a representative to the unveiling of the memorial commemorating the RAF airfield. They sent Squadron Leader Susie Barnes who specifically mentioned your group picture. The event itself was well attended but unfortunately the Spitfire flypast was cancelled mid flight when he hit bad weather on route. I gather some of your colleagues were on a visit to RAF Coningsby that day so at least they saw it.

Your comments about your time at Westcott are not uncommon. It would seem that most preferred Oakley to Westcott, it seems to me as though the whole atmosphere was better (more relaxed) there than here. Talking to others this would appear to be normal, in that the satellite station was preferred to the base station. Oakley celebrated its 70th on the 27th May. They held an event, that I attended, that was open to the public. The runways there are in better condition than the runways at Westcott and are still used by a microlight club. They put on a flying display and even took my wife and daughter for a flight - across Westcott.

In November we had a visit from Wg Cdr Mary Anne Whiting of the Royal Australian Air Force. She is researching a PhD thesis on the involvement of Australians in Bomber Command during the war. She came to Westcott because of its connection with Operation Exodus, the repatriation of allied POW to the UK by air, in May '45. She was very moved by your group picture.

I've included some pictures of the Airfield Memorial.

Thank you once again for your letter and pictures, if you or any of your bomber colleagues have any more stories or pictures related to Westcott or Oakley please let me know via Peter (Wheeler).

All the best,

Ed



Graham Turner DFC was flying that day and is pictured showing his name on the ops board.



RAF Engineers

On our regular Wednesday gathering a special visitor was Harry Widdup F/E 100 Squadron. Admiring the Merlin (which mark ?) with Harry are fellow RAF types Des Hall (F/E 468Sq.) and Wally Halliwell (RAF MU from Battle of Britain days to post war in India).

If you are visiting Auckland do come and see us, Wednesday mornings or phone for other arrangements.



Radio Interview

In February a gathering of Mossie men were interviewed for radio and podcast by Dave Homewood of Wings over NZ. Pictured are: Sonny Despard (75Sq), Keith Boles DFC (109Sq.), Bunny Burrows (487Sq.) and Reg Mitchell (488Sq.) with Dave Homewood.

Here and There

Money for News

Despite having community post and very helpful printers, this newsletter costs around \$500 per issue. Many members here and especially overseas are happy to accept it by email but hard copies are really appreciated by most.

But the bucket is nearly empty boys, so if you have any loose change it would be welcome.

We try to produce three issues a year and the recent multi-page editions have been very well liked. Let's keep it up, can you help out?

Bay of Plenty

In late March I was fortunate to meet up with ten members in the Bay of Plenty. Some great yarns, gen log books and some unique photos. Thanks team.

It was obvious that the late Ray Stratford's efforts in arranging Ad Astra luncheons is sorely missed and all are keen for another.

Lou Woodward, AG 218 Sqn., phone 07 574 9346 is happy to be a contact, so men, who can you nominate, invite, force, order to arrange a do. Classic Flyers would love to see you all again.

Nelson

Graham Pullyn is doing a great job keeping the Nelson boys in touch and has arranged a luncheon recently. Do call him if you are now living in the area. Other contacts are:

North	Peter Wheeler	09 416 5312	spirits@xtra.co.nz
Waikato	John Gumbley	07 824 8623	gumbleyj@wave.co.nz
Bay of Plenty	Lou Woodward	07 574 9346	lou.woodward@xtra.co.nz
Nelson	Graham Pullyn	03 547 8272	pullyns@xtra.co.nz
South	Neville Selwood	03 455 0578	neville@kinect.co.nz



Internet – The Good

For those who have access to the internet try these excellent sites:

www.wingsovernewzealand.co.nz – New Zealand's best aviation site covering all aspects of NZ aviation, civil, military, current, historic. There's even sections on NZBCA and FAA.

www.bcar.org.uk – Bomber County, Lincolnshire, maps, photos

www.75nzsquadron.wordpress.com
www.75squadron-raf-inzaf.com – 75 Squadron, history and news.

... and do remember
www.nzbombercommand.co.nz

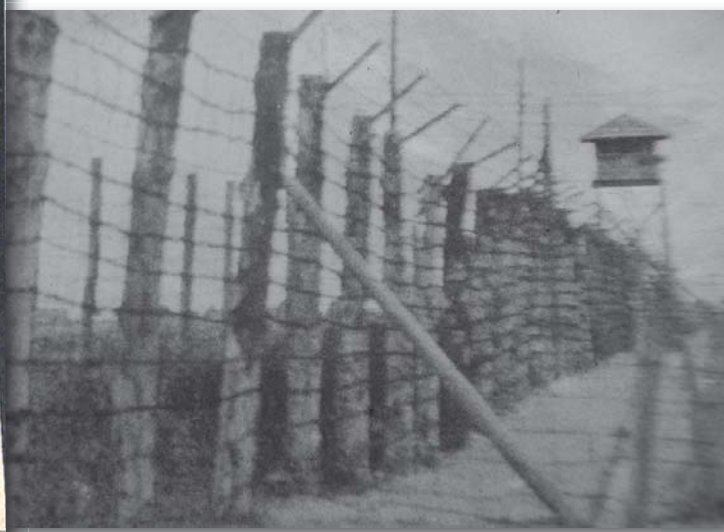
Stalag Photos

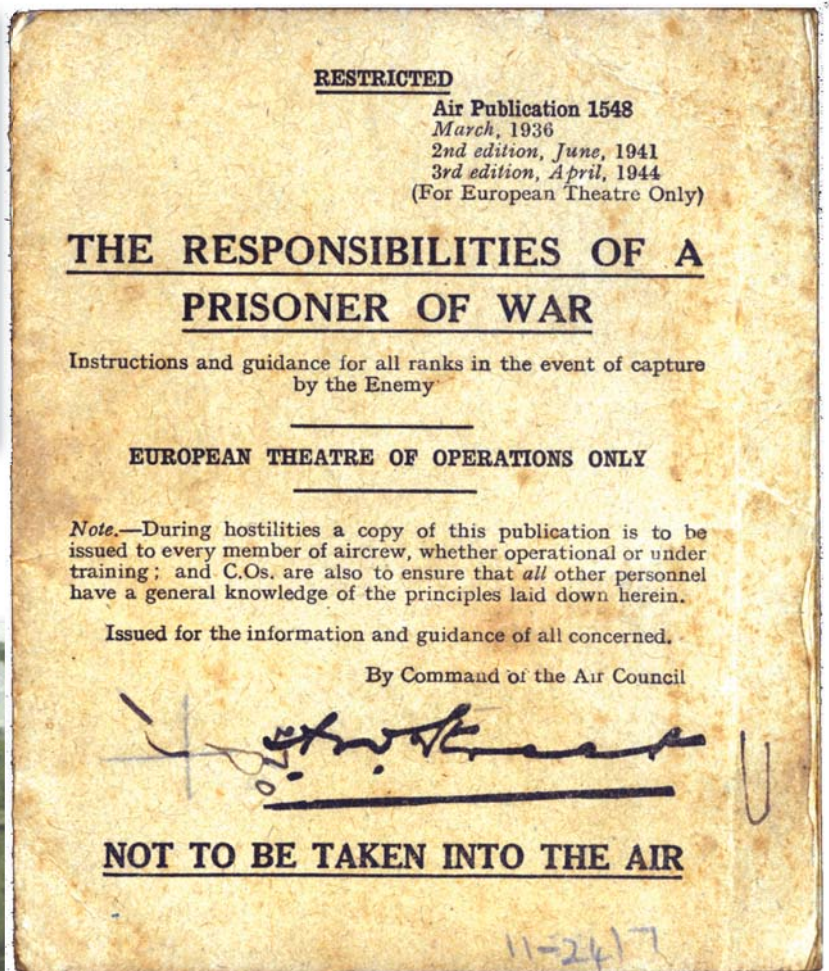
These remarkable photos were taken in Stalag VIIIB Lamsdorf by English airman Bill Lawrance. He used a Leica camera hidden inside a Red Cross box and post war sent a set to Charles Croall. Charles at 97 lives in Thames and kindly allowed these copies.

Charles Croall was a bit of a handful for the Germans escaping seven times and his determination was recognised post war with the award of a Military MBE. His book "You Croall??" is worth a read.

Escape 1	4th September 1942
Escape 2	June 1943
Escape 3	13th August 1943
Escape 4	13th May 1944
Escape 5	
Escape 6	1st September 1944
Escape 7	January 1945

17th April 1945	Plauen Hospital
6th May 1945	War ended
7th May 1945	Left Hospital
7th June 1945	"Changed into new clothes for the first time in a long long time."





Off home at last

At Last –Bomber Command Clasp Approved

Arctic Star and Bomber Command Clasp

Arctic Star Application
Bomber Command Application Form
Eligibility Criteria

It has been announced today, 26 February 2013, by the Minister of State for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans Mark Francois that all the details have been confirmed for the Arctic Star and the Bomber Command Clasp and the application process has now opened. This follows Sir John Holmes' independent medal review and the announcement by the Prime Minister, on 19 December 2012, that these awards should be made in recognition of the great bravery of those who contributed to two very significant campaigns of World War Two.

Her Majesty The Queen has approved designs for the new awards on the basis of recommendations made by the Royal Mint Advisory Committee. The design for the Arctic Star is based on the other World War Two Stars and the Bomber Command Clasp, to be worn on the ribbon of the 1939 to 1945 Star, follows the design of the Battle of Britain Clasp.

Production of the new Arctic Star and Bomber Command clasp will commence this week and could result in up to a quarter of a million veterans, and the families of those who have sadly died, applying to receive the new awards in recognition of their unique contribution protecting Britain during World War II. Priority in issuing the awards will be given to veterans and widows who could receive their awards in a few weeks. Other next of kin may also apply now but will have to wait slightly longer to receive their award.

Minister of State for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans Mark Francois said:

"All those who served our country in Bomber Command and on the Arctic Convoys deserve nothing but the utmost respect and admiration from us. That's why I am delighted that these special individuals will in the next few weeks begin to receive the Bomber Command clasp and Arctic Star that they have so long deserved.

"I am also pleased to announce that the families of those no longer alive will also be able to apply for these awards in recognition of their loved one's bravery."

The qualifying period for the Arctic Star is "service of any length" recognising the particular severity of the conditions experienced by those who served in the Arctic. Whilst the primary intent is to recognise those who served on the Arctic Convoys, eligibility is extended to include all who served north of the Arctic Circle in World War Two. Those eligible will include members of all three Services as well of course as the Merchant Navy who crewed the ships taking the vital supplies to Russia.

The criteria for the Bomber Command Clasp requires prior qualification for the 1939 – 45 Star, to which it will be affixed, with the additional requirement to have flown at least one operational sortie with a Bomber Command operational unit. A clasp was deemed more appropriate, by Sir John, in the case of Bomber Command as aircrew had already received either the Aircrew Europe Star or the France and Germany Star and another medal would have constituted "double-medalling" for the same service.

Further details of the criteria can be found at the eligibility criteria link on this page.

Eligible veterans and next of kin are now encouraged to apply using the relevant application forms, which can be found on this page, or by telephoning the MOD Medal Office on 08457 800 900 (a local rate number) for further details. An application must be made as it is simply not possible for the MOD to contact veterans or families of all of those who may be eligible going back almost 70 years



Arctic Star

A copy of the MoD application form is included with this newsletter.

Retain a spare copy in case the NZDF Awards Agency become involved with distributing the clasp.

Please pass these details onto any friends or mates who may have not got this newsletter.

For those with internet go to: www.veterans-uk.info/knowledge/index.htm

Those who have carried out operations in the far north should check their log books and apply for the Arctic Star as well.

Please note that our ex RAF members must apply directly to the UK using these forms.

And another thing – The Russian Ushakov medal – are you eligible for this 'service in the defence of Russia'? Do check with the Embassy.

Bomber Command Clasp to the 1939-45 Star –

Conditions for Applications

A Clasp to the 1939-45 Star is granted to the aircrew of Bomber Command who served for at least sixty days, or completed a tour of operations, on a Bomber Command operational unit and flew at least one operational sortie on a Bomber Command operational unit from the 3rd September, 1939, to the 8th May, 1945, inclusive. The award of the Clasp is to be denoted by a silver rose Emblem when the ribbon alone is worn.

Eligibility is extended to those members of Bomber Command aircrew who did not meet the qualifying criteria due to service being brought to an end by death, wounds or other disability due to service, service marked by a gallantry award or taken as a prisoner of war.

Foreign nationals commissioned or enlisted into British or, the then, Dominion Air Forces (e.g. Royal Canadian Air Force or Royal Australian Air Force) are eligible provided the individuals did not receive a similar award from their own Government.

Eligibility to the Bomber Command Clasp has no effect upon eligibility for World War Two recognition previously awarded and does not suggest automatic eligibility for any further awards.

Arctic Star

The Arctic Star is granted for operational service of any length north of the Arctic Circle (66 degrees, 32'N) from the 3rd September, 1939, to the 8th May, 1945, inclusive. The Arctic Star is intended to commemorate the Arctic Convoys and is designed primarily for the ships of the convoys to North Russia and their Escorts. Eligibility is defined as follows:

- Navy and Merchant Navy – Naval and Merchant Navy service anywhere at sea north of the Arctic Circle to include, but not limited exclusively to, those ships participating in, and in support of, Convoys to North Russia. Fleet Air Arm Personnel, not qualified by sea service may qualify under the conditions applying to the Royal Air Force.
- Air Force – Aircrew of the Royal Air Force will be eligible if they landed north of the Arctic Circle or served in the air over this area. Non aircrew on operational service in the area, for example ground crew or those sailing with CAM ships (Catapult Aircraft Merchant Ships), are also eligible.
- Army – Army personnel serving in His Majesty's ships or in defensively equipped Merchant ships qualify under the rules applying to the Navy or Merchant Navy. In addition, personnel taking part in land operations north of the Arctic Circle will also be eligible.
- Civilians serving with the Forces – Members of the few approved categories of civilians who qualify for Campaign Stars will be eligible if, in support of military operations, they meet any of the above qualifying criteria.
- Foreign nationals commissioned or enlisted into British or, the then, Dominion Forces (e.g. Royal Canadian Navy, Royal Australian Navy) are eligible provided the individuals did not receive a similar award from their own Government.
- General – Eligibility to the Arctic Star has no effect upon eligibility for World War Two recognition previously awarded and does not suggest automatic eligibility for any further awards.

Luck –Good or Bad?

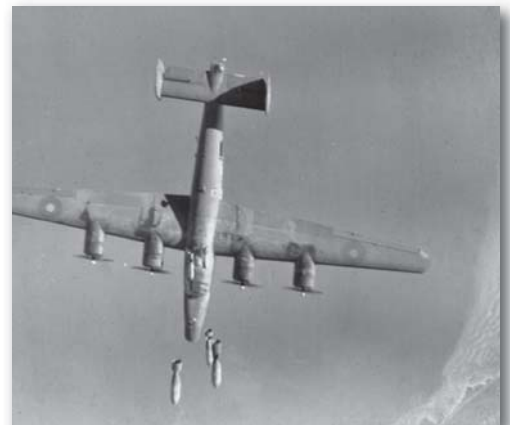
Depends upon where you were.

The original photo from IWM was added to during a visit to Charlie Beresford of the North Shore. Charles pilot in 40 Squadron was on the raid. Having flown Wellingtons for much of the war, re-equipment with Liberators brought extra crew members and a touch of luxury.



The unfortunate Lib was from 37 Squadron and after being struck continued to the target on three engines.

Back at base Charles took another photograph, the crew saying that the errant bomb bounced from the fuselage



into the engine, carrying it away. Being in the Med we hope the crews tropical flying kit included Kakhi underwear and the accident report didn't just say 'lost one engine outbound to target!' Quite an understatement.

Groundies

101 Squadron ground crew at Ludford Magna – Warrant Officer Raymond Alexander

Ludford Magna was a war-built station. Its aircraft strength was around 24 at any one time when it operated Lancasters. These aircraft cost £40,000 each as they were delivered, slick and new from the factories. Its personnel strength was about, 2,500, the aircrew numbering some 250 of these.

In the maintenance stores was a vast array of spare parts, enough to refit completely about half the aircraft on the station strength. The stocks included such items as spare engines, £2,500 each, tail planes £300, single Browning machine guns £45, parachutes £35, propellers £350 each, turrets £500 each, tyres £50 each, wireless sets £250 each, and countless other items down to rivets, screws and aluminum sheet for patching flak damage. It was equipped to defend itself with such items as searchlights £1,250 each, Bren guns £35 each, tommy guns £30 each, ammunition £7 10s for 1,000 rounds, grenades 4s each, etc.

It was a township, a factory, a battle headquarters and a front-line assault point from which men sallied forth to attack the enemy. It was never at complete rest. Throughout the twenty-four hours of the day someone was working. Set down among the fields of home its 2,500 men and women led an entirely independent existence from the rest of the country for weeks on end. If they were ill or injured they could get treatment in their own hospital; canteens, kitchens and food stores big enough to supply a small town, fed them. There was also provision for some recreation on playing fields; a cinema, sometimes a dance hall with a stage for variety shows provided the venues for lighter entertainment.

And now to visualise a Station day's work in a 2,000 ton raid scheduled for the coming night Ludford's share in that raid is the full Station strength – 24 Lancasters. It is a long distance to Southern Germany. Take-off will be before dusk, say 5pm so that the long journey out and home is completed before the moon rises or early morning fog settles down on the aerodrome. By 8am the handling crews will be hard at work down in the bomb dump at the far end of the aerodrome. Scores of men will be slithering about in the mud bringing hundred-pound weight cases of incendiaries to a central section where they will be packed into the special containers carried on the aircraft.

The men advance from the bomb dump in lines of ten; with the exception of the two end men, each man holds in either hand one handle of the incendiary case. Thus at each journey the men are carrying 900 lb of bombs to the packing section. In another part of the dump other men are rolling out the great 4,000 lb high explosive 'cookies' and mounting them on to low engine-driven bomb trolleys. Others are loading flares. All this work goes on without a pause or break till the early afternoon when the trolleys



are driven out to the aircraft. Lunch is a hastily eaten sandwich and a cup of tea.

Meanwhile in another section armament crews are working against time feeding tens of thousands of cartridges into the ammunition belts which will go to the gunners. Over the airfield are the fuel tanks, other men are filling the great 2,500 gallon capacity fuel bowsters and the oil bowsters, each of which holds 450 gallons. The petrol bowster holds just enough fuel for filling one Lancaster if it is a long raiding journey. So many journeys must be made back and forth from the storage tanks to the aircraft waiting

at the dispersal points. Again it is mid-afternoon before they are all filled. At the dispersal points ground crews are swarming over the bombers in their charge. Every point in the bomber is being checked and re-checked; engines, plugs, instruments, guns, turrets, under-carriages, tyre pressures, bomb door mechanism and the host of other things. Some 'snag' to one part or another of the bomber is nearly always found, and it has to be put right, with the toiling men always working against time. If it is a fault connected with the flying ability of the aircraft it has to be put right in time for a test flight which must be made to make sure that the fault has been rectified long before take-off on the raid. It sometimes happens that two or three test flights are made before the sweating ground crews have completed the job to the satisfaction of the captain of the aircraft.

Over at the sheds there is almost certain to be two or three bombers getting a special overhaul to put them into full serviceability at the hands of skilled maintenance crews and fitters. Perhaps whole engines



may be changed, as a result of damage, patches fitted over flak holes, new instruments put in or pipe lines and cables refitted. Test flights are made in these cases, of course, and not infrequently the maintenance crews are working on the aircraft right up to a few minutes before take-off. Skilled crews have been known to fit a new engine with less than an hour before take-off, which is certainly running it close.

While all this sweat and toil is going on in many different parts of the airfield, other special staff are also working against time. The intelligence officers are sweating on their filing systems getting out data about the target, getting out target maps and photographs, collecting information from Group Headquarters and from the path-finder force engaged -all to be ready for the briefing of the crews which will take place by 2pm. The meteorological officers are collecting and revising up-to-the-minute weather information from their own central channels. In the locker rooms another staff is sorting out all the items of clothing and equipment which will be issued to each member of the aircrews as soon as the briefing is over -about 15 articles for each man ranging from life-saving waistcoats to socks. In the kitchens Waafs are cutting sandwiches for nearly 200 aircrew and parcelling up rations of chocolate, fruit, chewing gum and other items of refreshment.

In Station Headquarters the Commander and other officers are selecting the crews and working out technical data for the journey. Sometimes new information comes through from Group Headquarters making a change of plan necessary. It may happen that this change has to be made and most of the morning's work altered within half an hour of the briefing.

The only people who have no part in this unceasing labour are the flying crews who will go on the raid. Theirs, perhaps, is the worst part -the waiting from the time they are 'warned' for a raid until take-off, a long wait which is broken only by the briefing and then by the dressing up in the crew room. But everybody else on the Station goes unceasingly and doggedly on until the moment comes when the last aircraft is signalled down the runway and off on its journey. Then, and only then, do the tired ground crews, the bomb crews and the others stretch their aching limbs and take their ease in canteen and mess hall. But not for long; in an hour or so it is time for bed, to be ready for an early morning start and another long, exhausting day.

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Them and Us

Flak and nightfighters were the foe as much as ice and snow and wind was the enemy but do people recall or even know what the Germans had planned?

... taken from the Royal Air Force Journal of May 1945.

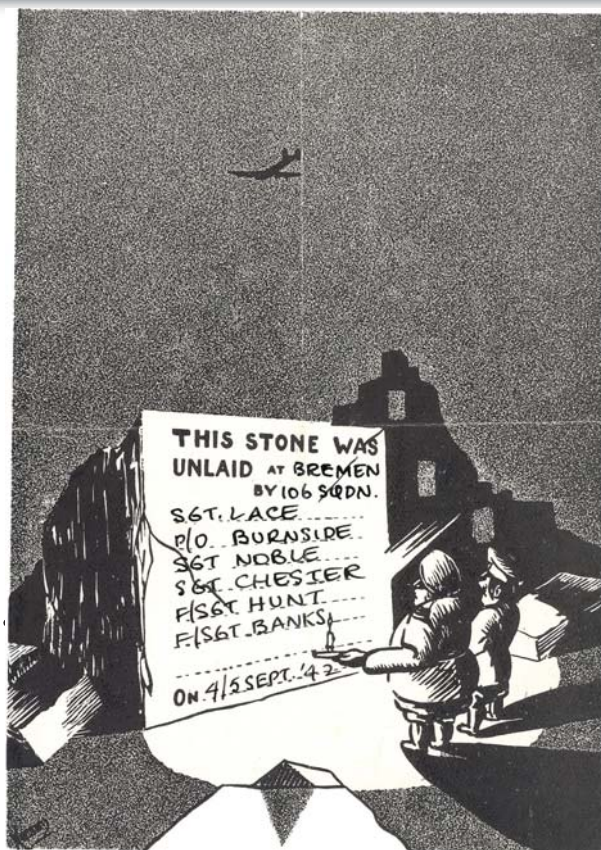
THE GERMAN PERIL

"As soon as we beat England we shall make an end of you Englishmen once and for all. Able-bodied men and women will be exported as slaves to the Continent. The old and weak will be exterminated. All men remaining in Britain as slaves will be sterilized ; a million or two of the young women of the Nordic type will be segregated in a number of stud farms where, with the assistance of picked German sires, during a period of 10 or 12 years, they will produce annually a series of Nordic infants to be brought up in every way as Germans. These infants will form the future population of Britain. They will be partially educated in Germany and only those who fully satisfy the Nazi's requirements will be allowed to return to Britain and take up permanent residence. The rest will be sterilized and sent to join slave gangs in Germany. Thus, in a generation or two, the British will disappear."

HERR WALTER DARRE,
Reichsminister of Agriculture.
April, 1942



The foe



Flying with the Luftwaffe

By Bernie Lewis

The Fiat G.91 was an Italian built aircraft that was used by the Luftwaffe. It's Orpheus engine was made originally by Bristol Siddeley, which eventually became Rolls-Royce, when Harold Wilson, became Prime Minister in 1964.

In 1969, when I was flying for Rolls-Royce, a requirement came in for a pilot to fly a Fiat in Germany with a suitably modified Orpheus engine. The compressor blades had been strain gauged and it was necessary to do a series of flights to take stress readings in normal flight and then to eventually do the same when firing the two Defa 30mm cannon. These cannon were in the aircraft's nose, on either side of the jet intake and it was thought that the gases from the cannon were causing problems with the engine, as had originally happened with the RAF's Hawker Hunter.

Having flown the F.86 Sabre on a squadron in the RAF, I was asked to go to Germany to do the requisite flying, as the G.91 was virtually an F.86, but about two thirds the size. There the similarity ended, as the Sabre touched down at about 105 knots and the Fiat did the same at 130 knots and had to use a braking parachute as well.

I was given a copy of the Pilot's Notes and it was arranged that a few days later, I was to fly some of our executives to Munich, in our HS 125. From there, I flew the 125 to Manching, a Luftwaffe R&D airfield, nearby. After landing, I was immediately taken to the hangar where a dual G.91 awaited. There were no security checks and I was soon strapped into the front cockpit, by a very pleasant Luftwaffe instructor. Fortunately, I had read the Pilot's Notes thoroughly and the instrumentation and procedures for starting were all as per the Notes. We had a pleasant hour flying around getting familiar with the aircraft and it was arranged that we would have a further flight next morning, before I returned to Munich, to fly my passengers back to Bristol. That flight was capped off when the instructor closed the throttle at about 20,000 ft and asked me to do a practiced forced landing back at Manching. Much to my surprise it went excellently and the instructor was very impressed and couldn't understand how I did so well. I told him that we, at Rolls, knew that our engines could fail and that anyone could do a normal circuit and landing, but we knew that our engines could fail and our circuits were frequently flown, with that in mind.

A week or so later, I was advised that a suitably strain gauged engine was ready for test flying at Husum, a Luftwaffe airfield, north of Hamburg. This time I went out as a passenger on Lufthansa and was met at Hamburg by one of our technicians, who drove me to Husum. Again, security was minimal, but I was given an identity card, as I was going to be there a number of days.

My first flight was with another instructor to show me the area and procedures for the airfield. The Germans, were most helpful throughout my stay and the morning briefings for all the pilots, were in perfect English, as were all Air Traffic directions. I was asked what call sign did I want to use. I replied, "Siddeley 5", which was what I used back at Bristol. Suddenly, a bright fellow at the back of the room said, "We can't use that as it's too many letters and it won't fit into our computer". I replied that "Sid 5", would be okay and that sorted the problem out.

I only flew about once a day, as the readings from the strain gauges had to be downloaded and analysed prior to the next flight. During the week, the Commandant called me in to his office and told me that they normally closed the airfield for weekends, but as I was here to help them, he would keep the airfield and all its services open for me, but "please Mr. Lewis, would you not fly low over the churches on Sunday".

When I was young, before the war, I used to read everything that I could about flying. I loved reading stories about Biggles and all the other flying adventure books. The heroes always seemed to be fighting against aircraft with big black crosses on their sides and wings. During the war I had two brothers and several friends, fighting aircraft with big black crosses on them. I never dreamed that one day, I would be flying along in an aircraft with big black crosses on the wing. On my first test flight at Husum, I was concentrating on what I was doing and taking down notes on my knee pad, when I looked out to orientate myself and saw a great black cross on the wing tip, about twenty feet away from me. For one nano second I was absolutely terrified, and wondered, a) how did he get so close

without me seeing him and b) was about to be blasted out of the sky! These flashes of terror, happened several times and I never ever really got used to it all. It hadn't happened when I was flying at Manching, as I guess that I wasn't totally engrossed in what I was doing at that time.

My last flight from Husum, was to fire the cannons at the air to air gunnery range, just west of the island of Sylt, where we did our air to air gunnery, in the days when I was with the RAF in Germany. I walked out to the aircraft and noticed that the armourers were walking away from the aircraft, carrying a large box with TACAN, stencilled on it's side. I thought to myself that the German maintenance/armourers are just like the RAF personnel and use all sorts of boxes to carry their odds and ends in and after my pre-flight inspection, I climbed on board and strapped myself in. I went through all the pre-flight and starting checks and set about dialling up the Tacan, which was a very good approach aid. It wouldn't come up and all I got on the instrument panel, were a lot of noughts and crosses. I suddenly realised what had happened. To get all the cannon shells on board, the Tacan had to be removed! Never mind, I knew where the firing range was and flew there, just off the coast and did my firing. I fired several bursts and as the Defars chugged away, the cockpit filled with dust and the wander lamp on its twirly cord kept falling out on my lap. Apart from that, nothing untoward happened. Next, it was back to Husum, above 8/8ths cloud and I called for a descent from 20,000ft. Air traffic told me to let them know when I was overhead, so I told them that I couldn't do that as I had no Tacan (which was also the aid to get me overhead). They told me to standby. After a few minutes I called again to remind them of the situation and was told again to standby. By this time I was starting to get low on fuel and decided to head out towards the sea again and let down below the cloud. There was no high ground anywhere in this area of Schleswig, so it was perfectly safe. All went well and I returned to Husum for my final landing. It struck me as being rather odd that if you wanted to find a remote target and shoot it up, it was necessary to do it by map reading. Alternatively, you could find the target, with Tacan, but when you got there, you could only fly over it and wave at the



opposition! Also, if you returned to base above 8/8ths cloud, there didn't appear to be a procedure for homing overhead, for a let down at your base! Very strange.

I enjoyed my stay with the Luftwaffe and found them very cooperative and hospitable.

Bernie Lewis joined the RAF post war qualifying as a pilot then moved to test flying for Rolls Royce. Another notable moment was test flying an Avro Vulcan bomber fitted with Concorde's Olympus engine. Surely a temptation to become a supersonic Vulcan until the wings fell off.

Conclusion

Reproduced from Volume 6 of "BOMBER COMMAND LOSSES" by kind permission of the Author, W.R. Chorley

Joe Williams, Rear Gunner, 625 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

No other command in the Royal Air Force sustained casualties at the frequency and scale as Bomber Command. Martin Middlebrook and Chris Everitt show, in their Bomber Command War Diaries, a total of 55,573 died with a further 9,836 taken prisoner of war. The names of the majority of those who make up these bare statistics are identified in this series of six volumes, which, I hope, will stand as a mark to their supreme courage.

Throughout the last seven years that have occupied me in my research into the subject, I have referred constantly to the cemetery registers published by the Commonwealth War Games Commission. No matter how hard one tries to be objective, the sheer volume of Air Force names that are recorded on each page causes me to reflect on the gratitude that we, as a nation, should show to those young airmen of fifty years ago, and more, that took the war into the enemy camp on an almost nightly basis between that terrible summer of 1940 and May 1945.

For them, and many were not much older than eighteen or in their early 20s, their course of life; and all the joys that should have been their future, was over scarce before it had begun.

Just one example of the sheer scale of numbers, that I refer to in my opening paragraph. In Germany, where the Commission is responsible for nine major concentration cemeteries plus half-a-dozen smaller plots, the dead of the air forces is more than double that of the army with a staggering 17,830 graves of known and unknown airmen, of which most fell while flying in Bomber Command.

In presenting this example, I acknowledge fully the courage of the ground forces who fought their way into Germany and leaving, as a lasting testament, well over 8,000 of their men resting in German soil.

Perhaps, in a way, we do acknowledge now, through the medium of books, squadron associations, radio, television and the like, better than those in authority that in the immediate aftermath of the war could have done something to mark the appreciation of our nation to those who had participated in that long campaign of attrition against a skilled and resolute enemy. For let there be no misunderstanding, the Luftwaffe fought tooth and nail and with no little success to deny Bomber Command access to what became known as "Fortress Europe".

And thus, it has to be forcibly said, the politicians of the time treated Sir Arthur Harris and by association the officers and airmen that came under his authority, quite shamefully. Apart from the gallantry medals awarded (and for the majority such kudos passed them by) there was no distinctive medal in recognition of their part in helping to rid the world of one of the most despotic dictators in modern history.

On a personal level, this deeply wounded Sir Arthur who, it is said, felt that he had failed those who had supported him to the hilt through thick and thin from the time that he took up the helm at High Wycombe in February 1942 until his departure on the 15th of September, 1945.

Throughout his long retirement (he was over fifty when he



left the service), Harris maintained a dignified silence refusing to publicly counter the sniping remarks made against his leadership or to refute the scurrilous charges levelled by some historians as to the ethics of the area bombing campaign. Even today, there are some who believe Sir Arthur was the architect of area bombing, whereas, in fact, he merely carried out the orders of the Air Council and the dictates from the War Cabinet.

Happily, he lived long enough to see the establishment of the Bomber Command Museum at Hendon and was present on the 12th April 1983, for the official opening ceremony by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother.

He wrote only one book, "Bomber Offensive" which appeared in 1947. In taking up the pen he had two objectives in mind. One was to explain the bombing offensive and the many trials and tribulations that had to be overcome before success could be assured and secondly to pay tribute to the stoicism of his aircrews upon whose young shoulders the weight of his command decisions fell.

In typical Harris fashion, he pulled no punches, neither did he seek to make any excuses or hide behind the coat-tails of his superiors. By and large, he succeeded in both purposes and as an analytical record of the bombing campaign, it has stood the test of time remarkably well. So, too, have his men. By the time he took up office, the pre-war officer and non-commissioned officer aircrews had been reduced to a fraction of their pre-1939 strengths and Bomber Command was now reliant on the vast influx of volunteer reserve airmen, plus the thousands of Commonwealth and Dominion airmen that had answered the call to come. Worthy contribution was also forthcoming from airmen who had escaped from the occupied countries, and who were anxious to play their part in restoring freedom to their homelands.

All are now in the autumn of their lives, lives that they can justly look back upon with pride. A handful remained in the peace time Air Force but the majority were only too anxious to return to civilian life and begin the task of rebuilding interrupted careers and raising families in the austere conditions of post-war Britain.

Thus, the bonds of friendship forged on those bleak wartime airfields faded as the priorities of "civvy street" took over and contacts were lost as the years rolled by.

Then, in the late 1970s came a resurgence of interest. Many squadron histories were started and though not all were published, squadron associations were either formed or strengthened and today I am amazed at the quality and frequency of the newsletters that arrive in my mail.

On the continent too, the sacrifice of the air force is not forgotten, particularly in the smaller villages and communities where often a single grave, or the seven headstones marking the last resting place of an individual crew, are a permanent reminder of the cost in re-establishing their eventual freedom. Here, the dedication and commitment by the local inhabitants towards honouring the fallen is quite magnificent to behold, and this wonderful appreciation extends across all generations.

Furthermore, what is plainly evident, the resolve and spirit of those most concerned with those now distant days has not dimmed. Limbs may not be so strong, or eyesight keen but that self confidence to overcome all odds is still present and, I firmly believe, will remain for as long as there are survivors from the squadrons of Bomber Command.

In the [COUNTY] [BOROUGH] OF ISLE OF ELY
Petty Sessional Division of Ely & South Witchford.

To N.Z.423321 ^{PILOT OFFICER} Sgt. John Gimbert Scott,
of the R.A.F. Station, Mepal,
in the [County] [Borough] of the said Isle

Information [on] [Of] [Affirmation] has been laid this day by
Frederick George Wells, Superintendent of the Ely Constabulary
Force in the said Isle,
charging you with the following offence:

STATEMENT OF OFFENCE (a)

No red rear light on bicycle

In contravention of Paragraph 25 of the Lighting
(Restrictions) Order, 1944 (as amended by subsequent Order), made under the
Defence (General) Regulations, 1939, which Regulations were made in
pursuance of Section 1 of the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act, 1939.

PARTICULARS OF OFFENCE.

On the 12th day of December, 1944,
at the Parish of Sutton
in the [said] [County] [Borough] of the said Isle you did (c)
unlawfully use a bicycle at Ely Road, Sutton,
aforesaid during the hours of darkness to wit at 8.50 p.m.
not carrying a red rear light from an authorised rear
lamp as required by paragraph 25 of the said Order.

You are therefore hereby summoned to appear before the
Court of Summary Jurisdiction sitting at the Sessions House at Ely

in the [County] [Borough] first aforesaid, on Thurs day,
the 22th day of January 1945, at the hour of 10.30.
o'clock in the fore noon, to answer to the said Information.

Copyright.

L.R. 2.

Defence (General) Regulations,
1939.

Lighting (Restrictions) Order,
1944.

Lighting (Restrictions) (Amend-
ment) Order, 1944.

Lighting (Restrictions) (Amend-
ment) (No. 2) Order, 1940.

Lighting (Restrictions) (Amend-
ment) (No. 3) Order, 1940.

Summons.

LONDON:
SHAW & SONS Ltd.,
Fetter Lane, Fleet Street,
E.C.4.

A467 S1551 (P) T

Dated the 21st day of December, 1944.

William Hedley
Justice of the Peace for the [County] [Borough] first aforesaid.

(a) See overleaf for offences under the Lighting (Restrictions) Order, 1940 (Paragraphs 1 (a), 1 (b), 20
22, 23, 31, 32, 35 (1) and (2), 35 (1) and (3), 39, 50 (1)).

(b) Insert reference to the particular Paragraph contravened.

(c) The particulars should be set out in ordinary language. Technical terms may be omitted.

NOTE.—Venus. "Proceedings in respect of an offence alleged to have been committed by a person
against any of these Regulations may be taken before the appropriate Court in the United Kingdom having
jurisdiction in the place where that person is for the time being" (The Defence Regulations, 1939, Paragraph
93(3)).

Defending King and Country poor Johnny Scott, after joining up, training and finally on ops with 75 Squadron at
Mepal, the Germans missed but Mr Plod didn't.
Fined 7/6, a sum better spent on pints of bitter, he should have pleaded that it was against King's regulations to fly
at night with nav lights on.



Ministry
of Defence

Reference No. _____

(MODMO use only)

BOMBER COMMAND CLASP APPLICATION

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING DETAILS IN **BLOCK CAPITALS**

Part 1 – Particulars of the Claimant

1. Surname: _____ 2. Forenames (not initials): _____ 3. Title: _____
4. Full address of application, plus country if non UK resident:
.....
.....Post Code: _____
5. a. Telephone number: b. Email address:
6. Please tick one: a. Veteran ☐ b. Widow ☐ c. Next of Kin ☐
7. Relationship to the Veteran (if NOK): _____

Part 2 – Particulars of the Veteran

8. Surname: _____ 9. Forenames (not initials): _____
10. a. Service No. _____ b. Rank _____
- c. Date of Birth / / d. Date of Death (if applicable) / /
11. Service (please tick one): a. RAF ☐ b. Commonwealth Air Force ☐ (please specify _____)
- c. Affiliated Foreign Air Force ☐ (please specify _____)
12. Please state aircrew role _____
13. Received 1939 – 45 Star. a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐ c. Not known ☐
14. Details of Squadron no(s) for any Bomber Command Squadron served on as aircrew between 3 Sept 1939 – 8 May 1945, with dates, operational sorties etc (if known) :
.....
.....
.....
.....

If you have any supporting documentation, e.g. official Record of Service, aircrew log book, please attach copies which will assist us in determining eligibility to receive the Bomber Command Clasp.
Please do not send original documents.

Part 3 – Declaration

To the best of my knowledge the information I have given is correct and as full as possible. Please be aware that it is an offence to knowingly withhold relevant information or give false information.

Name _____ Signed _____

Date _____

WHEN COMPLETED PLEASE RETURN TO THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE MEDAL OFFICE AT THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS – **BOMBER COMMAND CLASP, MoD Medal Office, Imjin Barracks, Innsworth, Gloucester, GL3 1HW** OR EMAIL SPVA-ASBCCApplications@mod.uk