

Washington Times



Newsletter

Issue 19

Spring 2010



Cover Photos

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

Lower Left Washington Art. Scanner at work; pencil on ration box lid by John Williams 'drawn just to pass the time' (*John Williams*)

Lower Right T Square 54's 'Barber's Chair' and CFC sighting station nearing completion at Boeing's Plant Number II, Seattle, Washington. (*Donald England*)

This page:

Below A fine shot of refuelling taking place. (*PRB6059 / Andy Renwick*)

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Reunion Update

Places are still available for both the meal and the RAF Marham Families' Day Air Show. If you have not responded previously and would like to attend please let me know. If transport is a problem for either of these events let me know and I will see if I can arrange something to help.

The form, provided as a separate sheet contains a table that must be filled in for each person planning to attend the RAF Marham Families' Day Air Show. If you are only planning to attend the meal you need not complete the form.

RAF Marham requires details of the visitors by July 1st after this time further applications will not be accepted. The list of those who have so far expressed an interest is given below.

2010 Washington Reunion Participants

Name	Meal	Air Show	Unit / Association
Chris Howlett	Yes	Yes	Organiser
Sandra Howlett	Yes	Yes	Associate
Nick Howlett	Yes	Yes	Associate
William Howlett	Yes	Yes	Associate
Ernie Howlett	Yes	Yes	44 Squadron Engine Fitter
Beryl Howlett	Yes	Yes	Associate
Mike Davies	Yes	Yes	90 Squadron Air Gunner
Val Davies	Yes	Yes	Associate
John Laing	Yes	Yes	207 Squadron Air Gunner
Mary Laing	Yes	Yes	Associate
Kevin Grant	Yes	Yes	207 Squadron Air Gunner
Sheelah Sloane	Yes	Yes	Daughter of Sqdn Ldr Sloane, OC 90 Sqdn
Maurice Sloane	Yes	Yes	Associate
Ross Duffield	Yes	Yes	Associate
Delma Duffield	Yes	Yes	Associate
John Broughton	No	Yes	207 Squadron Engine Fitter
Margaret Thomas	No	Yes	Daughter of Ike Cundall, A/G 207 Sqdn
Florence Cundall	No	Yes	Wife of Ike Cundall, A/G 207 Sqdn
Chris Thomas	No	Yes	Associate
Richard Kent	No	Yes	35 Squadron
Ken Edwards	No	Yes	Associate
Charles Parker	No	Yes	Associate
Patrick O'Leary	Yes	Yes	Armourer, Coningsby
Alan Haslock	Yes	Yes	ASF Turret Armourer, Coningsby
John Marchant	Yes	Yes	ASF Engine Fitter, Marham
Jill Marchant	Yes	Yes	Associate
Harold Bromwich	Yes	Yes	207 Squadron ground crew
Dorothy Bromwich	Yes	Yes	Associate
Peter Fairbairn	No	Yes	35 Squadron Engine Fitter
Sylvia Fairbairn	No	Yes	Associate
Keith Dutton	Yes	Yes	90 Squadron Air Gunner
Anne Dutton	Yes	Yes	Associate
Mike Brown	No	Yes	115 Squadron Air Frame Mechanic
Brian O'Riordan	Yes	Yes	192 Squadron ground crew
Joyce O'Riordan	Yes	Yes	Associate
	25	35	

Michael Butler, son of Harry Butler (207 Squadron Signaller) supplied the following information concerning his father's service with the Washington....

Having joined the RAF straight out of school and despite having been graded 'Exceptional' by his tutors and then becoming an instructor on ASV at an OTU in Scotland during 1944 Harry Butler, like many people in those austere days, found it hard going in 'Civvy Street' once de-mobbed in 1946. So, after struggling to find regular employment he re-mustered into the then rapidly expanding RAF during 1952.

THE WASHINGTON FORCE AND HARRY BUTLER

As a prelude to his posting to the Washington Conversion Unit at RAF Marham, Harry spent a month (29 Sep - 30 October 1952) at 2 Air Signaller School at Halfpenny Green near Wolverhampton, after, of course, the ground-based Induction Process. After 33 hours and 10 minutes day flying – all on Ansons – he had completed all the required training exercises on the radio and communications equipment and was deemed fit for posting to an Operational Conversion Unit. He was at the Washington Conversion Unit (RAF Marham) between 16 Dec 52 and 29 Jan 53, during which time the training syllabus involved 43 hours and 30 minutes day and 7 hours 10 minutes night flying. The flying was rather ordinary for that type of aircraft, except for one event – Harry's first and only CRASH LANDING. On 03 January 1953, whilst crewing under Squadron Leader PENNING, Washington WF574 took off at 1050 hrs from Marham and could not raise one of the main undercarriage legs. Whilst they flew around and tried to wind it either up OR down, to no avail, they burnt off fuel and planned their next move. Eventually, after over 5 hours, the Captain decided that a landing must be attempted. Despite the undercarriage leg being only half extended AND the runway icy and snow-covered, the pilot landed perfectly, the aircraft suffering only minimum damage and without any injury to the crew. (Incidentally, the first I knew of this event was the arrival of the 'Washington Times' with the Bomber Command "Good Show" Report – *Issue 15, Chris*)

Between 19 Feb and 03 Jul 53, Harry served on 207 Squadron, still at Marham. His Log Book is punctuated, in addition to the normal phrases like HLB (High Level Bombing), with terms such as 'EYEWASH', 'PINPLOT', 'BACKCHAT', 'SOFTBALL', and 'KINGPIN'. I have no idea what any of them mean, but think they must be varieties of training exercise. There were also many recorded tasks such as Fighter Affiliations, Radar Homings, Cross Countrys and Air-Sea Firings. Dad flew on 'JUNGLE KING' (with Flt Lt STEWART as Captain) on 18 Mar 53, taking off at 1750 hrs and flying 50 minutes day and 3 hrs 55 minutes night, and that's all I know about that. There was also the 3 Group Bombing Competition and something called 'EXERCISE HORACE', apparently involving the French Air Force, on 21 May 53.

For the whole of June and early July, the Squadron flew 10 (yes, 10!!) Coronation formation practices, culminating in the real thing on 15 July 53, and in the aircraft in which Harry flew (WF567) that day they had, as an observer, one Group Captain Donaldson. This guy was the well-known record breaker from the High Speed Flight based at RAF Tangmere.

Dad then went to 35 Squadron, also at Marham, in Aug 53, taking part in his first Washington return flight to the USA that month. Harry flew four of these trips to take the Washington home, and they are listed hereunder. Also, he crewed on 29 Sep 53 in Washington WF572 captained by the aforementioned Group Captain Donaldson. They flew for 2 hours and 25 minutes carrying out "Instrument & Local Flying", but why the Group Captain was piloting I do not know.

The trips to return the Washington to Davis-Monthan AFB were major tasks. A study of the times taken to fly the various individual legs, and the many hours, sometimes days, between them, suggests inclement weather and problems with the aircraft delayed some of the trips. The first was completed within just 3 calendar days, the second took 12 (the longest of them), the third 8 (or, 9 if 1954 was a Leap Year (*it was not, so the flight was 8 days – Chris*)), and the fourth 6 days.

TAKING THE WASHINGTONS HOME, 35 SQUADRON'S TRIPS TO THE USA, 1953 - 54

FIRST TRIP

11 -13 AUGUST 1953	WF571	Flt Lt DORMER
11 AUG	MARHAM – PRESTWICK	(1 hr 25 mins)
12 AUG	PRESTWICK – HARMON AFB	(11 hrs 20 mins)
13 AUG	HARMON AFB – DOVER AFB	(5 hrs 10 mins)
	DOVER AFB – DAVIS-MONTHAN AFB	(9 hrs 20 mins)

SECOND TRIP

15 - 26 JANUARY 1954	WW351	Flt Lt DORMER
15 JAN	MARHAM – PRESTWICK	(2 hrs 15 mins)
16 JAN	PRESTWICK – LAJES (AZORES)	(8 hrs 25 mins)
20 JAN	LAJES – KINDLEY AFB (BERMUDA)	(10 hrs 35 mins)
21 JAN	KINDLEY AFB – DOVER AFB	(4 hrs 10 mins)
26 JAN	DOVER AFB – DAVIS-MONTHAN AFB	(10 hrs 50 mins)

THIRD TRIP

25 FEB - 04 MAR 1954	WW350	Flt Lt DORMER
25 FEB	MARHAM – PRESTWICK	(1 hr 35 mins)
25 FEB	PRESTWICK – MARHAM (RTB)	(6 hrs 25 mins)
26 FEB	MARHAM – LAJES (AZORES)	(8 hrs 10 mins)
28 FEB	LAJES – KINDLEY AFB	(9 hrs 30 mins)
03 MAR	KINDLEY AFB – DOVER AFB	(3 hrs 40 mins)
04 MAR	DOVER AFB – DAVIS-MONTHAN AFB	(10 hrs 45 mins)

FOURTH TRIP

22 - 27 MAR 1954	WF496	Flt Lt DORMER
22 MAR	MARHAM – PRESTWICK	(1 hr 35 mins)
23 MAR	PRESTWICK – LAJES (AZORES)	(7 hrs 05 mins)
24 MAR	LAJES – KINDLEY AFB	(9 hrs 30 mins)
26 MAR	KINDLEY AFB (BERMUDA) – DOVER AFB	(3 hrs 45 mins)
27 MAR	DOVER AFB – DAVIS-MONTHAN AFB	(10 hrs 00 mins)

Jeff Brown wrote:

A little snippet I recently came across as I went through my flying log book was the total number of rounds that I fired as an Air Gunner. It came to 23,240 of which 6,140 were .5 and the rest .303 and not one was in anger! I must also have fired thousands of rounds on ground ranges but these were not recorded, in addition I must have fired hundreds of rounds on rifle ranges and shot gun rounds on skeet ranges – we were always shooting at something!

Do any of the other gunners recall how many rounds they fired?

The Crash of Washington WF553

While researching the crash of a Meteor at RAF Coningsby (see page 20). Patrick O'Leary discovered the graves of five casualties from the crash of Washington WF553 in Coningsby cemetery and is now researching this crash. If anyone can provide any information relating to this crash to Patrick he would be most grateful. Patrick can be contacted on: Tel 01493 780542 or by e-mail on:

pat.oleary@btinternet.com

Story of a Survivor – Part 2

In the Issue 17 I covered the service history of B-29 44-69729 up to her being ‘discovered’ at the China lake weapons range and selected for preservation. Mel’s Misfits dismantled #729 and transported her to Lowry AFB on seven large flatbed trucks where the items were unloaded and, with the help of winches, hoists, ropes and lots of manpower, were pieced back together. The resident 3415 Consolidated Maintenance Squadron provided support including machine shop work, cranes and tow personnel. Missing pieces (and there were many) were bought, obtained by trading with other museums, made from scratch or ingeniously made from substitute parts (the prop hub covers were old fire extinguishers!) and, over a period of several months #729 re-emerged.



Left and centre left: #729 arrives at Lowry AFB where the resident 3415 Consolidated Maintenance Unit provided manpower and specialist machinery to offload and piece the airframe back together. (*T Sq 54 web site*)

Bottom: #729 starts to take shape. Much work remains to be done and the weather will not always remain as benign as is shown in these photos! (*T Sq 54 web site*)

Below: Winter and snow surrounds the restoration project. (*T Sq 54 web site*)



Clockwise from top left: Number 1 engine being re-fitted. Ensuring the engine aligns correctly (note the mattress – the exposed metal became very hot in the sun and would burn bare flesh!). Working on a propeller. Propeller Hub made from old fire extinguishers. Refitting the nose wheels. Fairing in the dummy lower rear gun turret. The original, and several longerons, had been removed during #729's conversion to a tanker. Working on the horizontal stabilizer.
(All photos T Sq 54 web site)



The effort culminated on 2 October 1986 (the 50th anniversary of the opening of Lowry AFB) with a ceremony to dedicate T Square 54. Present were many B-29 veterans but significantly no fewer than nine of these had flown in T Square 54 during WWII.



Above: The restoration crew and B-29 veterans pose by the completed aircraft on 2nd October 1986.

Left: Members of Lowry's resident 3415 Consolidated Maintenance Squadron pose by a snow bound T Sq 54 (*All photos T Sq 54 web site*)

T Square 54 remained on display outdoors at Lowry for five years until the closure of the base necessitated a new home and, in 1992, she was moved once more, this time to Boeing's Museum of Flight in Seattle.

The Museum of Flight had the ambitious intention of restoring T Square 54 to as near flying condition as possible and, although there was never a serious thought given to actually putting T Square 54 back in the air, it was hoped that all her systems would be operable and she would be able to taxi under her own power. Unfortunately, there was insufficient space to house T Square 54 indoors at the Museum so the restoration continued outside, at the continued mercy of the elements although covered work and storage areas with utilities helped the 25 or so volunteers who worked on the plane each week. Over a number of years, the outdoor restoration team accomplished much:

- a propeller was bought (to replace one that the Navy required to be returned to China Lake);
- the CFC system was restored with amplidyne and sights obtained so as to make at least some of the turrets operational. A 4-gun upper forward turret was donated by the Imperial War Museum, Duxford, UK which, with help from the US Air Force and Boeing was transported to Seattle;
- the tail gunner's compartment was discovered to be 30% fake and another compartment was sourced from China Lake and fitted
- the lining blankets for the tunnel and crew compartments were recreated using the original specifications by the resident dedicated volunteer seamstress Flo Nicholson;
- all hydraulic lines were replaced allowing the brakes to operate;
- a full set of control cables (manufactured by Boeing) were installed.

The 1949 conversion to KB-29M standard left some surprises in store for the restorers. When the lower rear turret was removed for refurbishment it was discovered that two body frames had been cut and partially removed so as to provide space for the refuelling gear. To return the plane to bomber configuration and safely support the turret, longerons, frames, skin, and the floor above the turret and turret support structure had to be built.

Throughout this time corrosion control had to be continued as the Seattle weather threatened to undo the good work done so far. Fortunately, in 2003 space was found in Boeing Plant II which was no longer in use and T Square 54 was finally moved indoors. Plant II itself is quite an historic building having been used during WWII as the final assembly line for Boeing B-17s and was also where the three XB-29 prototypes were built. However, time moves on and it was no longer required by Boeing – good news for the restoration projects but only for a while as Plant II is scheduled for demolition sometime after 2011.

With the move indoors the restoration continued at a greater rate and T Square 54 is now much closer completion. Items finished while in the hanger include:

- the horizontal stabilizer was rebuilt internally and re-skinned.
- the tail was also rebuilt.
- the left wing from about the no.1 engine out was replaced.
- the wingtip on the starboard side was replaced.
- the cockpit was gutted and is being carefully reinstalled.
- the radios have been renovated and now work allowing former WWII B-29 crew members to talk to former WWII B-17 crew members in the museum's B-17 that is parked nearby.
- the bomb bay doors have been built as well as the mechanism to operate them.
- the aircraft is being rewired to allow many systems to work. With no ability to get the engines working (see below) – to allow the engine mounted generators to operate and with the Putt Putt (as the APU is almost universally known) similarly inoperable power has to be provided from a ground source. Dale Thompson, one of the volunteers working on the guns, found a forklift battery charger to power the plane. Despite the battery charger being able to deliver 110 amps at 28 volts only one turret can work at any one time. A functioning B-29 produced 660 amps from the 6 engine mounted generators.
- work on the turrets has continued with the plan being to have all five turrets on the plane operational plus a sixth turret working on the ground. The turrets in the plane will be operated from the nose sight (upper forward and lower forward), one of the two blister sights (lower forward and lower rear) and the pedestal sight (upper rear). The tail turret sight also works but controls only the tail guns. In addition to the sights in the plane, any of the four turrets (i.e. not the tail) and the ground turret can be operated from an external sight – although with each turret requiring 110 amps at 28 volts only one can be operated at a time. Interestingly, each turret has a loud speaker mounted inside to provide recorded 50 cal firing sounds when it is 'fired'.

- all engines were removed and cosmetically restored. All parts, including the nuts and bolts, were glass beaded and wire wheeled, oiled and, if needed, painted then safety wired back together again and all engines are now refitted. During this process the engines acquired names from the crew. Engine 4 is known as Joan Crawford (she was difficult to work with!), while engine 3 is Rachel and engine 2 is Stephanie. Engine 1 is currently unnamed. There was initially hope that the engines would run. However, the USAF (who still own the airframe said NO. Also, the cost of getting the fuel injection system operating got the better of them. To run it had to be perfect and though they could get or make the fuel lines there were the rubber diaphragms inside the flow control (carburettor) that not only are very hard to find but also have a certain shelf life. They look like they would run though
- all control cables are installed to the engines.
- the cowlings have also been rebuilt. One of the volunteers, Jim, worked on these in WWII and, at 93 years young was back at it.
- inside the plane, all surfaces have been cleaned and sprayed with anti corrosion paint.
- the quilting of all crew quarters is nearly complete.
- some of the stringers inside the plane have been replaced...big ugly holes in them.

With Plant II due for demolition in 2011 the restorers have been told they have to vacate the plant by December 2010. Discussions are on going with the museum to find a new home. The restoration centre is 30 miles away rather than the 0.5 miles of Plant II. Also, the museum has plans to build a huge display hall to house the B-29, B-17 as well as the Super Constellation, Concorde, 747, 737, 727, Air Force 1 707, and hopefully a space shuttle – it will be quite a collection under one roof and I hope it comes off. As this goes to press nothing is decided and it is possible that T Sq 54, the B-17 and the Super Constellation that is also in the hall will end up outside in early 2011. Should this happen the restoration crew think they will have to cocoon or ‘shrink wrap’ the planes to await a new home where the restoration can continue. The Museum of Flight is currently trying to secure one of NASA’s Space Shuttles and as such, the focus has moved away from the WWII aircraft.

The following pages contain various pictures from T Square 54’s various restoration works – given the extraordinary state of restoration I sincerely hope that space can be found to display T Sq 54 in-doors for people to enjoy, after all she is one of the most famous Boeing creations:



Above: T Sq 54 nears completion.



Top Left: Terrence McCosh observes the installation of the number 2 propeller. **Top right:** Dale Thompson and Dick Peterson pose with the newly restored APQ-13 radar antenna. **Middle Left:** Herb Phalen (Crew Chief) in front of T Sq 54's nose. **Lower Left:** Terrence McCosh with the newly restored co-pilot's instrument panel. **Lower Right** Hal Lyon stringing electrical cables in T Sq 54's rear bomb bay. *(All pictures Donald England)*



Top Left: Ted Schumaker works on an engine. **Top Right:** Roy Foote. **Middle Left:** Syd Baker constructs the radome for the APQ-13 radar. **Lower Left:** Donald England. **Lower Right:** Terry, our Boeing crane and fork lift operator with the 5th engine to be on ground display. *(All pictures Donald England)*



Interestingly, the restoration team are making the turrets work. They can be operated from the normal sighting stations within the airframe or from a special external sighting platform. A switchboard allows the external sight to operate any of the four turrets plus a fifth on the ground stand. Loudspeakers mounted in the turrets play recordings of .5 inch Brownings firing when the trigger is depressed. **Top Left:** The gun sight with the external turret and T Sq 54 beyond. **Top Right:** The test stand including amplidyne for moving the turret. **Middle Left:** The gun sight and switch board. **Lower Left:** The sight in operation. Note: the turret behind is the lower rear turret which is mounted upside down in the test rig. This is why it is pointing up when the sight points down! **Lower Right:** The dummy wooden guns in the external 4 gun turret. (All pictures Donald England)



Top Row: The intricacies of the electro mechanical analogue computers that were fitted to the B-29s to control the guns. Five of these were fitted to each plane, one for each sighting station. The restoration team have one example which, although functional, will not be used with the operating turrets, partly as such ballistic refinements are not needed and partly to cut down on the already complex operation. **Middle Left:** The sighting computer in its box. **Middle:** The APQ-13 Radar Antenna. **Middle Right:** Part of the Flight Engineer's panel during restoration. **Lower Left:** T Sq 54's new nose glass being installed. **Lower Right:** The Pilot's control panel during restoration. (All photos Donald England)

Over Exposed

A few months ago the BBC 'Country File' program ran a piece on a USAF RB-29A that crashed on the Derbyshire Moors. The plane crashed in a remote location and, despite the constant attrition of bits from souvenir hunters, substantial parts of the wreckage remain essentially where they came to rest back in 1948. Following the program several Washington Times 'subscribers' contacted me to let me know of it and thought its story may make a suitable inclusion in a future Washington Times. I could not agree more and, as it happened, I already had some photos sent to me by Jeff Brown of a display put up by the Glossop Heritage Trust to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the crash. The text, and photos below, were a part of this display and come courtesy of Mike Brown of the Glossop Heritage Trust. Unfortunately, the display had to shut in July 2009 due to a lack of funding although the artefacts and displays are safely stored in case a suitable venue becomes available again in the future.

**Boeing RB-29A [F13-A] Superfortress 44-61999
'Over Exposed'
16th Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron,
91st Reconnaissance Wing, 311 Air Division,
Strategic Air Command.**

**Crashed at Higher Shelf Stones
on November 3rd 1948.**

On November 3rd 1948, during a flight from Scampton in Lincolnshire to the Burtonwood United States Air Force base near Warrington in Lancashire, the Superfortress crashed onto the high ground at Higher Shelf Stones.

The pilot of the aircraft, Captain Landon P. Tanner had been given a briefing before the 20 minute flight that there would be broken cloud between 2,000 and 4,000 feet with a visibility of 4 - 6 miles. For this flight the crew was;

Pilot	Captain Landon P. Tanner
Co-Pilot;	Captain Harry Stroud
Engineer;	Technical Sergeant Ralph Fields
Navigator;	Sergeant Charles Wilbanks
Radio Operator;	Sergeant Gene A Gartner,
Radar Operator;	Sergeant David T. Moore
Camera Crew:	Technical Sergeant Saul R. Banks Sergeant Donald R. Abrogast Sergeant Robert I. Doyle Private First Class William M. Burrows
Additional Crew	Corporal M. Franssen Corporal George Ingram

Photographic Advisor Captain Howard Keel of the 4201st Motion Picture Unit

The flight was carrying the payroll for the American airbase at Burtonwood and sacks of mail to be sent back to the United States.

It is believed that the pilot must have descended out of the overcast sky to establish his current position and impacted with the ground just below Higher Shelf Stones, about 2000 feet above sea level.

When the aircraft failed to arrive at the airbase an air search was called and the burning wreckage was seen.

At the time the members of RAF Harpur Hill Mountain Rescue team were completing an exercise some two and a half miles away and picked up the messages of the search aircraft. Realising that they were in the area, in two parties, they moved towards the crash site through conditions of mist and drizzle until they could see the remains of the aircraft with its high tailfin above the fires. The first arrivals from the RAF team, Flight Sergeant George Thompson and Corporal William Duthie realised there were no survivors of the crash and as night fell firemen and other men from the RAF arrived and made a further search.

Very early the following day a much larger party made their way to Higher Shelf Stones and the 200 yard long debris trail was searched until all the bodies of the crew were found, as was the £7,000 pay satchel.

The crew of 'Over Exposed' had completed their tour of duty and in three days would have returned to their homes in the United States. Captain Landon P. Tanner, the 33 year old pilot of 'Over Exposed' left a wife and two daughters, Jean and Jane. He had enlisted in the US forces in 1936.

The Boeing B 29 Superfortresses used for photographic reconnaissance duties were fitted with extra fuel tanks and cameras were installed to photograph a strip of ground 3 miles wide. After this conversion the aircraft was designated as an F-13 and first entered service in November 1944. 117 were built.

44-61999 'Over Exposed' was built at Renton Washington and entered service just before the Second World War ended. In 1946 it was one of seven F-13s that were fitted with extra cameras, including cine cameras in the five gun turrets, and assigned to a special unit created to test the effects of atomic bombs against ships under what was known as 'Operation Crossroads'. For this operation the planes were based at Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands while a fleet of old warships was moored in Bikini Atoll to await their destruction by the bomb.

On July 1st 1946, B29 Superfortress 'Dave's Dream', accompanied by 'Over Exposed', took off to drop an atomic bomb on old warships moored in Bikini Atoll Lagoon for what was called Test Able and it was the job of 'Over Exposed' and its 25 cameras to photograph 'Dave's Dream' and the bomb leaving the aircraft. 'Over Exposed' then dived 1000ft and was seven miles away when the bomb exploded.

On July 25th 'Over Exposed' was used to photograph the results of an underwater bomb test, known as Baker Test, and at the end of the tests was sent back to Wright field, with the other 7 F-13s involved, where the extra cameras were removed and then sent to Roswell Field for contamination checks. They then returned to their squadrons.

In 1948 the Russians cut off the Allied occupied sector of Berlin by cutting the road link and the only way to re-supply the Allied forces was by a massive air operation, bringing in food, coal and other supplies. During the period of the Berlin Airlift 'Over Exposed' was used to fly in with the other transport aircraft and photograph the Russian occupied territory of Germany.

After the crash the investigating teams had the tail fin destroyed as it stood up on the hillside, visible for great distances and it was attracting too many sightseers. Over the succeeding years many walkers visited the site, as well as aircraft historians and many parts were gradually removed or scattered over the hillsides and the once shiny metal parts rusted or oxidised.

The story of 'Over Exposed' was told by Ron Collier in his books on the numerous air accidents that took place in the area and subsequently in other authors' books and the many itineraries published for the thousands of walkers and hikers who used the land around the Pennine Way.

Many years later a memorial was placed on the site, and wreaths were laid in memory of the crewmen who died in the crash. Services were held on anniversaries and relatives of the lost crew attended.

A few years ago Glossop Heritage Centre was informed of the survival of a cover dome from one of the four gun turrets of the plane. It had been moved away from the crash site not long after the event but, in common with many similar artefacts from the many crashes, its young finders had abandoned it some way from the area in a stream bed, where over the years it had become buried in the peat and gravel.

50 years later one of them had gone back to find it and found that recent floods, probably in 2002, pouring down White Clough from Higher Shelf Stones had revealed it again.

Photos were taken to show what had survived and the Authorities informed of its survival, and that the Heritage Centre would like to use it in an exhibition at some appropriate point in the future, when they had space.

The dome was left on the hillside but its presence was reported to the Heritage Centre again on several occasions and there was fear that it would be taken away and lost or damaged, having been cut up into bits as souvenirs, or for scrap.

With the 60th Anniversary imminent, the organisations who usually attended the memorial services hoped that the dome could be recovered and an exhibition put on show both for visitors to the centre and those to whom the crash of 'Over Exposed' was a tragic part of their family history.

The Heritage Centre would like to thank
Sue Raftree and Deborah Morgan of RAF Innsworth, Gloucester
Mrs W Cotterill of Mossey Lea farm
The members of the Mountain Rescue Team
Mr Malcolm Baxter
Mr John Hickenson



Above: Taken from 'Over Exposed', 'Dave's Dream' at the point of dropping the atomic bomb during Test Able at Bikini Atoll, July 1st 1946. Note the forward bomb doors are open ready for the drop. The yellow B in the black square on the tail denotes 'Bomber'. Weather planes had a 'W' while the photo planes sported an 'F'.



Top: A photo of 'Over Exposed' while serving with Task Force 351 at Kwajalein Atoll during the 1946 Atom bomb tests. Over Exposed was one of the RB-29s used to photograph the explosions. The names of the men in the photo are unknown. (*Jay Bailey*)

Bottom: A general view of the memorial display put together by the Glossop Heritage Trust including the dome from the forward upper turret which had been recovered from a stream on the moors a few months previously. The turret dome was removed from the moors legitimately under an MoD licence and, following the closure of the display, now resides in the Newark Air Museum with the permission of the MoD (*Jeff Brown*)



Members of the R.A.F. Mountain Rescue Squad after their search for the super-fortress which crashed on Shelf Moor on Wednesday. Corporal W. Duthie and Flight-Sergeant G. Thompson tell of their moorland search.

13 die in Shelf Moor air crash

AN AMERICAN SUPER-FORTRESS crashed on Shelf Moor, about 2½ miles across Bleaklow Moor from the Snake Pass, Glossop, on Wednesday (with, it is feared, the loss of all the 13 men on board), whilst flying from the American base at Scampton, Lincolnshire, to Burtonwood, near Warrington.

When Flt.-Sgt. George Thompson and Cpl. William Duthie, of the R.A.F. Mountain Rescue Service, arrived at Glossop Police Station at 5.55 p.m., on Wednesday, all hope of there being survivors from the American Military B.29, which crashed 2,000 feet up Shelf Moor ended. Asked if there was anyone still alive, they replied "No." The airmen had completed the hazardous and precipitous climb from the Snake-road to Shelf Moor to the aircraft after receiving its position over their wireless communication. They had been out on an exercise, and without waiting for instructions, they decided to climb Bleaklow Moor in search of the plane. The remainder of the squad went round the other side of Bleaklow to wait for the flight-sergeant and corporal after they had worked out the exact location of the craft from their maps.

Still Burning

The airmen arrived at Glossop Police station and at once Inspector Brindey and a party of police and firemen set off in search of the wreckage. The two airmen led the way up Shelf Moor and when they arrived at the wreckage found it was still burning with occasional flickers of flame from the twisted metal to which it had been reduced.

Some 75 yards away from the main wreckage they found one of the radial engines with a twisted air-screw. The plane had buried its nose in the moss and appeared to have burst into flames on crashing. The tailplane was stuck into the moor and reared upwards to a height of some 20 feet. It bore the marking "461999."

The thirteen American members of the crew appeared to have been flung clear of the wreckage and one rescuer told reporters "I saw one unmarked body a distance away from the wreckage. I did not see any burned bodies."

The aircraft is understood to have crashed about 4.20 p.m. At least one person in Glossop saw it just before it crashed. He said that he saw the aircraft fly behind the hill but did not see it come out from the other side.

A whole fleet of American ambulances arrived in Glossop during the evening and when the rescuers with them learned there was no hope for their thirteen colleagues they decided to stand by until

down before attempting to bring the bodies down.

Altogether searchers spent some three hours on the Moor looking for the aircraft. The rapidly falling mist made their work more difficult and when two other parties climbing the moor met policemen and firemen coming down they were turned back because the fear of fog made the position dangerous.

All the Bodies Found

Early this morning the attempt to bring the bodies down was resumed. A large party of members of the R.A.F. Mountain Rescue Squad, U.S. Air Force men, and police climbed to the wreckage. They found all the 13 bodies and a few minutes before 9 a.m. the first of them had been brought down to Doctorsgate, where ambulances were waiting.



Left: A cutting from an unknown local paper covering the crash and attempted rescue.

Top Right: A plaque made to commemorate the victims.

Above Right: Jean and Don Houlding visiting the exhibition. Jean is the daughter of Landon Tanner and was about 4 at the time of the crash. She knew little of her father's fate until as she said: "Almost all of my knowledge about the crash comes from research done by amateur aircraft archaeologists in Britain. Before Gerry Scarratt of Hadfield found my father's wedding ring at the wreck site and then spent four years tracking me down (in the 70's), all I knew was that my father had died in a plane crash in England and my mother held a grudge against Harry Truman for sending him over there. Gerry sent me the ring and all of the crash information he could collect. In 1985 Don and I were able to make our first trip to the crash site and we have been back for anniversary climbs in 1998 and 2008. No matter what the weather on climb day, it is always thick fog at the top as it was on the day of the crash, and we feel very close to the fliers." (Jeff Brown)

Not B-29 related but an incident at RAF Coningsby during the Washington era.....

Patrick O'Leary, former National Service bomb armourer from RAF Coningsby has been researching the crash of a 92 Squadron Meteor that he witnessed from the bomb dump....

“Meteor WK657 of 92 Squadron (Linton-on-Ouse) crashed at Casey’s Farm near Dogdyke killing the pilot, Sqdn Ldr Jack Jagger. I was serving with the RAF doing national service working in the bomb dump as a bomb armourer. A few of us witnessed this sad event. I believe the pilot was practising for an air display and from the bomb dump we had a front row view! The Meteor started its take off run on the main runway from our right and became airborne about half way down. We watched in awe for as soon as his wheels were fully up, and when only 60 feet or so high, he did a complete 180 degree roll followed by a vertical climb to 2,000ft before performing a falling leaf manoeuvre at the bottom of which he pulled out too low and hit the high flood defence along the river bank and exploded. We actually saw the cockpit go flying on a good few hundred yards with the pilot still inside until it finally came to rest in a field of cows where it burst into flames killing the pilot and five of the cows. Some of us were posted as site guards the next day – a very sad event never to be forgotten. Sqdn Ldr Jack Jagger was buried in Coningsby cemetery.

I re-visited the area recently and, after chatting to some locals in the Packet Inn, managed to locate and visit Mervin Casey who has now taken over the running of the farm from his father. Mervin was only a young lad at the time of the crash. Mervin also said that a few years ago while dredging the river a large section of the Meteor’s fuselage was dragged up and lay in his yard for several years although it is no longer there. I did however manage to recover the aircraft’s camera lens.”



Top: The camera lens from WK657 recovered by Patrick during his visit to the crash site earlier this year.
Above: The grave of Sqdn Ldr Jack Jagger in Coningsby’s cemetery.
Right: A section of OS map showing RAF Coningsby as well as Patrick’s estimated crash site and the actual site. (All images Patrick O’Leary)

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)
Harry	Bromwich	207 Squadron ground crew
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
George	Chandler	207 Squadron Electrical Fitter
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	90 Squadron Air Gunner
Dave	Crawford	207 Squadron Navigator
John (Buster)	Crabbe	35, 115 and 207 Squadron Crew Chief
Don	Crossley	90 Squadron Signaller
Howard	Currie	44 Squadron Pilot (<i>deceased</i>)
Bernard	Davenport	90 Squadron Air Gunner (<i>deceased</i>)
Mike	Davies	90 Squadron Air Gunner
Gordon	Dickie	35 Squadron Airframe Mechanic
Basil	Dilworth	XV / 192 Squadron Navigator

Ross Keith	Duffield Dutton	Organiser of WF502 memorial 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
F	Hillier	
John	Hobbs	149 Squadron Air Gunner
Julian	Horn	RAF Watton Website
Henry	Horscroft	44 Squadron Association
Brian	Howes	115 Squadron Pilot
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)
John	Marchant	ASF Engine Fitter, Marham
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	Mowbray	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 (<i>deceased</i>)
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 th 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 th Bomb Group)
Joe	Somerville	RAF Marham Engine Fitter
Paul	Stancliffe	192 Squadron Co-pilot
David	Stanford	192 Squadron Radar 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
Margaret	Thomas	Daughter of Isaac (Ike) Cundall, 207 Squadron Air Gunner
Albert	Urquhart	Left Gunner K-39, 330 th 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
Tony	Whatman	57 Squadron Assistant Armourer
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

To finish, something non B-29 related but which made me smile when I read it, I hope you find it amusing too.....

"The following have all appeared in church magazines so let us thank God for church ladies with typewriters."

Next weekend's 'Fasting & Prayer' Conference in Whitby includes all meals.

 This evening at 7 PM there will be a hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

 Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door.

 Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

 Sunday morning sermon: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.'

Sunday evening sermon: 'Searching for Jesus.'

 Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

 Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again,' giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

 Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

 At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.

 Scouts are saving aluminium cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

 Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.

 Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM - prayer and medication to follow.