

# Washington Times



*Newsletter*

*Issue 17*

*Spring 2009*

## Cover Photos

**Top** WF512 (44 Squadron) at dispersal, RAF Coningsby (*Ernest Howlett*)

**Lower** The memorial stone for those lost in the crash of WF502. (*Ron Sand*)

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## Subscriptions

Unfortunately the time has come when I need to ask for subscriptions for the next four issues. As before, subscriptions are £7.50.

If you are interested in continuing to subscribe please send cheques for £7.50 made out to Chris Howlett to the address above.

I hope that you have continued to enjoy the issues and I look forward to producing four more. If you have any stories from your time with the Washingtons please do not hesitate to send them to me as the next issues will be somewhat short without your contributions!!

## Washington Times Reunion

The 2009 Washington Times reunion will take place on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup>, Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> and Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2009 and will involve a visit to RAF Marham during their families' open day on 23<sup>rd</sup> July.

RAF Marham is holding its annual families' day on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> July and we have been offered 30 places at this event. I am not sure of the format of this day but have been told that the entire station will be open and there will be flying displays so it should be a memorable event.

Rather than stay in, or immediately adjacent to RAF Marham, I am planning to hold the reunion at Blakeney, an historic and picturesque village and port on the North Norfolk coast about 40 miles distant.

### Reunion Itinerary

Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July	Arrive Blakeney; book into accommodation
Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July 7.00 pm	Reunion dinner at White Horse Hotel, Blakeney
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> July 10.00 am	Depart for RAF Marham family day (11.00am – 4.00pm)
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> July 4.30 pm	Depart RAF Marham and return to Blakeney
Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> July	9.45 or 10.45 am Seal watching boat trip to Blakeney Point from Blakeney Quay. Trip takes one hour.
Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> July	Depart for home

Accommodation is available in Blakeney and many of the surrounding villages. Please make your own arrangements although the following contact details may be of interest to you.

## **Blakeney White Horse**

9 rooms which range in price from **£70 - £140 per room per night** (all rooms are either twin or double). This is also the venue for the reunion dinner on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July.

Blakeney White Horse  
4 High Street  
Blakeney  
Norfolk  
NR25 7AL

**Web:** [www.blakeneywhitehorse.co.uk](http://www.blakeneywhitehorse.co.uk)  
**e-mail:** [info@blakeneywhitehorse.co.uk](mailto:info@blakeneywhitehorse.co.uk)  
**Tel:** 01263 740574  
**Fax:** 01263 741303

## **Blakeney Hotel**

60 rooms which range in price from **£84 - £140 per person per night**.

Blakeney Hotel  
Blakeney  
Nr Holt  
Norfolk  
NR25 7NE

**Web:** [www.blakeneyhotel.co.uk](http://www.blakeneyhotel.co.uk)  
**e-mail:** [reception@blakeney-hotel.co.uk](mailto:reception@blakeney-hotel.co.uk)  
**Tel:** 01263 740797  
**Fax:** 01263 740795

## **King's Arms**

A traditional pub with 7 rooms which range in price from **£65 per room (for 2 people) per night or £115 for 2 people for 2 nights**.

The Kings Arms  
Westgate Street  
Blakeney  
Norfolk  
NR25 7NQ

**Web:** [www.blakeneykingsarms.co.uk/](http://www.blakeneykingsarms.co.uk/)  
**e-mail:** [info@kings-arms.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:info@kings-arms.freeserve.co.uk)  
**Tel:** 01263 740341  
**Fax:** 01328 711733

Because of the distance between Blakeney and RAF Marham I am interested in knowing how many people will be arriving in their own transport and also how many passengers each car driver is willing to take. If enough seats are available we will not have to hire a mini bus which will keep the cost

down. However, there is no pressure to either drive yourself or to take passengers, willing volunteers only please!

If you are able to attend the reunion please fill out and return the attached booking form. Please also make your reservation for accommodation direct with the hotel of your choice. Send no money now. I will ask for deposits etc nearer the time but I would like to get an idea of how many people are interested in attending so I can let the hotel know for the meal and also keep RAF Marham informed of numbers for their families' day. The RAF also needs to know the following information for each person who wishes to visit RAF Marham:

Last Name; Forenames; Date of Birth; Place of Birth; Address & Postcode; Telephone Number; Nationality; Passport/Driving Licence Number.

These details are required by 1 June to ensure that we can access RAF Marham.

I hope to meet as many of you as possible for the reunion and hope that it will be an interesting and enjoyable event.



## Seal watching boat trip

For those who are interested, the Seal Trip takes about 1 hour and details are available on the web at:

[www.beanboattrips.co.uk](http://www.beanboattrips.co.uk)



## Memorial to those lost in the crash of WF502

On Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2008 a memorial stone for the crew of Washington WF502 was unveiled during a ceremony, led by the Reverend Huw Butler, at St Garmon's Church in Llanarmon-yn-Ial. WF502 of 90 Squadron had crashed into woods at nearby Gelli Gynnan Farm, with the loss of all 10 crew members, during the early hours of 9<sup>th</sup> January 1953, while on a routine training flight from RAF Marham. The plane was completely destroyed in the crash and subsequent fire, and no firm cause was established.

The ceremony, organised by Ross Duffield, was attended by some 300 people including family members of some of the deceased; Sheelah and Richard Sloane, daughter and son of Squadron Leader Bill Sloane (airplane captain); Alex and Tamar Hughson, brother and niece of Sgt Bobby Hughson (gunner) and Wendy Chilcott niece of Sgt Ken Reakes (gunner). Other attendees included 14 standard bearers from the local British Legion, members of two of the local Air Training Corps squadrons, and a Welsh choir. The RAF was represented by a contingent from RAF Marham and an RAF Tornado, also from RAF Marham, performed a fly past during the ceremony.

The Reverend Huw Butler told the congregation how a memorial service had been held in the church back in 1953 but had left "a sense of incompleteness" in that there had never been a formal memorial for those who had lost their lives.

Sheelah Sloane and her brother Richard attended the service to pay their respects to their father, Squadron Leader Bill Sloane, who was killed in the crash. Sheelah said of the service: "I never thought today would happen. I am just completely overwhelmed by the whole experience. I never dreamt that after all these years that we could have had such a wonderful celebration of these men's lives. A whole community has come out, we have had standard bearers, a wonderful Welsh choir, and the fly past that was just so amazing! It brought tears to my eyes. I have always found it so sad that my Dad survived the war years, having seen action in India and in the Middle East, but then was so tragically killed eight years after the war ended."

Alex Hughson came over from California with his wife, Lynn, and daughter, Tamar, in remembrance of his big brother Bobby who was just 19 when he was killed. Alex was seven years old at the time of the tragedy and he told the service that as a boy he had suggested a memorial - but was told that they were only for important people. He said that the service and memorial were "long overdue" and there was now a memorial for all to see and for all time. "Bobby had been home on leave not long before he died and I enjoyed the short time I had with him. He really was my hero".

**Left:** WF502  
of 90  
Squadron  
(*Ross  
Duffield*)

**Following  
pages:** The  
Order of  
Service from  
the unveiling  
ceremony for  
the memorial  
to the crew of  
WF502.  
(*Ross  
Duffield*)



SERVICE OF DEDICATION IN MEMORY OF THE CREW OF  
WASHINGTON BOMBER WF 502 OF 90 SQUADRON ROYAL  
AIR FORCE, WHO DIED IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR  
COUNTRY ON 8TH JANUARY 1953.

Squadron Leader W.R. Sloane  
Pilot Officer M.J. Lightowers  
Pilot Officer C.B. Speller  
Sergeant R.E.S. Anderson  
Sergeant M.J. Clifton  
Sergeant R.G. Hughson  
Sergeant A.S. Martin  
Sergeant E.D. Pearton  
Sergeant K.A. Reakes  
Sergeant E.F. Wheeler



SERVICE AT ST GARMON'S CHURCH  
LLANARMON YN LAL  
SATURDAY 6th SEPTEMBER 2008 at 3.00pm

**Order of Service**

Welcome by the Vicar of Llanarmon Yn Lal  
Rev. Huw Butler.

*Alex Hughson*

The names of the crew of WF 502

*Hymn*

*(During this hymn standards will be received by  
the Vicar and placed by the altar)*

O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal home.

Under the shadow of thy throne  
Thy saints have dwelt secure;  
Sufficient is thine arm alone,  
And our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,  
Or earth received her frame,  
From everlasting Thou art God,  
To endless years the same.

Thy Word commands our flesh to dust,  
"Return, ye sons of men!"

All nations rose from earth at first,  
And turn to earth again.

A thousand ages in Thy sight  
Are like an evening gone:  
Short as the watch that ends the night  
Before the rising sun.

The busy tribes of flesh and blood,  
With all their lives and cares,  
Are carried downwards by the flood,  
And lost in following years.

Prayers led by the Vicar  
Rev. Huw Butler

*Sheelah Sloane* Tribute

*Llwynegris Singers* Ave Verum Corpus

*Warrant Officer  
Ron Bennett* The Lesson: Revelations 7, Verses 13-17

*Hymn* *(During the singing of this Hymn, there will be a collection for  
The Church and Standard Bearer will collect their standards  
and remain at the carry in the chancel)*

The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended,  
The darkness falls at Thy behest;  
To Thee our morning hymns ascended,  
Thy praise shall sanctify our rest.

We thank Thee that Thy church, unsleeping,  
While earth rolls onward into light,  
Through all the world her watch is keeping,  
And rests not now by day or night.

As o'er each continent and island  
The dawn leads on another day,  
The voice of prayer is never silent,  
Nor dies the strain of praise away.

The sun that bids us rest is waking  
Our brethren 'neath the western sky,  
And hour by hour fresh lips are making  
Thy wondrous doings heard on high.

So be it, Lord, Thy throne shall never,  
Like earth's proud empires, pass away;  
Thy kingdom stands, and grows forever,  
Till all Thy creatures own Thy sway.

The Rev. Huw Butler will lead the congregation  
in saying The Lord's Prayer.

Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name  
Thy kingdom come Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses  
As we forgive those who trespass against us  
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil  
For thine is the kingdom the power and the glory for ever and ever.

*Amen*

**Rev. Huw Butler**

Prayer for RAF and H.M. The Queen.

Let us thank God for the Royal Air Force as it celebrates its 90 years history.

Let us pray for our Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth.  
For the Officer Commanding Royal Air Force Marham his staff  
and all who have served on his station.

The Royal Air Force Association, The Royal British Legion  
and the Air Training Corps.

We pray for all those members of our armed services  
at home and abroad.

*Amen*

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The National Anthems

Mae Hen Wlad fy'n Nhadau yn annwyl imi  
Glad Beirdd a chantorion enwogion o fri;  
Ei gwrol rhyfelwyr gwladgarwyr tra mad,  
Dros rhyddid collasant eu gwaed.  
Gwlad! Gwlad! Pleidiol wyf I'm gwlad,  
Tra mor yn fwr, I'r hur hoff bau  
O bydded i'r hen iaith barhau.

God save our gracious Queen  
Long live our noble Queen,  
God save the Queen.  
Send her victorious,  
Happy and glorious  
Long to reign over us,  
God save the Queen.

Northop Silver Band will then play the "RAF March" and  
Standard Bearers will lead the Clergy, choir, family members and RAF  
Marham contingent out of church followed by the congregation.

In the Church yard the Congregation will assemble  
around the slate memorial

The Royal Air Force Ensign will be removed from the memorial by  
members of No. 1918 (Ruthin) Squadron A.T.C.

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*Rev Huw Butler:*

"May the souls of the departed, through the  
mercy of God rest in peace."

*All respond: "And rise in Glory"*

*Reading by Tamar Hughson "The Airman's Prayer"*

**Wreath laying at the Memorial**

*Llwynegris Singers* Blessing of Aaron

**The Royal British Legion Exhortation**

They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old, age  
shall not weary them nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,  
we will remember them

*All respond "We will remember them"*

*Northop Band* The Last Post  
*Solo Cornet*

There will then follow one minute silence.

*Reveille*

**The Rev Huw Butler**  
The Blessing.

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## No. 90 Squadron

The Squadron was formed on the 8th. October 1917 at RAF Shawbury  
as a fighter unit destined for the Western Front but was disbanded on  
the 3rd. August 1918. It was then reformed as a home defence unit and  
based at Buckminster and equipped with the Avro 504k, but then dis-  
banded again on the 13th. June 1919.

The Squadron was again reformed as a bomber unit on the 15th. March  
1937. It then saw several changes during which time it was equipped  
with Hinds and later Blenheims and became part of 17 Operation  
Training Unit.

The Squadron's next incarnation was on the 7th. May 1941 when it  
became the first RAF Squadron to operate the Boeing Fortress, until  
14th. February 1942 when again it was disbanded.

The Squadron re-entered the order of battle on 7th. November 1942  
when it reformed as a Stirling unit in No.3 Group operating from  
Bottesford. It began operations in January 1943 and continued until the  
end of the war with Lancasters from June 1944. Retained as part of the  
post-war bomber force, the Squadron received Lincolns in May 1947  
which they retained until disbandment on 1st. September 1950.

However on the 4th. October, one month later the Squadron was again  
reformed this time as a Washington unit at RAF Marham. Conversion  
to Canberras began in November 1953 and was completed in March  
1954 when the last Washington departed. Another disbandment came  
on 1st. May 1956 but on the 1st. January 1957 a new 90 Squadron  
formed at RAF Honington intended to form part of the V-Force.  
Valiants arrived in March and continued to be operated in the flight re-  
fuelling role from April 1962 until their final disbandment on 16th.  
April 1963.

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*The organisers gratefully acknowledge the assistance provided by the following:*

Rev Haw Butler, Vicar of Llanarmon Yn Ial  
Church Wardens St Garmon's Church, Llanarmon Yn Ial  
Llwynegri Singers  
Llanarmon Yn Ial Community Council  
The RAFA Shotton and Connah's Quay Branch  
Northop Silver Band  
The RAFA Wrexham Branch  
The National Service RAFA North Wales Branch  
Royal British Legion Ruthin Branch  
Royal British Legion Denbigh Branch  
1918 (Ruthin) Squadron Air Training Corps.  
2279 (Wrexham) Squadron Air Training Corps.  
Officer Commanding Royal Air Force Marham  
Officer Commanding II (AC) Squadron Royal Air Force  
Mossfords Memorials Wrexham.  
Read Construction Holdings Ltd.  
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Up Creative







**Previous Page:** St Garmon's Church in Llanarmon-yn-Ial.  
*(Paul Stancliffe)*

**Top:** The congregation gather in the churchyard prior to the unveiling ceremony.  
*(Paul Stancliffe)*

**Middle:** Members of 1918 (Ruthin) and 2279 (Wrexham) Squadrons Air Training Corps form a guard of honour.  
*(Paul Stancliffe)*

**Bottom left:** The congregation at the unveiling ceremony.  
*(Paul Stancliffe)*

**Below:** The RAF Tornado, based at WF502's home base of RAF Marham makes its fly past.  
*(Ross Duffield)*



## **Reminiscences**

Here is another Washington tale – possible known only to those who were involved...

Late afternoon, late November or early December 1951 we (our crew) were airborne with two American civilian technicians on board. I do not know what they were doing.

They had come by car from London and were desperate to return that night.

Due to worsening weather we were diverted to Marham but our skipper wanted to get these two back to Coningsby and obtained permission to try and land back at base.

By the time we arrived back at Coningsby it had gone dark and was raining heavily; so heavily that we were losing sight of the runway when in the circuit. We missed the first approach and went round again. Control said that they would place yellow flares to port of the runway to help us. We came in again and as we turned in to approach I saw the flares from the left scanner blister; then they moved over to our starboard side.

I thought that the pilot had mis-understood the instructions and was landing to port of the flares i.e. on the grass!

What to do? The pilot was struggling with the controls in the rough weather. Should I tell him that I thought he was on the wrong side of the flares? If I am wrong I would look a fool. Would it distract him at this critical stage of the approach?

I decided to keep quiet.

At the last moment, as we crossed the end of the runway he realised his mistake (I was right) and did a horrible flat turn to starboard and got us down on the runway with a thump. During the turn we passed over the runway caravan at '0' feet! In the glare of the landing lights I had a fleeting glimpse of the Sgt controller diving off the caravan steps and landing flat on the soaking grass.

Eventually we got back to the mess for our flying meal and sitting there all wet and dirty was the runway controller. I cannot repeat the unprintable comments he made about our pilot! You could tell he was really shaken up.

The good news was that the Americans got away to London on time although it was what you might call a near miss – and I mean near. Am amazed that we did not chop the caravan to bits with our props – Lady Luck was with us that night!

Jeff Brown

## **OBOE - the Wartime Blind Bombing Aid**

In a recent Washington times it was John King, I think, who raised the question "What was Oboe and how did it work?" Donald Bennett in his book "Pathfinder" explains that there were three methods used by the RAF Path Finder Force to locate targets. Firstly visually when the weather conditions were right. Secondly H2S ground mapping radar, similar to that fitted to the Washingtons, and thirdly Oboe. Oboe was a responder system which was used from December 1942 to guide Path Finder Force aircraft to their targets in the Ruhr area. The work on developing the system was carried out by 109 Squadron, firstly in pressurised Wellingtons, as the aircraft needed to be as high as possible to get the range, and then on some newly acquired Mosquitos.

Oboe was a responder system worked by two ground stations in the UK which sent out radar pulses. These pulses were received by the aircraft and sent back to the ground station, which then measured the time element in order to ascertain the distance of the aircraft from the station. The theoretical accuracy of the equipment was very high, and nominally located the aircraft within about 50ft, in terms of distance from the station concerned. One such station acted as a tracking station, and transmitted a signal with dots on one side and dashes on the other to indicate whether the aircraft was maintaining the constant radius which was required to bring it on to the target. This constant radius was calculated for the height of the aircraft and prevailing wind, and allowed for the tangential throw of the bombs; it was carefully calculated by the 'boffins'. The other station was ranging on a similar basis, and had set on its equipment warning distances at which it sent out signals that the release point was coming near. Finally it sent out a long dash, and at the moment the dash broke the bomb aimer pressed the release and let go the bombs or markers. The 'boffins' (A.H. Reeves, Dr F.E. Jones and their team) produced the equipment, and it was maintained technically by No.60 Group. Group Captain (later Air Vice Marshal) Don Bennett was in operational command and provided the Controllers, headed by one Wing Commander Finn. The equipment was all virtually hand-made, even including the aircraft equipment, which was then installed on the squadrons. There were two pairs of ground stations, with the northern stations in each case up near Trimmingham and the southern stations down near Walmer and Worth. Each pair worked on a different channel, so that they could at that stage operate two aircraft at a time.

This was one of the limitations of Oboe. Moreover, its range was limited to just a little more than the straight line tangential to the earth's surface. In fact, it was about 1.05 times optical range. Thus these stations on the east of England could just cover the area of the Ruhr. Limited though this was, it was of tremendous value in view of its very precise nature and its absolute independence of weather.

The target markers laid by the Path Finder Force aircraft, and on which the main force bombed, were essentially of two types. Firstly ground markers were incendiary flares of various colours which exploded at 200 to 500 feet, spreading their burning chemicals over a fairly wide area. This made it difficult for the German fire services to douse all the flames quickly. These became known as Target Indicators, or TIs for short. The second type was Sky Markers, used when the cloud cover was too dense for TIs to be seen at bombing height. Sky Markers were parachute flares released upwind of the best aiming point. They burned for about 4 minutes and drifted with the wind during that time. They were released so that the mid point of the burn was at the optimum aiming point. Perhaps surprisingly, overall the bombing accuracy was good.

Bennett recalled that the first night on which Oboe was used against the enemy was 20<sup>th</sup> December 1942, and the pilots were No 109 Squadron's CO, Wg Cdr H.E. Bufton, and Somerville, Griggs, Campbell, O'Neill and Thelwell. Indeed, this team was the backbone of the Oboe squadrons from then onwards. They dropped 4 x 500lb HE bombs each on a coking plant at Lutterade, Holland - as a test target. On 31<sup>st</sup> December 1942 on a raid against Dusseldorf, Oboe was used to sky mark - the first occasion on which sky-marking had ever been used - with eight Lancasters of Path Finder Force acting as bombers, whilst two Mosquitos provided the sky-markers. Unfortunately, a gale had blown down one of the ground station masts, and Oboe was therefore working on one channel only. Thus one Oboe aircraft acted as marker and one as standby. The Lancasters in the main came in very nicely, with very precise timing, and seven out of eight of them bombed through the sky-markers on the correct headings with good results. The eighth aircraft, however, was a little early, and the flares ignited behind him. He was thus forced to do a circuit and, making it rather wide, he unfortunately did not get back to the flare before it had burnt out. It seemed from this, the first tests of the method, that the Path Finder Force was able to offer the C-in-C a means of bombing when there was complete cloud cover below so thick that no ground markers, however intense, could be seen through it. Many Air Force officers would have taken a lot more proof than this before they used the method, but it was typical of Air Chief Marshal Arthur Harris (the AOC-in-C of Bomber Command) that he grasped the opportunity and immediately thereafter used it against Essen itself - one of the most difficult and most important targets in Germany.



From 20th December 1942, onwards, the Oboe crews kept up their operations by dropping sky-markers for targets in the Ruhr, that area which had proved impossible to bomb by visual methods, and too congested to pinpoint by H2S, but which contained most of Germany's vital heavy industry. With forces of twenty to seventy Lancasters per raid, they attacked Essen six times and Duisburg twice during January, a bad weather month when the whole Command would have been practically paralysed without blind marking. During this period, the end of December 1942, plus January and February 1943, No. 109 Squadron operated a hundred and six sorties against various targets for marking and for test bombing purposes. The most interesting factor during this trial period was that in spite of the fact that each Oboe equipped aircraft had to fly dead straight and level for a distance of about fifty miles into the target, thus helping both the German ground gunners and the fighters, and in spite of the fact that the Mosquito was completely unarmed, and in the eyes of many senior RAF officers a completely useless aircraft, the loss rate was nil.

The losses on heavies in the early days of the Path Finder Force started off rather badly. In the first month, August 1942, they averaged 9.1 per cent lost. This was a rate which obviously could not be maintained to have any hope of retaining sufficient experienced crews to do the job properly. Fortunately, this unhappy state of affairs did not continue after the Force began to settle down and become effective in its tactics and planning. Hence in September the rate dropped to 3.1 per cent for the heavies, and in October 2.6 per cent. It fluctuated thereafter between 1.5 and 4.5 per cent, and this was a rate which could be borne without catastrophic results.

Reverting to Oboe, Bennett recalled a very historic occasion of a particular sky-marking raid on Essen. This took place on 9th January 1943. The C-in-C detailed a moderate little force of Lancasters to bomb on sky-markers, and all went well despite complete solid cloud cover below, unlike the better conditions which had prevailed on the other sky-marking raids already carried out. It was quite clear to those on the ground that the most valuable target in Germany, the Krupps works at Essen, was being hit by a blind bombing method. Hitler immediately called a meeting, at which he himself took part, and apparently he was most vehement in his denial that such a thing was possible. He insisted that there must have been breaks in the cloud so that the RAF could see the targets. His various experts advised him otherwise, but apparently he was furious at the thought. All this was discovered after the end of the war, when German records of the meeting became available. Oboe had not only shattered the targets of Germany, but had also shattered German morale. It continued the process for the rest of the War, and was probably the most effective single instrument of warfare in Britain's entire armoury.

Finally Bennett mused that it was interesting to note that the members of the public of Great Britain and the Commonwealth probably had, and still have, no idea of the existence of Oboe, and have certainly never heard of A.H. Reeves, who invented it with the able assistance of Dr F.E. Jones, and a small team of enthusiastic 'boffins' from the Telecommunications Research Establishment. Mosquito pilots MacMullen, Bufton, Slim Somerville and the rest of the aircrew in the Oboe squadrons of the Path Finder Force got their DSOs and their DFCs by the sheer weight of their obvious bravery on operations. The inventor of this vital part of their equipment, however, got precisely nothing.

Doug Cook

## **192 Squadron beyond the Washington and Canberra**

I read all the info about Washingtons on the RAF Watton website with considerable interest as I am doing some research into strategic reconnaissance aircraft.

I was not in the military but was a civil service equipment designer and my involvement with Electronic Warfare did not start until 1972. Consequently I have no direct involvement with the Washingtons nor with Watton as, when I started my career, the Squadron – 51 – with their Comets and Varsity trials aircraft had relocated to Wyton. By the time I arrived, circa March 1974, the Squadron was changing from Comets to Nimrod R Mk1s and the trials aircraft became an Andover C Mk1. My involvement for over the next thirty years concerned mainly the three Nimrod R Mk1s and the

Andover trials aircraft and my log book shows many hours in the Andover and some in each of the 3 Nimrod Rs. Perhaps uniquely I can claim to be the only civilian to have been airsick in all of them!

### **Washingtons and Watton**

As a Strategic Reconnaissance (SR) aircraft the Washington would patrol borders at a safe distance or fly over international waters e.g. the Baltic. Care would be taken not to cross borders and invite interception and/or diplomatic incident.

However, for an SR aircraft to do its job the “opposition” must operate its kit and this did not always happen. Obviously they would know an aircraft was “border crawling”, as their ground based surveillance radars would detect it. Consequently they could make sure that other emitters were switched off or operating into dummy loads.

One way of making an SR mission more worthwhile would be to “encourage” the opposition to switch their kit on and this would be the role of another aircraft, i.e. a Canberra. This aircraft would fly, probably at a lower altitude, towards the border and invite “detection” thereby causing “opposition” operators to switch on or change mode of operation. Then at a safe distance the Canberra would “about turn”. Akin to poking a stick into a wasps’ nest.

### **Flying Laboratories**

The “boffins” supporting the operational squadrons, 192 and 51 Sqdns, had the use of flying laboratories or trials aircraft. During the Watton era, and in the early Wyton years these aircraft were Varsitys - the standard RAF navigation trainer specially adapted by installation of “B model” or pre-production role equipment destined for the Washingtons and later the Comets. To test the kit under near operational conditions the trials aircraft would need to fly along similar, approved routes. Bear in mind that the trials aircraft at that time were un-pressurised so oxygen was needed for both the front end and the “backenders”.

Again the “opposition” did not always “cooperate” and if the sortie was particularly quiet an oxygen “failure” was not unknown. The pilot would then need to make a rapid descent. It was a curious fact that this would invariably cause the opposition operators to do something and the experimental kit could be tested with “live” signals!

Fortunately, in the Wyton era when the writer became involved, the aircraft were Nimrod R Mk1s and the trials aircraft was an Andover C Mk1. Both were of course pressurised and there was no need for excitement of that kind during the trials flights.

Nevertheless, given that the Andover had a genuine Short Take Off and Land (STOL) capability, in the hands of a willing pilot, it could be quite exciting. As soon as the wheels left the ground the undercarriage was retracted and water-methanol was injected into the turbo-prop engines to give more power. Full throttle was applied and the column pulled back to give a rapid climb out from the airfield. The pilot concerned told me that although he enjoyed doing this he wasn't “allowed” to as it wasn't good for the fatigue meter! Similarly when landing, the STOL capability could be demonstrated by applying full flap (30 degrees) and throttling well back to make a steep descent - well in excess of the normal three degrees - to land on the runway and exit at the first taxiway. This often caused consternation in the control tower, particularly if the aircraft taxied behind a building on its way back to the dispersal area and was lost to the view of the ATC controllers. The consternation of the controllers was matched only by the great amusement in the aircraft as we could all hear the radio conversation. This was of course a game – to be enjoyed again later in the bar when ATC guys and aircrew inevitably met for a “sundowner”.

In 1995 51 Sqdn and the Electronic Warfare and Avionics Unit (EWAU) moved to Waddington where they are currently based together with others. The 51 Sqdn Nimrods still provide the mainstay of the

RAF's Strategic Reconnaissance fleet. An interesting and challenging period came in the late 90s when one of the Nimrods was lost during an air test following major servicing at Kinloss. With the fleet reduced to 2 aircraft the challenge was on to find a replacement. "Mission Impossible" as it became known was to take a mothballed Nimrod MR1 out of storage and convert it to become an R1. Full capability was restored, although it took nearly two years. Role equipment updates are always "ongoing" on one or other of the fleet, so to this day 51 Sqn carries on. The last I heard these now venerable aircraft were due to continue in service up to 2010 and probably beyond.

Happy days.

Alan Palmer



**Top:** A Nimrod R1 as delivered in 1972 and (**below**) about twenty years later following a "paint job" and numerous role equipment updates. Some of the additional features are clearly visible from the outside.

Nimrod R Mk1s carried the serials XW664, XW665, and XW666. The first two are still in service but 666 was lost due to a catastrophic fire during an air test in 1996 and was replaced by an ex MR1 XV249 "back converted" to become an R1 in 1998.

*(Alan Palmer)*

**Bottom:** The Andover 'Flying Laboratory'. Your readers will no doubt be able to guess what was inside the pod fitted to the Andover and clearly visible in the picture.

The Andover is long gone, sold overseas and came to a sad end.

*(Alan Palmer)*





## Story of a Survivor

Although not a Washington, the story of B-29-60-BW makes for an interesting read....

B-29-60-BW, 44-69729, was built by Boeing at their Wichita plant before being accepted by the USAAF on 4 January, 1945. Allocated to the 20<sup>th</sup> Air Force she completed 39 combat missions before the end of WWII after which she returned to the US for storage and an uncertain future.

Selected to be one of the 174 KB-29M tanker aircraft, she was resurrected and assigned to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Strategic Reconnaissance Group serving in Puerto Rico and continental USA before once more being retired. This time no reprieve was forthcoming and she found herself languishing at the China Lake weapons test range awaiting her fate at the hands of the US Navy.

Miraculously she survived again to be discovered and rescued by a group of enthusiasts who, since 1975, have been painstakingly restoring her to the condition she was in when flying bombing missions during 1945.

This is part one of her story (continued in the next issue).....

After acceptance by the USAAF, 44-69729 deployed to the Pacific Theatre of Operations as a replacement plane for the 20<sup>th</sup> Air Force. Initially assigned to the 874<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron (BS), 498<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group (BG), 73<sup>rd</sup> Bombardment Wing (BW) with the identification T Square 28 she was almost immediately transferred to the 875<sup>th</sup> BS with the revised designation of T Square 54.



T Square 54 unloads her cargo of 500lb General Purpose bombs over a target in Japan. The letters painted on the tail were intended to allow the planes to be identified and so enable them to join the bombing formations in the correct positions. The upper character (T) denoted the Bombardment Group, the central geometric shape (Square) denoted the Bombardment Wing while the lower number (54) indicated the 'plane in group' and hence the Bombardment Squadron.

*(T Square 54 web site)*

Despite being painted as large as the B-29's fin would allow, crews reported problems in reading the identification markings while attempting to join their formation. As a consequence, in April 1945 the markings were changed. The 'T' was enlarged to fill the entire fin. The geometric shape was deleted and the plane in group number was moved to the rear fuselage. These revised markings were a success and the group flew with them for the remainder of the war.

During the war, T Square 54 completed an impressive 39 combat missions. After the cease fire was agreed B-29s gathered on Saipan's Isley Field where they were loaded with 40 gallon drums containing food and medical supplies. These were dropped on the known PoW camps to keep the inmates alive until ground forces were able to liberate them. T Square 54 participated in at least some of these drops but how many is unknown.



**Left:** Over 100 B-29s line up nose to tail and three abreast on Isley Field, Saipan in preparation for the PoW supply drop missions. T Square 54 is somewhere in the line up.  
*(Unknown)*

**Bottom:** Row upon row of B-29s rest at Pyote AFB, Texas in 1946. Locally the B-29 storage site was known as the Pickle Patch since all B-29s stored there were preserved (or Pickled) as part of the storage process.

At the height of Pyote's involvement with storing post war aircraft the Pickle Patch held 743 B-29s as well as 291 RP-63s, 126 L-41s and 207 L-5s.  
*(Pete Mclaughlin)*

In October 1945 T Square 54 returned home to the USA where she was stored, along with some 742 other B-29s, in the wonderfully named Rattlesnake Bomber Base at Pyote in Texas.



Towards the end of the 1940s the newly formed Strategic Air Command (SAC) was seeking ways to increase the range of its bomber fleet and selected a means of refuelling the aircraft while in flight. This in-flight refuelling method had been developed by the British company Flight Refuelling Limited and involved what became known as the Hose and Reel method whereby a tanker aircraft trailed a hose which, via some carefully choreographed flying moves, was reeled into the specially modified receiver aircraft to allow the fuel to be transferred by simple gravity feed (see schematic below). 92 B-29s were converted into tanker aircraft with the removal of all defensive armament, addition of refuelling gear and a 2,300 gallon jettisonable fuel tank fitted into each bomb bay. These aircraft were given the revised designation of KB-29M while a further 72 B-29s were converted into receivers getting the designation of B-29MR.

**Right:** A page from a 1950 USAF technical manual showing how the hose was passed from the tanker to the receiver

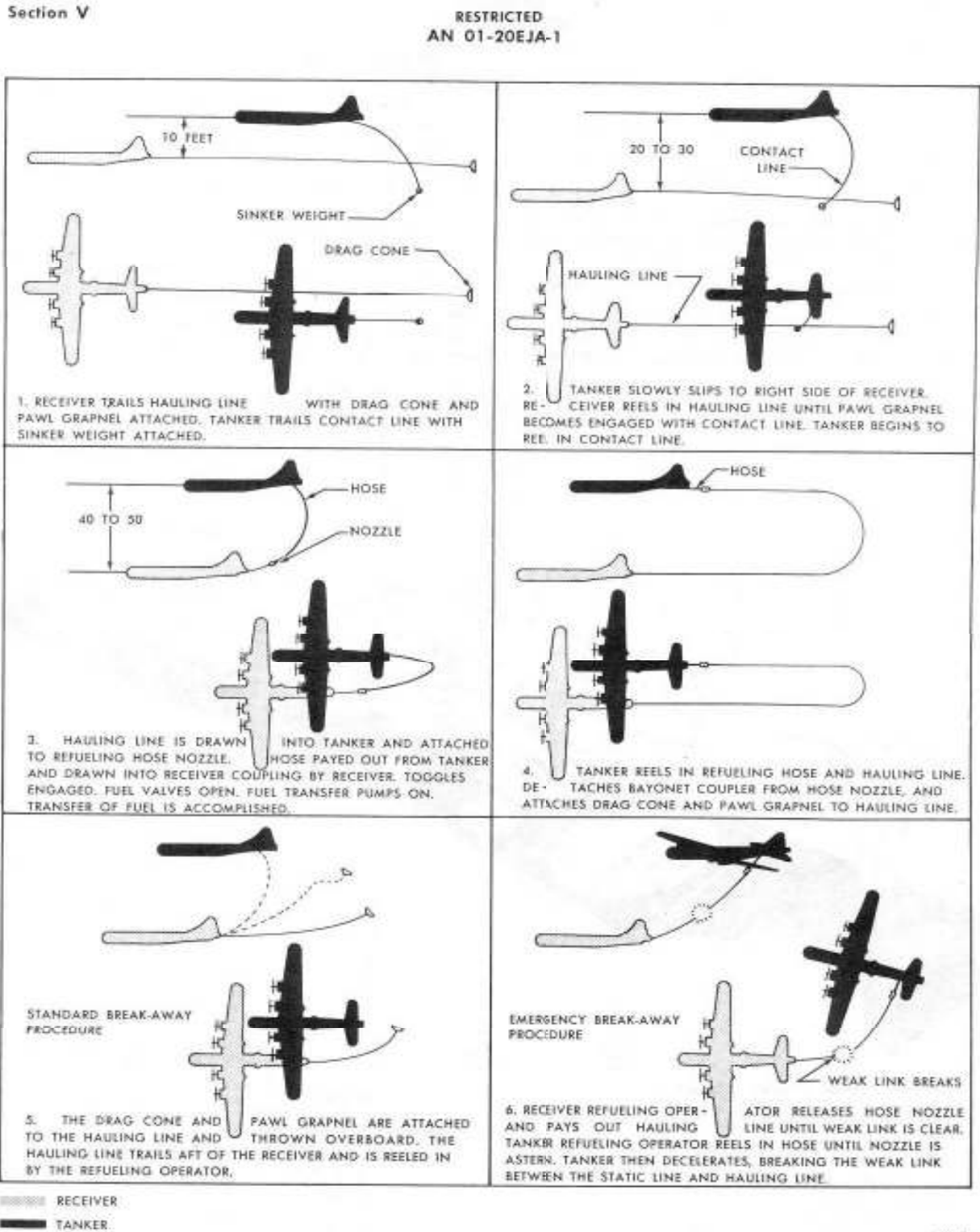
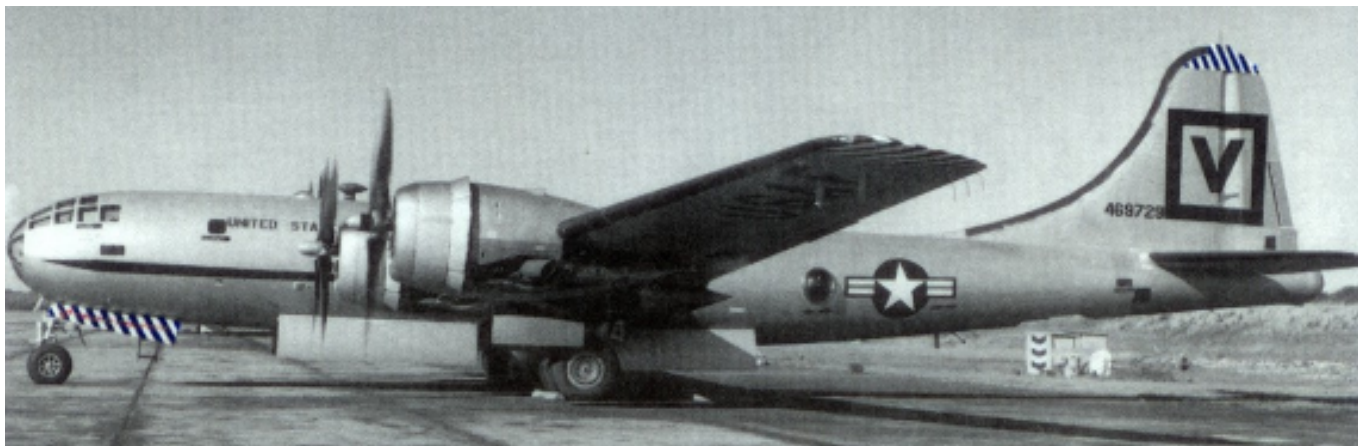


Figure 54J. In-Flight Refueling Formation



T Square 54 (#729) was selected to become one of the KB-29Ms and, after being de-pickled at Pyote was flown to Boeing's Wichita factory where the conversion was carried out. #729 emerged from Wichita on 9 January 1950 before being assigned to the 55<sup>th</sup> Air Refuelling Squadron (ARS) which was part of the 55<sup>th</sup> Strategic Reconnaissance Group (SRG) based at Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico. Unit markings had the tip of the tail, nose wheel doors and wing tips sporting blue and white diagonal stripes while the tail identification marking was a hollow black square (denoting the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Force) containing a black V (denoting the 55<sup>th</sup> SRG). In addition, #729 carried the name 'Tillie the Tanker' on the right hand side of the nose and a black speed stripe running down the side of her fuselage.

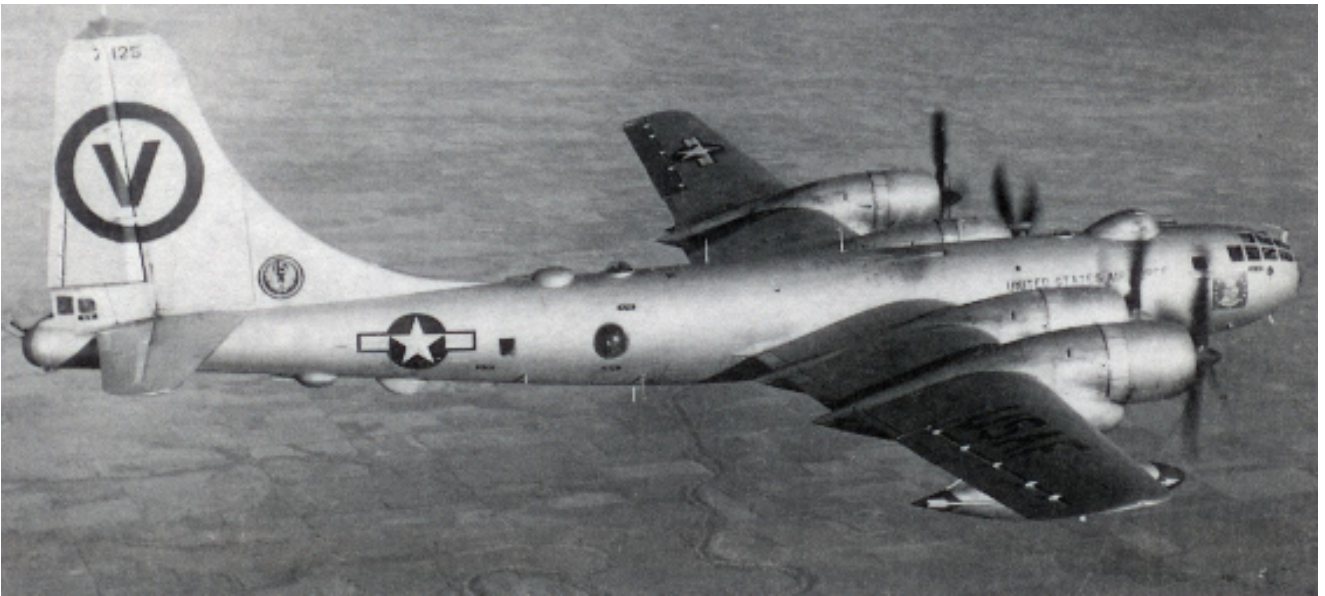


**Above:** 44-69729 as Tillie the Tanker while serving with the 55<sup>th</sup> ARS at Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico.

**Left:** Another photo of 44-69729 showing her 'Tillie the Tanker' name. Standing at the nose wheel are M/Sgt Elmer V. Gisbert Jr, crew chief and S/Sgt Kenneth R. Ainworth, assistant crew chief.  
*(Both photos Jim Webb)*

On October 10, 1952 the 55<sup>th</sup> SRG returned to the USA taking up residence at Forbes AFB, Kansas where it was re-designated the 55<sup>th</sup> Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (SRW). The change of location meant a change of parent Air Force, with the 55<sup>th</sup> SRG leaving the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Force and being taken on by the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force. This change required new tail markings and the hollow black square (2<sup>nd</sup> Air Force) was replaced by the hollow black circle of the 15<sup>th</sup> AF. The V denoting the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW remained the same.

The 55<sup>th</sup> ARS spent some sixteen months operating in support of the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW out of Forbes AFB. During this time the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW twice sent RB-50s to bases in England on temporary detached duties (TDY). The first TDY, between April and August 1952 saw the unit operating from Sculthorpe and Upper Heyford while the second saw them operating from Mildenhall. Whether #729 went on either is not known.



**Above:** Not #729 or even a B-29 but an RB-50 of the 338<sup>th</sup> SRS showing off the new markings applied once the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW moved to Forbes AFB and became part of the 15<sup>th</sup> AF. The KB-29Ms of the 55<sup>th</sup> ARS supported these RB-50s. *(Jim Webb)*

On February 16, 1954 the 55 ARS moved to Lincoln AFB, Nebraska to be inactivated. Following the deactivation of the 55<sup>th</sup> ARS #729 was struck from the inventory being assigned, as a target, to the China Lake Naval Air Weapon Station (NAWS) in California. Parked in the desert alongside many other redundant B-29s #729 awaited its fate.



**Left, Below and Bottom:** In 1986 the carcasses of several B-29s could be found scattered around the desert ranges of China Lake. Fortunately #729 was not one of them. *(T Square 54 web site)*





Although many B-29s did perish at China Lake (it was after all a firing range), #729 survived and, in 1986 was found by the Lowry AFB Heritage Museum who intended to return her to her original WWII bomber trim.



**Above:** #729 as found at China Lake by the Lowry AFB Heritage Museum. #729 is the front of the three B-29s in the 'vic' formation (the only one with the tail still standing). Note: the aircraft behind and to the right of #729 is "Doc," 44-69972, now being restored at the Boeing plant in Wichita (*T Square 54 web site*)

To rescue the, by now derelict, airframe, the museum contracted with Mel Blanscette from Ogden, Utah. Mel had B-29 engineering knowledge as well as a significant amount of battle damage repair experience (gained in the Vietnam conflict) while the remainder of the recovery and restoration crew was made up of volunteers, mainly WWII veterans who had either flown or maintained B-29s during WWII. Soon the team became a tight knit bunch who took on the name of 'Mel's Misfits'.



**Above:** A close up of #729 as found in 1986 at China Lake. Note the black undersides – a feature that was not present during WWII or during her early days as a tanker (see photos of Tillie the Tanker above). (*T Square 54 web site*)

The next issue continues the story through to her current state at Boeing's Museum of Flight in Seattle.

## 100<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Museum – Thorpe Abbots, Diss, Norfolk

Last summer my family and I spent a few enjoyable days on holiday in Norfolk where we stayed in the old light house keeper's cottage at Cromer. A beautiful place indeed (Cromer and Norfolk) but of equal interest are the numerous, often derelict, WWII airfields. Most are mainly farmland with a few buildings and no public access. However, a few, and Thorpe Abbots is one of these, have had museums created within their old WWII buildings to allow those who wish to, to remember the sacrifices of those who flew from the field during WWII.

Thorpe Abbots, near Diss, was the home to the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force's 100<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group (the Bloody Hundredth) and now holds an excellent museum centred on the old control tower. The museum tells the story of the 100<sup>th</sup> through numerous artefacts, models, photos and information boards. The volunteers who run it are knowledgeable and helpful in equal proportion and make a visit truly informative and enjoyable – I thoroughly recommend anyone who is in the area to call in.

One of the volunteers is Gordon Dickie, one time airframe mechanic on Washingtons with 35 Squadron who met with me during my visit providing me with a most welcome 'personal tour' – thank you Gordon.

The Museum is open Weekends, Bank Holidays and Wednesdays 10.00am to 5.00 pm; May to September. It is closed November to the end of January.



**Clockwise from top left:** Gordon Dickie in the door of Thorpe Abbots watch tower; The control tower; Inside the restored watch tower; A view of the museum buildings from the control tower; My family inspecting some of the numerous and excellent displays to be found in the tower. *(Chris Howlett)*



The following story was sent in by Joe Savko who discovered it on the internet – not Washington related but such a great story it needs to be shared!!

## **WWII MONOPOLY**

Starting in 1941, an increasing number of British airmen found themselves as the involuntary guests of the Third Reich, and the Crown was casting about for ways and means to facilitate their escape.

Now obviously, one of the most helpful aids to that end is a useful and accurate map, one showing not only where stuff was, but also showing the locations of 'safe houses' where a POW on-the-run could go for food and shelter.

Paper maps had some real drawbacks – they make a lot of noise when you open and fold them, they wear out rapidly, and if they get wet, they turn into mush.

Someone in MI5 (similar to America's OSS) got the idea of printing escape maps on silk. It's durable, can be scrunched-up into tiny wads and unfolded as many times as needed, and makes no noise whatsoever.

At that time, there was only one manufacturer in Great Britain that had perfected the technology of printing on silk, and that was John Waddington Ltd. When approached by the government, the firm was only too happy to do its bit for the war effort.

By pure coincidence, Waddington was also the UK Licensee for the popular American board game, Monopoly. As it happened, 'games and pastimes' was a category of item qualified for insertion into 'CARE packages', dispatched by the International Red Cross to prisoners of war.

Under the strictest of secrecy, in a securely guarded and inaccessible old workshop in the grounds of Waddington's, a group of sworn-to-secrecy employees began mass-producing escape maps, matched to each region of Germany or Italy where Allied POW camps were located). When processed, these maps could be folded into such tiny dots that they would actually fit inside a Monopoly playing piece. And while they were at it, the clever workmen at Waddington's also managed to add:

1. A playing token, containing a small magnetic compass.
2. A two-part metal file that could easily be screwed together.
3. Useful amounts of genuine high-denomination German, Italian, and French currency, hidden within the piles of Monopoly money!

British and American air crews were advised, before taking off on their first mission, how to identify a 'rigged' Monopoly set -- by means of a tiny red dot, one cleverly rigged to look like an ordinary printing glitch, located in the corner of the Free Parking square.

Of the estimated 35,000 Allied POWs who successfully escaped, an estimated one-third were aided in their flight by the rigged Monopoly sets. Everyone who did so was sworn to secrecy indefinitely, since the British Government might want to use this highly successful ruse in still another, future war.

The story wasn't de-classified until 2007, when the surviving craftsmen from Waddington's, as well as the firm itself, were finally honoured in a public ceremony.

It's always nice when you can play that 'Get Out of Jail Free' card!

Hi Chris,

Thought you might be interested in this one.

At a model competition held in Canberra in May, this fine model of the Chinese AWACS version of the Russian Tu-4, complete with turboprop engines and radome, built from pictures that were published in the ModelArt article I sent to you, was on show.

The model came second in the 'Small scale post 1945 propeller aircraft' section. The model was built by local Canberra-based modeller Peter Mahoney from the 1:72 scale Academy B-29 kit and features scratch-built turboprop engines, radome and winglets on the horizontal tail planes with the markings coming from a generic decal sheet which contained the appropriate Chinese national insignia.

Hope you enjoy.

Very Best Regards,

Frank



**This page and next:** Three views of Peter Mahoney' excellent Chinese Tu 4 AWACS conversion.  
*(Frank Morgan)*



## Contacts

A list of those people who have made contact with me (**new contacts in bold**) – if you wish to contact any of them, let me know and I will pass on your request:

Michael	Achow	General Interest
Thomas	Adams	Flight Engineer 44-69680 (WF437)
Oliver	Adamson	'Bad Penny' 42-65274 (WF442)
David	Alexander	ASF RAF Marham
Ken	Alderman	Bristol Aeroplane Company, Filton
Derek	Allen	192 Squadron
Neil	Allen	Bombardier 44-69680 (WF437)
Trevor	Allwork	149 Squadron Engine Fitter
Brian	Armstrong	XV Squadron Association
Roy	Arnold	44 Squadron Air Gunner
Vic	Avery	90 / 44 Squadron Navigator
Phil	Batty	44 Squadron Signaller
Gerry	Beauvoisin	57 Squadron Air Gunner
Ray	Belsham	ASF Engine Fitter RAF Marham
Cliff	Bishop	115 / 90 Squadron Engine Fitter
Bunny	Bowers	Crew Chief WF437
Maurice	Brice	General interest
Joe	Bridge	Webmaster, RAF Marham Website
John	Bristow	207 Squadron Airframe Mechanic (WF564)
John	Broughton	207 Squadron Engine Fitter
Jeff	Brown	149 Squadron Air Gunner
Mike	Brown	115 Squadron Airframe Mechanic (WF446)
Eric	Butler	207 Squadron Armourer
Michael	Butler	Son of Harry Butler, 207 / 35 Squadron Signaller
William	Butt	115 Squadron Crew Chief
John	Care	149 Squadron Pilot ( <i>deceased</i> )
Katie	Chandler	Widow of Vern Chandler, A/C 44-69680 (WF437)
Pat	Chandler	Daughter of Vern Chandler, A/C 44-69680 (WF437)
Brian	Channing	149 Squadron Navigator
Wendy	Chilcott	Niece of Ken Reakes 90 Squadron Air Gunner
Bob	Cole	149 Squadron Electrical Fitter (WF498)
Terry	Collins	XV Squadron Engine Fitter
Doug	Cook OBE	44 Squadron Co-Pilot (WF508)
John	Cornwall	192 Squadron Aircrew
John	Cowie	207 Squadron Air Gunner
<b>Dave</b>	<b>Crawford</b>	<b>207 Squadron Navigator</b>
John (Buster)	Crabbe	207 Squadron Crew Chief
Don	Crossley	90 Squadron Signaller
Howard	Currie	44 Squadron Pilot ( <i>deceased</i> )
Bernard	Davenport	90 Squadron Air Gunner
Mike	Davies	90 Squadron Air Gunner
Gordon	Dickie	35 Squadron Airframe Mechanic
Basil	Dilworth	XV / 192 Squadron Navigator
<b>Ross</b>	<b>Duffield</b>	<b>Organiser of WF502 memorial</b>
Keith	Dutton	90 Squadron Air Gunner



Ray	Elliott	Pilot 'Bad Penny' 42-65274 (WF442)
Peter	Fahey	35 Squadron Electrician
Peter	Fairbairn	35 Squadron Engine Fitter
Tony	Fairbairn	Lived near 23MU, RAF Aldergrove
Les	Feakes	149 Squadron Air Gunner
Geoff	Fielding	207 Squadron Air Gunner
Peter	Finch	General Interest (involved with writing 'The Washington File')
Ken	Firth	44 Squadron Air Gunner
Charles	Fox	Bombardier 42-94052 (WF444)
Dave	Forster	Researching RAF ELINT Squadrons
John	Forster	207 Squadron / WCU Air Gunner
John	Francis	192 Squadron Engine Fitter
Ray	Francis	57 Squadron Association
Gordon	Galletly	44 Squadron Navigator / Bombardier
Norman	Galvin	XV Squadron Engine Fitter
Alan	Gamble	90 Squadron Radio Operator
Brian	Gennings	Ground Maintenance Hanger
Bob	Goater	XV Squadron Instrument NCO
Tony	Goodsall	90 Squadron Air Gunner ( <i>deceased</i> )
Kevin	Grant	207 Squadron Air Gunner
John	Hanby	207 Squadron Engine Fitter
Ken	Harding	44 Squadron Signaller
Alan	Haslock	ASF Turret Armourer
Charles	Henning	CFC 'Bad Penny' 42-65274 (WF442)
John	Hewitt	Fire Section RAF Coningsby
Peter	Higgins	207 Squadron Air Gunner
Roy	Hild	Pilot 42-94052 (WF444)
Tony	Hill	Archivist P&EEE Shoeburyness
John	Hobbs	149 Squadron Air Gunner
Julian	Horn	RAF Watton Website
Henry	Horscroft	44 Squadron Association
Brian	Howes	115 Squadron
John	Howett	A/C 44-61688 (WF498)
Ernest	Howlett	44 Squadron Engine Fitter (WF512)
Alex	Hughson	Brother of Sgt Hughson 90 Squadron Air Gunner
Tamar	Hughson	Niece of Sgt Hughson 90 Squadron Air Gunner
Ken	Hunter	90 Squadron Navigator
Paul	Hunter	Flight Engineer 'Bad Penny' 42-65274 (WF442)
John	Inkpen	207 Squadron Air Gunner
Jimmy	James	Engine Fitter
Bryan	Jordan	207 Squadron Air Gunner
Ron	Jupp	Vickers Guided Weapons Department, Weybridge ( <i>deceased</i> )
David	Karr	Nephew of William Karr, XV Squadron Air Gunner
J.	Kendal (Ken)	90 Squadron ??
R (Dick)	Kent	35 Squadron
Andrew	Kerzner	Tail Gunner 44-69680 (WF437)
John	King	44 Squadron Flight Engineer
John	Kingston	CFC RAF Marham

John	Laing	207 Squadron Air Gunner
George	Lane	Navigator 44-69680 (WF437) ( <i>deceased</i> )
Peter	Large	Brother of Edward Large, 44 Squadron Pilot
Pete	Lewis	149 Squadron Engine Fitter
Brendan	Maher	192 Squadron Electrical Mechanic
David	Male	Bristol Aeroplane Company, Filton
Gerry	Maloney	44 Squadron Navigator/Bomb Aimer (WF508)
Douglas	Matthews	WCU / 35 Squadron Master Gunner
Patrick	McGrath	115 Squadron Pilot
Pete	McLaughlin	Engineering Officer, Pyote Texas
Derek	Mobbs	192 Squadron Electrical Mechanic
John	Moore	Air Traffic Control, RAF Coningsby
Peter	Morrey	57 / 115 Squadron Air Gunner
Mo	Mowbrey	57 Squadron Air Gunner
Don	Neudegg	115 Squadron Air Gunner
Sean	O'Donovan	Son of Flt Lt G O'Donovan 44 Squadron Pilot
Pat	O'Leary	RAF Coningsby Armourer
Brian	O'Riordan	192 Squadron Ground crew
Ralph	Painting	57 / 192 Squadron Flight Engineer
Harry	Palmer	44 / 57 / 115 Squadron Air Gunner
Tom	Pawson	35 Squadron Signaller
Bob	Pleace	XV Squadron Pilot
Chris	Petheram	207 Squadron Pilot
Ian	Qusklay	90 Squadron Air Gunner
Harry	Rickwood	149 Squadron Electrical Fitter
Phil	Rivkin	90 Squadron Signaller
Harold	Roberts	Witness to crash of WF502
Ivor	Samuel	207 Squadron Air Gunner
William	Santavicca	Gunner 'Look Homeward Angel', 6 <sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Association
Sheelah	Sloane	Daughter of Sqdn Ldr Sloane, OC 90 Squadron
Richard	Sloane	Son of Sqdn Ldr Sloane, OC 90 Squadron
Steve	Smisek	Son of A/C of City of San Francisco (K-29, 330 <sup>th</sup> Bomb Group)
Joe	Somerville	RAF Marham Engine Fitter
Paul	Stancliffe	192 Squadron Co-pilot
David	Stanford	192 Squadron Wireless Mechanic
Derek	Stanley	57 Squadron Radio Engineer
Jim	Stanley	
Adrian	Stephens	192 Squadron Air Wireless Fitter
Bill	Stevenson	35 / 635 Squadron Association
Harry	Stoneham	44 Squadron / A.S.F. Engine Fitter
Ron	Street	90 Squadron Pilot (WF503)
Harold	Tadea	'Bad Penny' 42-65274 (WF442)
Tim	Thewlis	General interest in Washingtons
Albert	Urquhart	Left Gunner K-39, 330 <sup>th</sup> Bomb Group
Dave	Villars	44 Squadron Electrical Fitter

Peter	Walder	44 Squadron Radar Fitter
Geoff	Webb	57 Squadron Engine Fitter (WF558)
Geoffrey	Wellum	115 / 192 Squadron Pilot
A	Whatman	
Colin	Williams	XV Squadron Navigator / Bombardier
John	Williams	XV / 207 Squadron Air Gunner
Robert	Willman	A/C 42-93976 (WF440)
Charlie	Woolford	90 Squadron (Stirlings)
Stephen	Wynne	Son of Sgt Jack Wynne 57 Squadron co-pilot



**Above:** The Bristol Brabazon on the ground at Filton – captured on film by Bob Pleace through the bomb aimer’s window of WF435 during a visit it Filton. *(Bob Pleace)*

## Tail Piece

Mike Davies sent the following advert for a mug from the Royal International Air Tattoo gift set collection. Proceeds go to the RAF Benevolent fund:

A small item for the ‘Washington Times’. If anyone wants a coffee mug, with some B29s on it, you can order one from the ‘Air Tattoo Gift Collection’, it is ‘Gilda’s Flypast Mug’ Code 415560. It is in the book at £4.95 but if you order on line at [www.airtattoo.com](http://www.airtattoo.com) it comes up at £3.50 plus 95p post and Packing. Or by phone 01870 758 1940 Ref XMA 008 or by post from RAFCTE Dept XMA 008 PO Box 1940 Fairford, Gloucestershire GL7 4NA.

The B29’s shown are, (I think, but I could be wrong), 1, unknown. 2, DYNA MITE 421 Sqdn 504 Bomb Group. 3, EXPOSURE 3<sup>rd</sup> Photo Recon no.224877 (should be Double Exposure). 4, OUR BABY. 5, JOLTIN JOSIE 42-24614.

Best wishes  
Mike Davies