



NZ Bomber Command Association News

October 2018

NZBCA CHARITABLE TRUST 2561560

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The New Zealand Bomber Command Association

From our President

We old Bomber Command types, like this winter, slowly fade away. There still are about forty veterans left, all in their mid to late nineties, with Doug now over 100. We retain vivid memories of those traumatic events of long ago but somehow we find it nigh impossible to explain what it was like fighting in a world war for our very existence.

We were acutely aware of the horrors and tragedies of war but being very young, also remember the excitements of flying.

How lucky we are in NZ to live in the remote Pacific!

Hopefully the massive publicity during the construction of the huge yet elegant Bomber Command Memorial in the heart of London, has given the general public a better understanding of the unique spirit, achievements and sacrifices of Bomber Command.

Some months ago, very aware of my frustrating hearing and



sight losses, I submitted my resignation as President of NZBZA. Here I am writing the President's opening remarks for the October newsletter.

There being no BC veteran able to become the new President, important changes to our Constitution are necessary, and this process takes months to complete.

I certainly have enjoyed my years as President. No doubt the many highlights must include the RNZAF flight to England to see the Queen unveil the magnificent statues of a bomber crew, in the heart of London. The creation of the priceless Bomber Command Memorial statuette, which the RNZAF awards to the outstanding squadron of the year, and getting to know so many wonderful people must also be highlights.

Thus I bid you "au revoir", until we meet again, not "adieu", farewell.

Ron Mayhill

The 2018 memorial service and 75 squadron Reunion.



From our Members

9TH AUGUST 2018 BRISTOL

ANDY BURROWS' MEETING WITH DAMBUSTER, GEORGE 'JOHNNY' JOHNSON

Shortly before the 617 Sqn Centenary Dinner and coincidentally enough, on the day of the 75th Anniversary of Op CHASTISE, an association member informed me that 'The last British Dambuster', Sqn Ldr (Retd) George 'Johnny' Johnson DFM MBE served on 120 Sqn and flew on Shackletons after the war. I got in contact via the Chairman of the 617 Sqn Association a short while later, offering Johnny Honorary Membership. A response came a few weeks later and 'Johnny had a very big smile on his face when he read your forwarded email and his daughter Jenny will contact you directly. Johnny's a lovely chap, and such great company at reunions, and he's delighted to accept your offer. Nice to be able to deliver good news Daz. But please don't break him at your next reunion; he's very precious to us!'

That email led to a meeting at Johnny's home in Bristol last night. I went with two work colleagues from Ascent Flight Training where I am in office once a month.

Johnny was welcoming and warm from the off. Smartly dressed with his Dambuster tie and blazer, I felt a little underdressed in jeans! I presented him with some CXX Sqn Centenary gifts from the Association, a Silk Sqn tie and a bottle of Glen Moray Malt to remind him of his days living in Elgin. Johnny's youngest daughter Jenny arranges his diary and warned me that we 'may be required to drink whisky'. I assured her that would not be a problem, and selected my visiting partners accordingly! True to form, Johnny offered us a lovely Welsh Malt and we duly obliged. His measures were also in keeping with a man of his revered background and we had a few. Very nice it was too! (Appropriately named Penderyn 'Legend' Single Malt Welsh Whisky for those of you who are interested.)

Johnny told us many tales and I thought I would try and paraphrase them for posterity and the perusal of our members here. My two ex-RN colleagues will be filling in any gaps so the notes should be as comprehensive a recollection of our visit as we can cobble together.

When one of the other chaps told Johnny that we worked together as a team that was predominately ex-RN, that they took every opportunity to remind me (and my other ex-RAF colleagues) of that fact and that the banter was still as strong now as it would have always been, he turned to me and said "bloody Fish—Heads!" Loved it!

Johnny started with telling us about post-war years and his short spell flying as trials team accepting the Shackleton into service. He loved his time in Scotland and was clearly a previous visitor to 'The Whisky Trail'. He told us of his time based in Singapore as an Operations Officer. While there a Shackleton VP254 B205 went missing. Johnny called an overdue action and a search commenced but to no avail. Eventually, a grave was found on a nearby Island with a simple wooden cross on it inscribed 'B205'. The aircraft or other crew members were never found. A wider investigation took place and there were several claimants for the 'cash reward for information'; most of which Johnny described as 'bullshit'. One though, was that a local fisherman

saw the crash and picked up a warm body as thought he was alive. When it transpired that he was dead, the man buried him and marked the grave with the cross on one of the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea. Johnny tasked his mate (he remembered the name from 60 years ago, I sadly cannot remember it from just last night!) to fly over and exhume the body for identification and proper burial. Once complete, his pilot friend asked him never, ever to ask him again as the smell will stay with him forever! The cross, I believe from a quick Internet search today, is registered with the IWGC, was mounted in concrete and bolted into the ground adjacent to the east wall of the St Georges Church, RAF Changi. It has since been moved to a wall between two windows in St Eval Church near RAF St Mawgan. The airman was identified as FS David HGN Dancy DFC, the aircraft's Flight Engineer.

This led to Johnny recalling a meeting at The Albert Hall this year for the RAFIOO concert and talking to former CA5 ACM Sir Stephen Dalton. Johnny asked if Sir Stephen knew another retired ACM called 'xyz' (again, poor skills Tindall — I should have taken a pen — Johnny's memory was perfect, mine not so). Sir Stephen did indeed know the other chap and Johnny proceeded to tell him that he had given the chap his wife. He explained that while in Changi, Johnny's wife had worked with the other wives and families and the couple had become close to a young Fg Off and his fiancée. When it became clear that her parents could not make the wedding, she asked Johnny to give her away. He duly obliged and therefore 'gave' a future CA5 (I think) his wife!

Very much a family man, Johnny was proud to tell us of his family. He said he didn't have much of a family life as a child so I suppose is living his childhood vicariously through his family now. He has a son, two daughters, eight grandchildren and I think he said 19 great-grandchildren with the latest being born only a year or so ago. He said he doesn't think he will see a 20th! Although expensive at Christmas, he said he lives life for them and you could see a proud twinkle in his eye as he glanced at the many pictures adorning his living room.

He married into a Welsh family and Gwyn died in 2005. He said he hadn't really entered into much to do with the war until his family said it might help with his grieving if he distracted himself with memoirs. He said he started writing but that soon petered out and decided to talk instead. Never taking a penny as 'I have enough pensions thank you and while not rich, I have enough!' if a fee was ever mentioned, he directed them to donate to RAFBF, RAFA or the Bomber Command Charities.

He spoke fondly of the International Bomber Command Memorial in Lincoln and how it was the best in the world. 'the intent was to have all the names of the Lincolnshire airmen that never came back from bomber raids, but in fact it has now been extended to record the names of over 58,000 that were lost from the entire command. When you came back from a mission to the Lincoln area, seeing Lincoln Cathedral gave a warm fuzzy feeling that you were home. These guys are now home, if only in name'.

He spoke of the Bomber Command Memorial near the RAF Club in Green Park and that the sculptor had captured it perfectly; looking up to wait and see if mates were coming back and right down to the tiredness in their eyes.

He also spoke of the 'paltry piece of brass. I have mine still in its box' — the clasp to the service medals for Bomber Command rather than a Bomber Command Medal in its own right. I feel a campaign coming on!

He spoke fondly of Carol Vorderman and her lovely family. He's had tea with them and Carol's mother (who sadly died in 2017) and told us a few funny stories there too.

Churchill. I don't think Johnny could be described as a fan of Winston. 'Was he our leader in wartime? Yes. Politically, but that was it!' He told us that Bomber Harris had told him that he had advised the PM that the carpet bombing of civilian population would have no benefit militarily and as such, would not work. After Dresden and the public outcry that followed, Churchill basically pointed the finger at Harris and said it was his idea (or words to that effect).

We had a brief skirt around the French and likewise, not a fan. 'The cowardly French'.

And so to Op CHASTISE. I must admit, like many of you I am sure, I was encapsulated by the movies as a child. I could watch them over and over again. Still can. I skated on the Mohne as a child (yes, yes, it was indeed thick ice!).

You could still see the replacement masonry in the 70s. Perhaps you still can. I played in the woods around the Eder too as we used to holiday in the area.

And here I was sat in front of this amazing man telling us about that night; a picture on the wall behind him of the Lancaster, T for Tommy, the Sorpe dam and a huge plume of water gushing up behind it. Johnny recalled meeting Barnes Wallis and liked him as he

was ex-military so had the manner an department correct 'well, apart from when he did all that 'tally-ho' rubbish!' He mentioned that groups of 6 aircraft were each designated their target, with Sin reserve. When they got to their target, the Sorpe Dam, they weren't supposed to be the first, nor the last, but they didn't see a sign of any other aircraft. He regaled the names of the captains of a few of the aircraft that he subsequently found out hadn't made it and what had happened to them. One shot down as he coasted in, another flew into a set of pylons. They were under strict orders to NOT bring the bomb home for fear of Cat-5-ing the airfield on return and they didn't want them falling into German hands for fear of reverse engineering that the Germans had been already known to be good at. If they didn't drop on target, they were to pick an opportunity target and drop the 6500lbs of HE on them. One Canadian pilot returned with his and was sent straight back to Canada by Gibson. Another couldn't release but when disorientated flew too low and the bomb got ripped off, severely damaging the aircraft — they made it back though I think. There was picture of the Mayor of a German town stood on a bomb, captured when an aircraft was shot down, Johnny said 'he was bloody lucky it didn't go off!' Johnny was the bomb-aimer and unlike the Mohne and Eder that were attacked side on by spinning, bouncing bombs, the Sorpe, due to the terrain and the fact it was an earth dam, needed a non-spinning bomb and

the aircraft track had to be ALONG the dam, not perpendicular to it like the others. A steep hill either side made it tricky. They lined up on the church in nearby Langscheid and ran in. Johnny called 'Dummy run' if he wasn't going to drop. After the fourth or fifth call of 'dummy run', the rear-gunner piped up on intercom 'are we going to drop this bloody bomb or not?!' They eventually dropped it after 10 runs. Going lower meant the bomb would be more accurate, so they dropped from 30 feet IIIII! Johnny didn't see the blast or splash but knew about it as the rear gunner got soaked by the water and the explosion apparently went up to 1000'!! That wasn't the last time the rear-gunner got wet either that night. As the drop was at 30', it meant the emergency climb out post-drop was even steeper and Johnny chuckled telling us that the Elsan toilet tipped over and flowed into the rear-gunner too! Although unlike the others, the Sorpe was unprotected by flak batteries, they were amazed that nobody in the surrounding

areas called in the Lancaster circling over the dam time and time again. This was what prompted the rear-gunner to comment 'my job was just to drop the bomb to cause maximum effect, his was to protect the aircraft and the longer we stayed, the more likely of arrival of trouble'.

They got home (via a circuitous route) but on the way observed the devastation caused by the other dam attacks. He was scathing of what he called 'retrospective

historians' who say that OP CHASTISE contributed nothing to the war. 'I always say to them, 'were you there?!'. He said that while they may not have had as much industrial effect, or not as much as they had hoped, we showed Hitler we could strike at low level anywhere in Germany'.

He mentioned about the waiting, looking skyward for guys coming home that never did. He spoke of his sadness that Scampton was being sold off 'they say they need the money — and in the Centenary Year too'. He spoke fondly of The Red Arrows and how 'they are singularly the very best air display team the world has ever seen'. The picture of the 9 in a V around a Vulcan he bought at a charity auction sits proudly at the top of his stairs as you come in. The Vulcan led to the 'I may have signed my own fate as Sqn Ldr being my ceiling' comment as after 5 family moves in 15 months he did a 'reading and writing' course and was posted to the V force which would have meant another 3 moves for his family in 6 months. After a discussion with the AOC, his wish was granted after the AOC telling him that it would negatively affect his career prospects. 'I was still promoted to Sqn Ldr a short while later though!' he smiled. After coming out of the RAF in 1962, he did some of his most gratifying work, first as a primary teacher 'I couldn't work with senior children as their



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definition of discipline and effort would have been different to mine and probably of their parents and other teachers also'. He went on to work for many years with deprived kids and people with mental health issues and proudly told us of his Honorary Doctorate from Lincoln University. He was humble about his MBE too and recalled a boss who got an OBE and thanked everyone as it was for 'other bugger's efforts'!

All in all, we were in awe. I still am. An amazing, humble, articulate man with probably the biggest story to tell that I have ever heard first hand and feel honoured, proud and privileged to have just done so. I hope to go back and have spoken to his daughter about maintaining a relationship from an Association point of view.

The 617 Sqn Association dinner next year is pencilled into his diary.

Andy is a serving Warrant Officer (Master Aircrewman) with the RAF who has just completed A five year stint on P3K2 Orions with the RNZAF. He is now in Lossiemouth prior to training on the new P8 Poseidons ordered for the RAF and RNZAF.



Honorary Chaplain

You will all be aware of Archdeacon Neville Selwoods' passing this year. It was his wish that the NZBCA Position of Honorary Chaplain be held by a Padre who had also served in the RNZAF.

It is with the real happiness that this post has been accepted by Group Capt. Anthony Howes. Anthony ("Ants") is well known to many of you, Dedicating the chapel at MOTAT, conducting a number of our annual services and of-course being

with the 2012 This veterans party to London.

Ant is currently NZDF Principal Chaplain...

Welcome aboard Sir!



Flying Officer (Pilot) Simon Phillips (aka Dick / Shorty)

RNZAF NUMBER 415223

Born in Wellington on 10th October 1921, Simon received his secondary education at Wellington Technical College. His chosen sports were Cricket and Soccer.

During 1938, he joined the Territorial forces as a Gunner in the 16th AA Battery. His civilian occupation was that of a panel beater in the employ of the P & T workshops. In February 1941 he applied for war service in the RNZAF.

Enlisted on the 14th September 1941 at RNZAF Station Hobsonville, where he was employed on ground duties while awaiting aircrew training. On the 2nd May 1942, he was remustered to pilot under training and posted to the initial training wing, Rotorua and from here on the 12th June to NO:1 elementary training school, Taieri. Where he flew his 1st solo 13 days later on the 25th June 1942. Training completed on the 2nd October, he embarked for Canada. There he was posted to NO:3 service training school in Calgary. It was while here on the 5th March 1942, he was awarded his flying badge and received his promotion to Sergeant. This promotion was superseded by being commissioned as Pilot, with the effect from the same date. Six months later, while serving in England he was promoted to Flying Officer. Meanwhile he proceeded to NO:1 Depot, Halifax, Nova Scotia to await embarkation for the UK.

Advanced training took him to Lulsgate Botton, Somerset, Westcott in Devon and later to Oakley in Hampshire to crew up and train on Wellington Bomber aircraft. In Wrating Common, Cambridgeshire, he converged to Stirling and finally in Feltwell, Norfolk, graduated on Lancaster Heavy Bombers.



On the 4th May 1944, Simon was posted to 15 Squadron, Mildenhall in Suffolk, where he commenced operational flying. It was with this Squadron he took part in 13DPS comprising attacks on French and German Squadron locations and a mine laying sortie in the Kattegat.

On 12/13 June 1944, Simon and his crew took off at 23:12 in Lancaster 1 LM 156/R. The aircraft was shot down by flak over the target area, crashing into the grounds of the Rhur gas works, 3kms west of Gelsenkirchen. The seven crew were buried in the East Cemetery in the city's Bismarck district. But later re-interred at Reichwald Forest War Cemetery, Kleve, Nordrhein, Westfalen, Germany.



Simon had completed 13 Ops, was 22 years old. He will always be remembered by his sister Joan Combie-Smith of Whangarei and his cousins Gary Ulmer and Yvonne Pullin of Auckland.

Phil Lamason was Simon's Squadron leader at Mildew Hall and was shot down a few days before Simon was killed.

Contacts with the Outside World

As well as the major efforts at MOTAT in Auckland, your Association has had close contact with the Auckland War Memorial Museum, the Air Force Museum at Wigram and numerous squadrons and group associations in the UK.

The NZBCA is very active through its website, Facebook page (updated weekly) and its page on the Wings over New Zealand Forum. Do check on them, just Google. We also publish articles in the Aero Historian (Aviation Historical Society Magazine).

We continue our close association with RNZAF 5 Squadron



Mark on a visit to veteran BA John Kelly in Kaiwaka. Although RAF, John trained in South Africa and served with SAAF Liberation Squadron.

based at Whenuapai and Sgt Mark Brain (an Air Electronics crewman on Orions) has been appointed our new liaison officer following Andy Burrows return to the UK. Long may the links between NZBCA and the 5 Squadron continue

Every week the NZBA "office" handles

enquiries both local and from overseas, families of crewmen looking for photos. Fortunately we now have almost 30,000 images on file mainly copied from veteran albums over the last 15 years. So if you something stuck away or a log book, let us copy them to share as that old crew photo may contain the only image of someone's relative taken in wartime. As well as copies we get, I do enjoy meeting "the boys" and their families, so give me a call, I travel! And who knows, that photo maybe published or get on TV.

NZ on Film / NZ on Air have a great catalogue to view free on air. One the latest is "POW" by David Blyth and involves interviews with Bomber Boys, Jim McQueen and Ernest Davenport. Its at <http://vimeo/256195100>



And there is the brand new book 75 Squadron, all 478 large format pages. Written by well known Squadron history author Chris Ward and our own NZBCA Exec member Chris Newey.

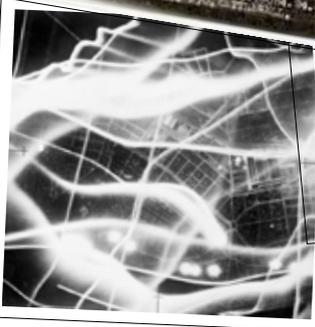
It contains over 200 photographs, most from veterans albums. It will be available from the MOTAT bookshop and a hardback version will be available from the NZBCA or Amazon

Our UK representatives Dee Boneham and Barbara Hunter both attend many memorial services on our behalf, bless them. The latest was the Remembrance service at the Bomber Command Memorial in London.



There's a job to be done, DCO!

... a few of the many target photos in the NZABC Archives



Executive Posts

PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT

You will have read of Ron Mayhill and Keith Boles desire to retire from the executive posts. With dwindling numbers of the trends that significant family membership it is time to pass on the responsibility.

The major "Tasks" are the annual June memorial service held in the Auckland War Memorial Museum, comment and guidance of the executive committee and writing the forward to this newsletter. Not a great task then not necessarily Auckland based.

With the expected change in the Constitution any member from the family, service in general groups may be proposed for the post.

Please contact me for further information. Those who are interested should forward details by December 1.

The Lucky Man

Giving an ANZAC day speech at our local hall, my father, Bob Yates called himself a very lucky man. The RAF Bomber Command air crew suffered the heaviest percentage losses of any of the western allies armed forces in WWII. Of 125,000 who flew, 55,573 were killed, a staggering 44.4%. So you needed a lot of luck to survive. This is Bob's story put together from his writings for the family, his log book, taped recordings between him and Harry Camish (also a NZ BCA member), meetings with and notes supplied by Arthur Hollis DFC plus other sources as referred to.

On 12th May 1943 50 Squadron Lancaster D Dog left Skellingthorp heading for Duisberg. Having crossed the enemy coast they arrived at the concentration point and joined the orbiting Bomber mass. Unfortunately a Halifax was orbiting in the wrong direction and met them almost head-on. The Lancaster lost six foot off its starboard wing and one of the Halifax's laminated wooden propellers scythed through the Lancaster's mid upper turret injuring the gunner, Flight Sergeant Robert Charles (Bob) Yates. Bobs oxygen mask was shattered and it took the medics many sessions over the next few days to remove bits of Bakelite and wood splinters from his face. Fortunately his goggles, though smashed, saved his eyes. Many bits were never removed and his face had black pot marks for the rest of his life. Among Bobs souvenirs was part of the Halifax propeller that was wedged in his shattered turret. That's how they knew it was a Halifax (only RAF bomber of the time with wooden propellers). The pilot, Flying Officer Arthur Hollis nursed the damaged Lancaster back to base, a feat he achieved many times.

Nothing is known of the Halifax's fate.

But this was war time. The next day and a new plane (A Apple), it's off to bomb the Skoda factory at Pilsen. Bob's log book is succinct. '5 Group only. Attack poorly concentrated. Starboard outer engine failed leaving target.' A later note shows that 11% of the attacking force failed to return and that the Pathfinders had marked the wrong target.

The last raid for May was on 31st to Wuppertal. This time they had their seventh, yes seventh, new Lancaster for the month, Hollis had been promoted to Flight Lieutenant, and Bob was in the rear turret. According to Bomber Command War Dairies Wuppertal was an outstanding success in the battle of the Ruhr, but Bob notes that 33 aircraft and crews were lost.

You had to be very lucky to survive in Bomber Commands aircrew and yet they were all volunteers: there by their own choice. Why? They could not have known the fate that awaited them. Well there must have been many reasons. In Bobs case when WWII broke out he was a painter and decorator as had been his father and grandfather before. His father Leonard served with the Third Battalion of the Coldstream Guards in WWI and was twice wounded and twice went back to France to fight again. On the second occasion while convalescing in England he as attached to the Tower of London guards and was the bearer of the Towers famous Keys. In later years he would



Joy and Bob, Butlins 1944

amuse his children and grandchildren by putting on a one man re-enactment of The Keys Ceremony. Leonard was a union leader and took part in the hunger marches in the 1920's and 30's. This resulted in many bosses refusing to employ him although he was a Master Painter. The family often had to resort to charity for food and other essentials. This fear of poverty and not being able to provide for his family haunted Bob all of his life

Leonard's stories of the horrors of Paschendale and life in the trenches were enough to convince young Bob that immediately after Chamberlain announced that 'a state of war existed between Britain and Germany' he volunteered for the air force rather than wait to be called up and risk the army. Having little formal education he applied

to become an air gunner, but was turned down and became a ground gunner in what later became the RAF Regiment. Bobs first posting was to Castle Bromwich to defend the airfield from which Fairy Battle Bombers and later Spitfires were test flown prior to delivery to front line squadrons. They were equipped with Austin and Standard car chassis fitted with a rudimentary lightweight armoured bodies and a Bren gun, so mounted as to be next to useless against low flying German aircraft. It was here he got his first flight in Westland Lysander that had escaped the German invasion of France At every opportunity he reapplied for air gunner training, but the air force in 1940 had other priorities, such as home defence so Bob managed to get onto a motorcycle training course and joined a Barrage Balloon squadron based at Gosport, helping defend the Gosport, Portsmouth and Southampton docks. In theory they were a mobile unit that could travel between towns that intelligence predicted would be targeted. In practice it usually didn't work and they would arrive many hours after the raid ended.

As a despatch rider keeping the various widely spread balloon sites in touch with each other and HQ, Bob was in the middle of the bombing. Often the roads would be blocked with fires and building debris. Downed power line were a particular hazard for motorcyclists. On one occasion he was glad of his heavy leather riding gear when helping rescue a family from a burning house and was surprised by the amount of shrapnel that rained down from the ack-ack shells and yes there were bombs exploding all round. On one occasion a large one landed within a few metres, but failed to explode. Thus he literally learned about air raids from the ground up.

Finally in July 1942 he was invited to attend an aircrew selection panel in London and the next month posted to RAF Credenhill near Hereford for air gunner training. At midday on 21 November he made his first flight with a camera gun mounted in the turret of a Bolton Paul Defiant and 50 minutes later fired 200 rounds of real bullets. One month later he was certified as a qualified Air Gunner.

On 6 February 1943 he started with 1660 Conversion Unit at Swinderby flying Avro Manchester's initially with S/Ldr Gardiner, but later with F/O Arthur Hollis, a relationship that would last

for the next six months and resume again 75 years later in 2008. On 16 Feb they converted to the Avro Lancaster and on the 12 March commenced duties with 50 Squadron at Skellingthorpe near Lincoln. 10 days later their first operational flight was to St Nazaire followed 4 days later to Berlin. Over the following months they were to raid, Essen, Kiel, Pilsen, Stettin, Duisberg, Dortmund, a floating dock off Copenhagen, Wuppertal, Friedrichshafen, Spezia, Gelsenkirchen, Cologne, Hamburg Turin and Milan, some several times.

At the front of a Lancaster the pilot, navigator, flight engineer, radio operator and bombardier sat close together in a heated cabin, but no such luxury for the two gunners sitting alone down the middle and back of the aircraft. The rear gunner in particular had a hard time as a panel between the guns was removed for better vision, but meant he was exposed to temperatures well below freezing. Also the rear gunner had the most dangerous position of all as most fighter attacks came from the rear. Many a rear gunner remains were literally hosed out of his turret. Jock Walker was the usual rear gunner and Bob the mid-upper, but they sometimes swapped around. A successful bomber crew were a well drilled team who's survival depended upon each other's skills and the trust. When making the final bombing run the Bomb aimer controls the aircraft and during fighter attacks its usually the gunners yelling instructions to the pilot.

On the night of 20 June 1943 50 squadron left their home base at Skellingthorp in Lincolnshire to take part in what was known as a shuttle raid.

The first target was the German Industrial city of Friedrichshafen home of the Dornier aircraft company, the great Zeppelin works, the engine, car and tank manufacturer Maybach, ZF who are still today one of the world's largest transmission manufactures, It was also the base for production of the V2 rocket.

Having bombed Friedrichshafen they flew on to Blida in North Africa to rest, refuel and re-arm before attacking the Italian naval base at Spezia on the 23rd. The airfield at Blida was next to a POW camp housing some the remnants of Rommel's Africa Corp. In the evening they listened to the Germans singing a lilting song over and over again Although they did not understand the words the tune stuck and both Jock and Bob had been choir boys so quickly learnt to hum and whistle it. They visited Algiers, where they purchased crates of oranges and Algerian wine. These were carefully loaded into the Lancaster and having done their bit in bringing down Benito Mussolini, they headed back to Skellingthorp via the Alps.

In theory, over the Alps they should have been safe from German night fighters, but the Germans had the same idea and flew regular patrols through Swiss air space. Flying over the Alps meant flying through cloud, which on the night of 23rd was 10/10th. In those days night flying over high mountains in cloud was a nerve racking experience. Bobs in the mid-upper turret and Jocks in the rear, but in such conditions everyone is keeping a lookout. Suddenly behind and above them there was a flash of light.

Was it a German fighter or another Lancaster on its way home?

In those circumstances you don't giveaway your own position by opening fire and without positive ID. It could be a friend.

Wait and see.

A few minutes later another flash, but again no ID, but as the

flash was in the same position as the first it was a worry as the German fighters had radar and they could be stalking them, just waiting for a break in the clouds to close in and shoot visually. After a couple more sightings the crew had a discussion and came to the concussions, firstly that the chances of one of their own aircraft following on exactly the same course and speed as them was practically nil. Secondly that it was a German fighter stalking them on radar, not being completely sure where the Lancaster was. Best to stay hidden and hope he gives up or runs out of fuel.

Time passes, a few more flashes, nerves at breaking point.

Then Hollis the skipper warn them. The clouds are thinning and they could be exposed at any time. Next flash, open fire.

Seconds later six Browning Machine guns start pumping 6900 rounds per minute of tracer and armour piercing bullets at the flash.

No return fire but the flash disappears, only to reappear 30 seconds later. Again the two gunners let fly and again the flash disappears.

This pattern is repeated several more times until the Lancaster finally breaks free of the cloud... and despite the thousands of rounds fired at it ... the moon is still shining up there to this day.

If you go to the Settlers Cemetery at Hobsonville you can see the moment captured in 3D on a bronze plaque on Bobs grave. The moon and the Lancaster emerging from the clouds.

But back in 1943 there were to be other repercussions. Having successfully returned from the shuttle raids they were given a few days off to visit family and friends. On their respective ways home Jock and Bob met on Nottingham Central railway station while waiting for a train back to Lincoln. They sat on their luggage and began to hum and whistle the German tune. Didn't take long before they became aware that a group men in raincoats and trilby hats had surrounded them, shortly followed by an MP Officer and six men. They were arrested as Spies and taken to the local MP cells. Hans Leip's Lily Marleen (Marlane in English) had yet to become the universal solders song, so any one who knew it had to be German, according to the SIS. After a night in the cells they were allowed to telephone their flight commander who vouched for them and explained how they came to know the tune. Only then did they find out its name from the SIS. The flight commander got the squadron commander involved and he demanded that, as he needed them for a raid that night, the MPs must provide road transport immediately. A couple of hours later an MP car deposited them back at Skellingthorpe, where they were duly arrested for being AWOL and marched before the squadron commander who sentenced them to a round of drinks in the Sergeants Mess.

On the night of 25 July they were coned by the search lights over Essen. Hollis threw the Lancaster all over the sky for four minutes, before finally escaping, but a night fighter had



Joy, Bob and the author early 1945.

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latched onto them and inflicted major damage. One shell exploded between the rear and mid upper turrets, wounding both gunners and other shells wounded two other crew members up front, as well as destroying many controls, both rudders, the ailerons and undercarriage. Yet again Hollis got them back to UK were they crash landed at Wittering. Bob and the two wounded front cabin crew (names not recorded) were patched up at a local hospital and flown back to Skellingthorpe the next day in a couple of Lysander's.

Jock was too badly injured so remained in a local hospital and was never seen again by the rest of the crew.

Luck played a major part in bomber crews lives and Hollis and his crew were posted to 617 squadron (un-officially known as the Suicide Squadron, now immortalised as the Dam Busters). However no crew in 50 squadron had ever completed an operational tour and with morale low due to losses, the postings were deferred to allow them to complete their tour.

Four days later with a new rear gunner and yet another new Lancaster they bombed Hamburg and Bob was able to claim his fourth kill, a Ju 88 with 180 rounds. Bobs log book entry ends 'a good prang'.

On the 16 August 1943 Arthur Hollis and his crew completed their first tour. According to Harry Camish a big celebration was held to mark this mile stone in 50 Squadron history. Hollis had been awarded the DFC, as also had navigator Dick Palmer and bombardier Ted Kemp. Wireless operator Tom Cheshire the DFM and engineer Tom Adshead and air gunner Bob Yates were both mentioned in Dispatches. Only poor old Jock Walker, the rear gunner, missed out.

Officially the crew were now entitled to a period of leave before taking up their postings to 617 squadron, but Bobs luck held again. With Bomber Command expanding rapidly the postings were cancelled and all sent on courses to become instructors. All that was except Jock who was still in hospital when the rest of the crew made their last four trips. Thus he had not completed his tour and, his posting to 617 was never cancelled. When fit for flying again the posting took effect. It seems he took part in at least two raids with 617 but was killed probably during the attack on the Saumur rail tunnel.

After 2 weeks leave Bob took up duties at 1660 conversion unit at Winthorpe. Although relatively safe these were not the happiest of times as Bob suffered chronic air sickness unless on operational flights. The tensions and concentration of ops left no time for sickness. At the start of 1944 he transferred to the Air Armament School at Manby and passed out from there as a qualified Instructor in February now with the rank of Pilot



Bob (rhs) with fellow gunner Ron Kinsman. Frazer Nash turret.



All officer crew 467 Sqn RAAF, Bob is in the centre.

Officer. The school used Bristol Blenheim Mk4. He then had 4 months as an instructor with 1661 conversion unit at Winthorpe flying in the unloved Stirling's. In August he was posted to Central Gunnery School at Catfoss to qualify as a Gunnery Leader. Here they flew Wellington Mk3 in mock combat with Mustangs, Spitfires, Thunderbolts, Marauders, Hurricanes and Martinet's. In November now promoted to Flying Officer he returned to 1661 Conversion Unit now as a senior instructor. His log book for 11 Nov notes that during fighter affiliation the pilot corkscrewed the Stirling to violently and lost control. The aircraft turned onto its back and they lost 6000ft before the pilot regained control. A reminder that the air force suffered heavy losses during training as well as during ops. It wasn't until 1945 that

Lancaster's finally replaced the Stirling's.

Bob completed his first non-operational tour on 10 April 1945 and 4 days later Flight Lieutenant Yates returned to operational duty as gunnery leader of 467 Squadron RAAF at Waddington. By now the bombing war had changed from strategic to tactical to help the advancing Allied armies. Over the next 10 days they raided the rail marshalling yards at Pilsen and Komotau and the oil refinery at

Tonsberg in Norway. Twice fog prevented them from returning to Waddington so they diverted to Boscombe Down and Lyneham. Tonsberg was their last night operation of the war as on the 2nd May they took part in a daylight raid and on 4 May switched to ferrying released POW from Juvincourt and again on 8 May the day of Germany's surrender.

With the war in Europe at an end 467 squadron returned to Australia and Bob was transferred to 106 squadron at Metheringham who were being prepared for Tiger Force, the name given to British forces intended for use in the invasion of Japan. Until they could get enough Lincolns, Lancasters were being 'tropicalised' and fitted with long rang fuel tanks.

Bobs luck held again when following the second A-bomb the Japanese at last accepted the inevitable and surrendered so Tiger Force was not needed and the slaughter of millions of both Japanese and Allied personnel avoided. In September they made two trips to Bari in Italy to repatriate 8th Army personnel. Bob stayed with 106 until the start of 1946 when he re-trained as a supply officer. In 1948 the RAF Volunteer Reserve was being wound down and Bob went for a Burton, in more ways than the usual RAF slang. The Air Force put him through a business management course and he got a job as the manager of Burtons Mansfield store. After a series of disagreements with the area manager he left in 1950 and joined the bearing manufacture Ransome and Marles in Newark becoming an instrument

technician. At this time the communist funded and lead unions were starting to destroy British Industry and over the next few years Bob, having had his appetite for Australia whetted by 467 squadron decided to emigrate. He applied to the RAAF, RCAF and RNZAF and the first to invite him for an interview was the RNZAF. By the time the other two also invited him for an interview he had already been accepted by RNZAF were he stayed for the next 21 years, until being plucked by Textron to be the Supply Manager for their newly established Bell Helicopters New Zealand. Bob loved flying in Choppers (no air sickness and close to the ground so that you can see the scenery) so despite being back in his dreaded Civvy Street he thoroughly enjoyed his last 5 years work before retirement, in 1980

At this point we'll fast forward to 2008 when one of Bob's grandsons, at that time a Heathrow based Boeing pilot, saw an article on a speech given by Arthur Hollis at a 50 Squadron reunion dinner. Garrick contacted Arthur who invited him to his large but decaying country house on 5 acres of land complete with lawns, flower beds, a walled garden, glass house, a lake with jetty and row boats, three Oast houses (hop drying) and large implement sheds, in the Kent village of Westwell. If you look it up on Google earth it's the large house next to the church. Arthur and Garrick became friends and on subsequent visits they studied the differences between Bobs and Arthurs log books and flying Lancaster's compared with B757's. Comparing the log books it would be easy to believe that they flew on different raids. Looking backwards and upwards was very different from looking forward and downwards. This got a correspondence going between Bob and Arthur until they were both to old and

ill. Among other points to arise was that while Bob was training for Tiger Force, Arthur was already in Hong Kong planning for the arrival of the Squadrons. When my wife and I visited UK in 2010 Arthur invited us to visit him and Garrick drove us down. Arthur greeted us at the door, monocle in place and enquired if we drank Champagne. This set the scene for a most pleasant day and many old stories were re-visited plus a few new ones. One that Arthur told against himself was at a dance On their rare nights off the crew used to take a bus into the Lincoln dances To start the girls would congregate at one end of the hall and the airmen at the other. Now Bob, often referred to as 'gentleman Bob' was a charmer and had a way with the ladies so it was always his job to go over to the girls and invite them over to the crews table. On this particular night Arthur spotted an outstandingly beautiful girl and uttered the words 'Cor she's a smasher. Bob bring her over' Bob's reply caused hilarity among the rest of the crew. 'Hollis we didn't know you were human!' Bob dutifully brought 'the smasher' and her friends to join the crew and a few months later married her.

Bob and Joy had 3 sons, 2 granddaughters and 6 grandsons.

Bob and Arthur died within a few weeks of each in 2013 both in their mid 90s...

Two very lucky men.

—Robin Yates



Lancaster and the moon emerging from the clouds. Recorded in bronze at the Hobsonville Settlers Cemetery.

The Canadian Effort

Except to the many Veterans who were trained in Canada, this country's effort is often overlooked. Totally funded by the Canadian people their BCATP contribution was over \$1 Billion. Spot your camp in this comprehensive list,

British Commonwealth Air Training Plan Schools - Canada

The majority of crews in Bomber Command's squadrons went through the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, the exception being those already in the service during the outbreak of the Second World War. Canada played a huge role in the plan and operated over 100 schools in a five year period, graduating a total of 131 553 airmen.

MANNING DEPOTS

Name	Location
No. 1 MD	Toronto, Ontario
No. 2 MD	Brandon, Manitoba
No. 3 MD	Edmonton, Alberta
No. 4 MD	Quebec City, Quebec
No. 5 MD	Lachine, Quebec

INITIAL TRAINING SCHOOLS

No. 1 ITS	Toronto, Ontario
No. 2 ITS	Regina, Saskatchewan
No. 3 ITS	Victoriaville, Quebec
No. 4 ITS	Edmonton, Alberta
No. 5 ITS	Belleville, Ontario
No. 6 ITS	Toronto, Ontario
No. 7 ITS	Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

ELEMENTARY FLYING TRAINING SCHOOLS

Name	Location	Dates of Operation	Aircraft
No. 1 EFTS	Malton, Ontario	06/24/40 - 07/03/42	Fleet Finch, Tiger Moth
No. 2 EFTS	Thunder Bay, Ontario	06/24/40 - 05/31/44	Tiger Moth
No. 3 EFTS	London, Ontario	06/24/40 - 07/03/42	Fleet Finch, Tiger Moth
No. 4 EFTS	Windsor Mills, Quebec	06/24/40 - 08/25/44	Fleet Finch, Tiger Moth
No. 5 EFTS	Lethbridge, Alberta	07/22/40 - 06/01/41	Cornell, Tiger Moth
No. 5 EFTS	High River, Alberta	06/01/41 - 11/15/44	Cornell, Tiger Moth
No. 6 EFTS	Prince Albert, Saskatchewan	07/22/40 - 11/15/44	Cornell, Tiger Moth
No. 7 EFTS	Windsor, Ontario	07/22/40 - 12/15/44	Fleet Finch
No. 8 EFTS	Vancouver, B.C	07/22/40 - 12/01/41	Tiger Moth
No. 8 EFTS	Boundary Bay, B.C	12/02/41 - 01/02/42	Tiger Moth
No. 9 EFTS	St. Catharines, Ontario	10/14/40 - 01/14/44	Tiger Moth
No. 10 EFTS	Mount Hope, Ontario	10/14/40 - 08/01/42	Fleet Finch, Tiger Moth
No. 10 EFTS	Pendleton, Ontario	08/01/42 - 09/15/44	Fleet Finch, Tiger Moth
No. 11 EFTS	Cap de la Madelaine, Quebec	10/14/40 - 02/11/44	Fleet Finch, Cornell
No. 12 EFTS	Goderich, Ontario	10/14/40 - 02/11/44	Fleet Finch
No. 13 EFTS	St. Eugene, Ontario	10/28/40 - 06/19/45	Fleet Finch
No. 14 EFTS	Portage la Prairie, Manitoba	10/28/40 - 07/03/42	Fleet Finch, Tiger Moth
No. 15 EFTS	Regina, Saskatchewan	11/11/40 - 08/11/44	Cornell, Tiger Moth
No. 16 EFTS	Edmonton, Alberta	11/11/40 - 07/12/42	Fleet Finch, Tiger Moth
No. 17 EFTS	Stanley, Nova Scotia	03/17/41 - 01/14/44	Fleet Finch, Tiger Moth
No. 18 EFTS	Boundary Bay, B.C	04/10/41 - 05/25/42	Tiger Moth

Continued over page

No. 19 EFTS Virden, Manitoba 05/16/41 - 12/15/44 Cornell, Tiger Moth
 No. 20 EFTS Oshawa, Ontario 06/21/41 - 12/15/44 Tiger Moth
 No. 21 EFTS Chatham, New Brunswick 07/03/41 - 08/14/42 Fleet Finch
 No. 22 EFTS Ancienne Lorette, Quebec 09/29/41 - 07/03/42 Fleet Finch
 No. 23 EFTS Davidson, Saskatchewan 11/09/42 - 01/02/45 Cornell
 No. 23 EFTS Yorkton, Saskatchewan 01/02/45 - 09/15/45 Cornell
 No. 24 EFTS Abbotsford, B.C. 09/06/43 - 08/15/44 Cornell
 No. 25 EFTS Assiniboia, Saskatchewan 01/30/44 - 07/28/44 Cornell
 No. 26 EFTS Neepawa, Manitoba 01/30/44 - 08/24/44 Tiger Moth
 No. 31 EFTS De Winton, Alberta 06/18/41 - 09/25/44 Stearman, Cornell,
 Tiger Moth

No. 32 EFTS Bowden, Alberta 07/12/41 - 09/08/44 Stearman, Tiger
 Moth, Cornell
 No. 33 EFTS Caron, Saskatchewan 01/05/42 - 01/14/44 Tiger Moth, Cornell
 No. 34 EFTS Assiniboia, Saskatchewan 02/11/42 - 01/30/44 Tiger Moth
 No. 35 EFTS Neepawa, Manitoba 03/30/42 - 01/30/44 Tiger Moth
 No. 36 EFTS Pearce, Alberta 03/30/42 - 08/14/42 Stearman, Tiger
 Moth

SERVICE FLYING TRAINING SCHOOLS

No. 1 SFTS Camp Borden, Ontario 11/01/39 - 03/31/46 Harvard, Yale
 No. 2 SFTS Ottawa, Ontario 08/05/41 - 04/14/45 Harvard, Yale
 No. 3 SFTS Calgary, Alberta (Currie Airfield) 10/28/40 - 09/28/45 Anson, Crane
 No. 4 SFTS Saskatoon, Saskatchewan 09/16/40 - 03/30/45 Anson, Crane
 No. 5 SFTS Brantford, Ontario 11/11/40 - 11/03/44 Anson
 No. 6 SFTS Dunnville, Ontario 11/05/40 - 12/01/44 Harvard, Yale,
 Anson
 No. 7 SFTS Fort Macleod, Alberta 12/09/40 - 11/17/44 Anson
 No. 8 SFTS Moncton, New Brunswick 12/23/40 - 01/02/44 Harvard, Anson
 No. 8 SFTS Weyburn, Saskatchewan 01/02/44 - 06/30/44 Harvard, Anson
 No. 9 SFTS Summerside, PEI 01/06/41 - 07/01/42 Harvard, Anson

SERVICE FLYING TRAINING SCHOOLS CONTINUED

No. 9 SFTS Centralia, Ontario 07/01/42 - 03/30/45 Harvard, Anson
 No. 10 SFTS Dauphin, Manitoba 03/05/41 - 04/14/45 Harvard, Crane
 No. 11 SFTS Yorkton, Saskatchewan 04/10/41 - 12/01/44 Harvard, Crane,
 Anson
 No. 12 SFTS Brandon, Manitoba 05/16/41 - 03/30/45 Crane, Anson
 No. 13 SFTS St. Hubert, Quebec 09/01/41 - 02/01/44 Harvard, Anson
 No. 13 SFTS North Battleford, Saskatchewan 02/01/44 - 03/30/45 Harvard, Anson
 No. 14 SFTS Aylmer, Ontario 10/03/41 - 08/01/44 Harvard, Yale,
 Anson
 No. 14 SFTS Kingston, Ontario 08/01/44 - 09/07/45 Harvard, Yale,
 Anson
 No. 15 SFTS Claresholm, Alberta 06/09/41 - 03/30/45 Crane, Anson
 No. 16 SFTS Hagersville, Ontario 08/08/41 - 03/03/45 Harvard, Anson
 No. 17 SFTS Souris, Manitoba 03/08/43 - 03/30/45 Harvard, Anson
 No. 18 SFTS Gimli, Manitoba 09/06/43 - 03/30/45 Anson
 No. 19 SFTS Vulcan, Alberta 05/03/43 - 04/14/45 Anson
 No. 31 SFTS Kingston, Ontario 10/07/40 - 08/14/44 Battle, Harvard
 No. 32 SFTS Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan 12/09/40 - 10/17/44 Oxford
 No. 33 SFTS Carberry, Manitoba 12/26/40 - 11/17/44 Crane, Anson
 No. 34 SFTS Medicine Hat, Alberta 04/18/41 - 11/17/44 Harvard, Oxford
 No. 35 SFTS North Battleford, Saskatchewan 09/04/41 - 02/25/44 Oxford
 No. 36 SFTS Penhold, Alberta 09/28/41 - 02/25/44 Oxford
 No. 37 SFTS Calgary, Alberta 10/22/41 - 03/10/44 Harvard, Oxford,
 Anson

No. 38 SFTS Estevan, Saskatchewan 04/27/42 - 02/11/44 Anson
 No. 39 SFTS Swift Current, Saskatchewan 12/15/41 - 03/24/44 Oxford
 No. 41 SFTS Weyburn, Saskatchewan 01/05/42 - 01/22/44 Harvard, Anson

AIR NAVIGATION SCHOOLS

No. 1 ANS Trenton, Ontario 02/01/40 - 05/11/42 Anson
 No. 2 ANS Pennfield Ridge, New Brunswick 07/21/41 - 04/30/42 Anson
 No. 2 ANS Charlottetown, PEI 02/01/44 - 07/07/45 Anson
 No. 31 ANS Port Albert, Ontario 11/18/40 - 02/17/45 Anson
 No. 32 ANS Charlottetown, PEI 08/18/41 - 09/11/42 Anson
 No. 33 ANS Mount Hope, Ontario 06/09/41 - 10/06/44 Anson

AIR OBSERVER SCHOOLS

No. 1 AOS Malton, Ontario 05/27/40 - 04/30/45 Anson
 No. 2 AOS Edmonton, Alberta 08/05/40 - 07/14/44 Anson

No. 3 AOS Regina, Saskatchewan 09/16/40 - 09/01/42 Anson
 No. 3 AOS Pearce, Alberta 09/01/42 - 06/06/43 Anson
 No. 4 AOS London, Ontario 11/25/40 - 12/31/44 Anson
 No. 5 AOS Winnipeg, Manitoba 01/06/41 - 04/30/45 Anson
 No. 6 AOS Prince Albert, Saskatchewan 03/17/41 - 11/11/42 Anson
 No. 7 AOS Portage la Prairie, Manitoba 04/28/41 - 03/31/45 Anson
 No. 8 AOS Ancienne Lorette, Quebec 09/29/41 - 04/30/45 Anson
 No. 9 AOS St. Jean, Quebec 07/07/41 - 04/30/45 Anson
 No. 10 AOS Chatham, New Brunswick 07/21/41 - 04/30/45 Anson

WIRELESS SCHOOLS

No. 1 WS Montreal, Quebec 02/16/40 - 09/01/44 Norseman, Tiger
 Moth, Stinson 105
 No. 1 WS Mount Hope, Ontario 09/01/44 - 10/31/45 Norseman, Tiger
 Moth, Stinson 105
 No. 2 WS Calgary, Alberta 09/16/40 - 04/14/45 Harvard, Fort
 No. 3 WS Winnipeg, Manitoba 02/17/41 - 01/20/45 Norseman, Tiger
 Moth, Fort, Finch,
 Yale
 No. 4 WS Guelph, Ontario 07/07/41 - 01/20/45 Norseman, Tiger
 Moth

BOMBING AND GUNNERY SCHOOLS

No. 1 B&GS Jarvis, Ontario 08/19/40 - 02/17/45 Anson, Lysander,
 Battle, Bolingbroke
 No. 2 B&GS Mossbank, Saskatchewan 10/28/40 - 12/15/44 Anson, Lysander,
 Battle, Bolingbroke
 No. 3 B&GS MacDonald, Manitoba 03/10/41 - 02/17/45 Anson, Lysander,
 Battle, Bolingbroke
 No. 4 B&GS Fingal, Ontario 11/25/40 - 02/17/45 Anson,
 Lysander, Battle,
 Bolingbroke,
 Nomad
 No. 5 B&GS Dafoe, Saskatchewan 04/26/41 - 02/17/45 Anson, Lysander,
 Battle, Bolingbroke
 No. 6 B&GS Mountainview, Ontario 06/23/41 - Post war Anson,
 Lysander, Battle,
 Bolingbroke,
 Nomad, Harvard
 No. 7 B&GS Paulson, Manitoba 06/23/41 - 02/02/45 Anson, Lysander,
 Battle, Bolingbroke
 No. 8 B&GS Lethbridge, Alberta 10/13/41 - 12/15/44 Anson,
 Lysander, Battle,
 Bolingbroke,
 Nomad
 No. 9 B&GS Mont Joli, Quebec 12/15/41 - 04/14/45 Anson,
 Lysander, Battle,
 Bolingbroke,
 Norseman,
 Hurricane
 No. 10 Mount Pleasant, PEI 09/20/43 - 06/06/45 Anson,
 B&GS Lysander, Battle,
 Bolingbroke,
 Norseman,
 Hurricane
 No. 31 Picton, Ontario 04/28/41 - 11/17/44 Anson, Lysander,
 B&GS Battle, Bolingbroke

NAVAL AIR GUNNER SCHOOLS

No. 1 NAGS Yarmouth, Nova Scotia 01/01/43 - 03/30/45 Swordfish,
 Seamew, Anson,
 Lysander, Walrus,
 Hurricane

Handley Page Halifax



STATISTICS

6176 built	82773 Ops
1833 ??	224207 tonned dropped
65000lbs take off Weight Range	1860 miles (combat)

Built by Rootes, London Bus, English Electric as well as HP the Halifax was an product of many industries.

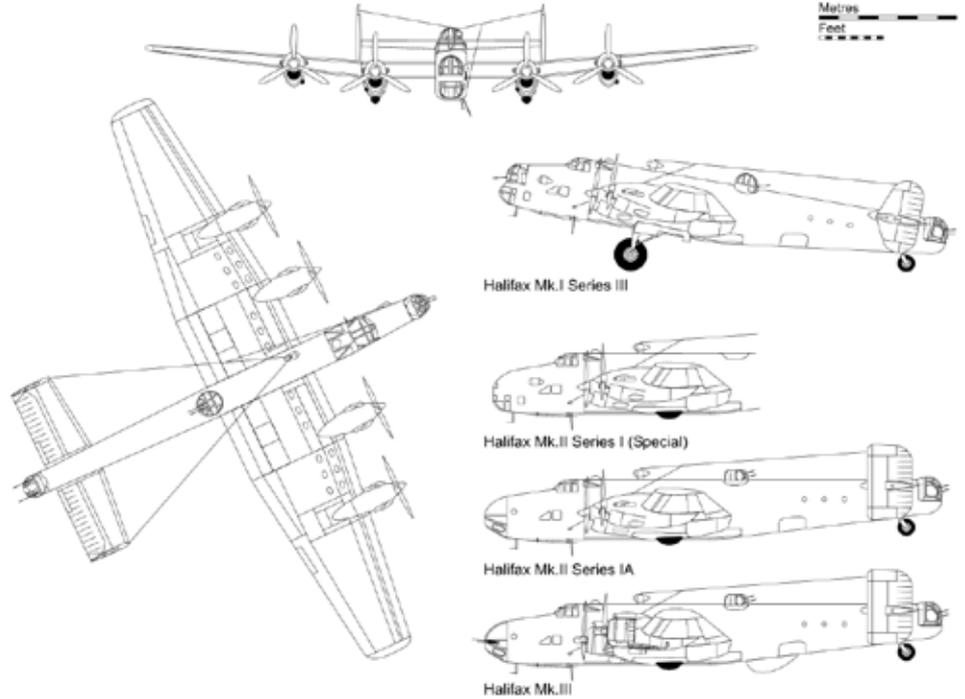
'Yee the Halifax'...

Old Halibags the vets will cry, yet to Bill Petersen who flew on 102 Squadron from Pocklington and Phil Small a dispatcher on 624 they were just fine.

Phil dropped agents or supplies across Yugoslavia and Poland while Bill dropped even more lethal supplies on places like Stuttgart or Hamburg. And it was the Halifax's "bridge strength" construction that allowed Geoff Rothwell on 138 Squadron to clean up a Dutch power pylon and still get back to earth (although not flying properly)



Bill Petersen



Bill was always keen to remind the Lanc boys that his beloved MKII didn't mind the heat and roamed to the edges of the Empire. In fact the Pakistan Air Force retired their last ones in 1961. A Halifax even reached New Zealand in 1947 carrying Pineapples!

Halifaxes served with the RAAF Squadron, the whole RCAF 6 Group of 15 squadrons and 42 RAF squadrons.

So while ever popular Lancs and Spitfires fill the news and screen remember the Halibag and those who fought with it.



One of only three Halifaxes currently preserved.

Change to the NZBCA Constitution

Following the executive meeting on June 3 and considering the wishes of our President and vice President, a change to the constitution is proposed which will allow any person to become a member and take an executive role.

Following is the proposal. A voting slip is included with the newsletter to all eligible voting Members. Please complete and return by November 30. Alternatively phone or email your reply though.

Changes to the Constitution of the RAF Bomber Command Association (New Zealand)

It is proposed that

----- Clause 5 Membership : be changed

From

Membership of the Association shall be limited to those who served with RAF Bomber Command during the Second World War for any period as members of aircrews and groundcrews including the Womens Auxiliary Air Force. This shall include those who served in Middle East bomber units operating against Germany since they generally completed operational training, initially in Bomber Command. All applications shall be supported by proof of service.

Honorary membership shall be available to the widows of deceased members or ex Bomber Command personnel. Associate membership shall be granted to a limited extent to other next of kin, authors and researchers and those who give active support in the pursuit of Aim 4 ©

To

Membership of the Association is available to all on application, and with the approval of the Association executive.

----- Clause 6 The Officers be changed

From

The officers of the Association shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting which shall be held not later than 31st August in each year. They shall be A President, Three Vice Presidents, An Honorary Secretary, An Honorary Treasurer, an Honorary Auditor
There shall be no formal election of committee members.

To

The officers of the Association shall be elected by the members by a special postal AGM as required and continue in their roles until resigning.

They shall be

A President, a Vice President an Executive Officer and a committee of no less than three members.

These constitutional changes are

proposed by R. Mayhill President signed and dated 8/9/18

seconded by K Boles Vice President signed and dated 13/9/18

The two changes detailed above were unanimously approved by the Committee on June 3 2018 at the AGM held in the Board Room of the Auckland War Memorial Museum.