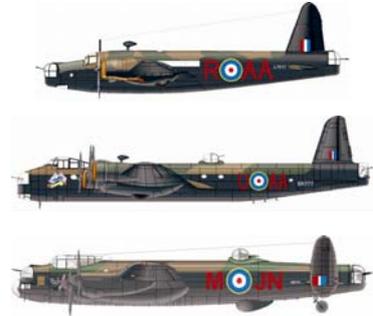


**Friends of  
75 (NZ) SQUADRON RAF  
ASSOCIATION  
UNITED KINGDOM  
JANUARY 2009**

**Chairman**

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**A personal message from the President, Jack Richards.**

Many thanks to Kevin and Margaret for the happy and friendly reunions we are now having under their guidance. We are being well informed of our friends and comrades well being. I beg all of you to give them every support; they are trying very hard to keep us all together and seeking suitable venues for us to meet at prices we can afford. Unfortunately we are getting less in number so lets keep together as long as we possibly can and happy to meet again.

We all hope you had a lovely Christmas and 2009 will be good to us all, okay the bankers might see that this is not going to happen.

**SUMMER REUNION**

Our summer reunion is being held at Gunton Hall Coastal Resort, Gunton Ave, at Lowestoft, between Suffolk and Norfolk from Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June till Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June

This is part of the Warners group of resorts and that weekend they have great entertainment. It's a variety of music and laughter from the 1940's so a wonderful sing a long can be expected. If you want to learn the jitterbug please let me know as they don't have many places left, yes I am going to have a go so you can come along and have a laugh at my two left feet.

The prices are: Standard Chalet £137.66 per person. The single chalets are £197.66 per person, this is for the 3 nights and includes a full English breakfast, 3 course evening meal and daytime entertainment, onsite facilities, for example swimming pool or indoor bowls rink. They are keeping our bookings until February 16<sup>th</sup> so hopefully you can let me know immediately.

Phone Margaret Still 01621 843 935. Should be a lot of fun and with all that is happening on site we won't have to move out for any entertainment, mind you I am sure the ladies can go shopping in Lowestoft if they wish to.

## WINTER REUNION

For all those that came to our winter reunion I am sure you are like me and really enjoyed the weekend at the Brandon House Hotel, talk about Miss Marple it was old and worldly and I am sure there were ghosts hanging around. The food was out of this world but so much we all came away at least 7 lbs heavier and the hospitality of the owner and staff was really something else. It sure beats these posh hotels and was cheaper. On the Saturday we went to Feltwell and put flowers on all the 75 NZ Squadron members buried there, I was amazed that there are 13 Kiwis there. On Sunday at the service at Mepal there were over 100 people, the lovely Mepal locals always turn up to support us.

Ernie Barlow from Mepal came to Brandon for dinner on Saturday night and we made him an Honorary Member for his many years of loyal service to 75 NZ Squadron and the dignity in which he has taken the Remembrance Service when a vicar has not been available and his sympathetic approach when we are laying ashes in memory of the 75ers that have passed away and wished to have their ashes placed around our Mepal Plinth. Ernie is also custodian of our adopted Chapel at Mepal. He makes sure that the Chapel is always warm and well heated for us on the cold Remembrance Sundays plus keeping a keen eye on our Plinth and surroundings, he lives on the opposite side of the road to the Plinth. Thanks Ernie for your dedicated service.

## OBITUARIES

We have had sad news as well. **Chris Dickenson** from Cornwall died mid December; Chris served with 75 NZ Squadron as a Flight Engineer on Stirling Bombers "W-Willie". Chris and Sybil came to the reunion when all the Kiwi's came over and he was with his old crew who came from NZ. Their son Robin has been made a Canon at Truro Cathedral and is still a rural dean and rector of his 8 churches. **Ted Wilson** who lived in Brandon has also died on the 15<sup>th</sup> January, Ted and Pam became members after coming along with Mike Strickland years ago and Ted was in the war in the RAF but said my Squadron don't do anything can I join the 75er's and they have been great members ever since. Also **Mike Strickland** had a stroke a couple of months ago but seems to be on the mend, his daughter is looking after him, get well soon Mike who as we know worked very hard for the 75 NZ Squadron. **John Craven** has also sadly passed away. John was a wireless operator who completed a tour on 75 and then volunteered for a second tour near the wars end. The C.O. tried to talk him out of it, but John insisted on going back on ops. On the 25 February 1945 John's aircraft was shot down whilst attacking Kamen. The crew survived to become POWs. In later years John became blind, and when I last met him he joked and talked of his time on 75, and for a short time he was back in the air.

Our lovely **Malcolm Fox** has had a quadruple heart by pass on 24<sup>th</sup> December but hopefully you are on the mend Malcolm, has he got you on the run Margaret, Margaret's brother flew with the Squadron and comes to the reunions with amazing memorabilia which her mother saved. We had a few absentees at the winter reunion, **George & Dolly Wilks** couldn't make it as Dolly is not well, **Lew & Phyllis Parsons** got the flu bug, Lew you should have come and had some of the hotels finest whisky!

**Brenda Parker** was another member who has never missed a reunion like the above members, **Len & Pam Coleman** also couldn't make the reunion as Len is not in the best of health so hopefully you are all fit for the summer reunion.

**Esme Burch** came along with her two daughters and their husbands for the reunion and you can always get a laugh from them, and as usual we had **Dan and Carol Engle** and **Chris Cocks** from Feltwell for dinner Saturday night.

At our winter reunion we had Mr & Mrs David and Isobel Harris who attended the service at Mepal on the Sunday. Isobel's brother flew with the squadron and this is the first time they have known anything about the service we hold at Mepal every November, it is very sad that its taken Isobel so long to find us but we hope that you can now feel a little at peace since you met us all.

I would also like to thank those members who send us money every year we do appreciate it and we don't spend it on designer sun glasses or hand bags you will be pleased to know.

### **GLENN MILLER**

We had an interesting article from the Sunday Express about a plane belonging to the 75 NZ Squadron shooting down Glenn Miller on December 15<sup>th</sup> 1944. No one really knows for sure if this is true but apparently the crew of the Lancaster had to abandon their mission because of bad weather and the usual practice was for the crews to jettison their bombs into the Channel and it was here that disaster might have befallen Miller. Ironically the Squadron had adopted the Glenn Miller hit String of Pearls as their lucky tune and would play it as soon as they returned to their base at Mepal.

We would like members to know that Joan Max and the family of Roy Max have donated his medals on loan to the RNZAF Museum at Wigram in NZ, a very honourable gesture. Our President, Jack, was informed by our members in NZ that were present at the handing over ceremony.

### **Margaret**

### **BOMBER COMMAND MEMORIAL**

At the November reunion a proposal was made to make a donation to the Bomber Command Memorial fund. The fund has been set up to pay for a permanent memorial to all members of Bomber Command. As I am sure you will agree this is something long overdue. It was put to the membership that a donation be made to the fund from the association. It was agreed that a sum of £250 be donated.

### **NEW MEMBERS**

It has been most heartening that the association is keeping it's membership up with the addition of next of kin of former members joining. Do please encourage the younger members of your families to join us. Not only will we ensure they have a good time if attending a reunion but make sure they know they are part of the 75 family.

Please do ensure to let Margaret know if you are attending the summer reunion. Having myself stayed at several of the Warner hotels I can recommend them.

Looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible in June.

God bless you all.

**Kevin King**

**AKE AKE KIA KAHA**