

**Friends of
75 (NZ) SQUADRON RAF
ASSOCIATION
UNITED KINGDOM
AUGUST 2010**

Chairman

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Another newsletter and as usual we have a lot of sadness and also some happy moments.

WINTER REUNION 2010

The Remembrance Weekend reunion is being held at Heathcourt Hotel in Newmarket from Friday 12th to Sunday 14th November with dinner Friday night at 7pm and Saturday night at 6.30 and Mepal at the plinth on Sunday at 10.30. The cost is £75 per person a night including dinner.

Saturday we are going to Jack Richards in Fakenham, Jack has a big surprise for the 75 NZ Squadron members, can't wait Jack, the bus will leave Newmarket at 10am on the Saturday morning, everyone is welcome to join us and then we will call into Feltwell to lay a wreath at our marker.

Saturday night we are having a meeting at 6am, once again there is not much to discuss but a few members have asked about our finances and we will have a balance sheet for you all to see what we have done with the monies and what we want to do.

If you wish to come to the reunion please contact me Margaret Still on 01621 843935.

Selection of menu for Saturday night:

Starters: Prawn & Crayfish Cocktail, Homemade Garlic Mushrooms, Sliced Sun Ripened Honeydew Melon, Cream of Watercress and Spinach Soup.

Mains: Poached Escalope of Scottish Salmon, Char-grilled Rib Eye Steak, Sauté Breast of Chicken, Baked Stuffed Peppers.

Puddings: Passion Fruit Parfait, Dark Chocolate Break & Butter Pudding, Fresh Fruit Salad, Cheese Selection.

SUMMER REUNION 2010

We had a wonderful summer reunion in Nottinghamshire at Thoresby Hall, just how lucky we are to have the opportunity to stay in this fabulous old home. There were 23 for dinner Friday and Saturday night with Ron Brown who lives in the area joining us on both nights. Ron has written a book, Per Ardua Ad Astra, and gave us a generous donation,

thank you Ron. The activities at Warners are amazing, we played crochet, not well but it was a lot of fun and Esme Burch played the shot of the game, some played golf, we went shooting and that was enjoyable with a shoot off between Kevin King and Roly Still, Kevin being the eventual winner, I even got a bulls eye, more good luck than management. The ghost tour on the Saturday night was fun with David Church providing the ghostly spooky noises and brushing against bushes making a few people want to run from the tour. Margaret & Malcolm Fox got bikes and rode around the estate and all this in the price. It was lovely to have Mike Moloney for the weekend as Mike had just buried his lovely wife Pam, I hope we gave you a few laughs Mike. The plays etc that were put on by the Thoresby players was just as good as London theatres perform. Margaret Gray had the works in the Spa and came out looking 20 years younger, Colin has now said she can spend a £100 a month to carry on the massages, well perhaps not. As usual we had our Brandon members there, Peter & Rita Walker and Pam Wilson, Peter has such a dry wit and Pam & Rita with their shopping expeditions - no don't ask me girls I hate shopping. We are very lucky to have John & Helen de Hoop, Helen only too happy to help and yes Helen, Roly and Dee won the crochet, but did they cheat???? As usual Ken & Ann Brown bought Esme Burch and on the Sunday they visited the Arboretum where the 75 NZ Squadron have a memorial tree and plaque. Brenda Parker came for the first time for a year - remember Brenda is 93 and had a hip operation last November, what a marvel she is and is still as petite and elegant as usual. For those who don't know, Dee Bonham is in the Air Force at Honnington and found the grave of a New Zealander unkempt and cleaned it up. She went to New Zealand and found a niece of the Kiwi in Dunedin. I think Dee is smitten with NZ.

Margaret



From L to R

Back row

David Church, Colin Gray, Ken Brown, June Church, Margaret Gray, Ann Brown, Dee Boneham, Helen deHoop, Margaret Still, Esme Burch, Pam Wilson, Rita Walker, Peter Walker, Malcolm Fox, Kevin King, Roly Still.

Front row sitting

Mike Molony, John deHoop, Brenda Parker, Margaret Fox, Dawn King.

Absent from the photo is Ron Brown and his companion, Millie.

OBITUARIES

As Margaret has mentioned there is some sadness with this newsletter. Seven members of the association have recently passed away.

Phil Parsons, wife of Lew, passed away after a period of illness. Phil was a great supporter of Lew in raising money for the Red Cross, without whom Lew may well not have made it home from a PoW camp. Myself, John and Helen de Hoop, Margaret and Roly Still attended Phil's funeral. Many fine words were spoken by her grandchildren and Helen de Hoop. A lady loved by all.

Dolly Wilks, wife of George, passed away after a long illness. George and Dolly married just before George was posted to 75. George would often bring members of his crew home on leave where Dolly would fuss over them. In later years George and Dolly spent a great deal of time in Canada and New Zealand renewing wartime friendships. Dolly was a very caring person and at one time travelled to New Zealand to care for a sick friend. I attended Dolly's funeral at her local parish church where she was a regular worshiper. She was laid to rest wearing the squadron badge of which she was always proud of.

Pam Molony, wife of Mike, passed away after a long period of ill health. Pam was a very keen golfer. Most holidays being spent touring the best golf courses in the British Isles. I was pleased to be able to attend Pam's funeral and represent the association.

Reginald Hartley DFC. Passed away after a short illness. Served as a navigator 1944/45.

Joyce Wells, widow of Roy Wells who was killed in action 5th October 1944. Joyce had suffered from ill health for many years. With the aid of her brother, Michael, she was able to visit her husband's grave in Germany and attend the Remembrance Day parade at the Cenotaph in London with the War Widows Association. Each October Joyce and Roy would come to Mepal and place a small memorial cross at the plinth in memory of her husband. It was only in the last three years that Joyce and her brother had become aware of the association. Michael is hoping to attend our Remembrance weekend.

James Glass. 22-12-09. No further details.

Len Wright. Have just heard that Len passed away after a long period of illness. Len was able to attend our reunion last November with his son, Nigel, who brought him along. Len was a Flight Engineer on Stirling's and Lancaster's, being part of the Johnny Grubb crew. Len remained in the RAF post war. He carried on flying after the RAF with Dan Air until retirement.

TREVOR GRAY

Margaret has sent me an article that appeared in the Taranaki Daily News. It concerns the daughter of Trevor Gray, a New Zealander who was killed on the squadron in November 1941. He never got to see his daughter who was born after he left New Zealand. His daughter, Lorraine, recently found a box containing letters that her father had sent as well as his flying log book and medals. An extract from his last letter written on the day he failed to return reads as follows: "I am glad Lorraine has brought so much happiness to everyone, and I think now our efforts must certainly be watched over by God. I feel that I could not do what I am doing without the knowledge, and I am glad now, more than ever, of my Bible Class days". Lorraine is now in contact with a Dutch group that intend to unveil a memorial at the crash site of her father's aircraft, 8th November, 69 years after it happened.

TIES AND LANYARDS

Glen Turner, the NZ Association secretary was over for a couple weeks to attend and take part in the air show at RAF Fairford. He has left us with some lanyards. These can be worn around the neck for an ID card to be attached to or a mobile phone. Printed on the lanyard are all the squadron aircraft and badges of the RAF and NZ squadrons. Cost is £3-50 including postage. Please send your order to me, Kevin.

The Squadron tie is now available to order. The tie in the photo shows all four types of aircraft flown by the squadron during the war. When ordering ties please state which aircraft you want on the ties. For example if you flew or worked on Wellingtons and Stirlings, order the tie with those two aircraft on. If you are a relative, order the tie without aircraft on. Ties are priced at £13 each including postage. Please send your orders to Margaret with payment. She will pass the orders onto Glen in NZ.



Squadron tie



Lanyard with ID card

BATTLE OF BRITAIN AIR GUNNERS

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. Most people believe that the battle was fought just by fighter pilots in Hurricanes and Spitfires. This is a misconception. Twin engined Blenheims were used as well as Defiant's. Both these aircraft carried air gunners. Two such gunners went on to serve with 75 at Feltwell. Sadly both were to lose their lives on operations.

The first, **Sgt. Arthur Service** RAFVR, who served with 29 Squadron during the battle.

The second was **Sgt. Alan Campbell** RNZAF, who served with 264 Squadron. Alan was killed on his second tour with 75 on his fifty second operation.

STORIES

Andrew Threadgold of Haddenham, is collecting stories of members of the squadron who married local girls. Would also like information on the following crew.

Ernest Joseph Abraham DFC, Donald John Glengarry, F/O Jones, F/Sgt Watson, Sgt Hughes, F/Sgt Makin and Sgt Evens. Any information that you have please contact Andrew on 01353-740650 email andrewthreadgold@btinternet.com .

THE SWEDISH CONNECTION

A request for information from Lars Ahlkvist in Sweden. Lancaster HK594, AA-G was lost on a raid to Stettin on 30-8-44. The aircraft was abandoned near the Swedish coast and crashed in Sweden. Only the pilot, Flt.Sgt. D.A.S. King survived to evade capture. Sgt H.W. Causley, Sgt C.B. Hill and Sgt D.L.D. Moon are buried in Sweden. Sgt J.P. Callen, Flt.Sgt. Fitzgerald RNZAF and Flt. Sgt. W.D. Watson RNZAF are commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial. A memorial has been erected at the crash site to honour the crew. If you have any information on the crew please let me know and I will pass on the information.

WELCOME

I'm pleased to report that our Padre, Ernie Barlow is recovering well after treatment at Addenbrookes hospital. We look forward to Ernie being with us in November.

A warm welcome to Jim Lamb who has returned to Scotland after 40 years in South Africa. Jim served at Feltwell and Newmarket as ground crew.

FELTWELL COMMUNITY CENTER

Our good friend at Feltwell, Joe Koziar informs me that the old Sgts Mess at Feltwell is to be turned into a community centre. It is proposed to name the centre after Jimmy Ward VC. When plans are finalised it is hoped that the association will be present at the opening.

I look forward to November when we can once again join in friendship and the spirit of 75 (NZ) Squadron.

Kevin

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