

# Washington Times



*Newsletter*  
*Issue 9*  
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## Cover Photos

- Top            WF512 (44 Squadron) at dispersal, RAF Coningsby (*Ernest Howlett*)
- Middle        B-29 44-61748 "It's Hawg Wild" at Kadena AFB while serving with the 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group during the Korean war. (*Frank Farrell*). "It's Hawg Wild", now on permanent display at Duxford, made what could well be the very last landing of a B-29 in Britain when she was delivered in 1980. An account of this delivery is at page 18.
- Bottom        One of my all time favourite Washington photos, WF491 of 90 Squadron B-29 at dispersal, RAF Marham. (*Bernard Davenport*)

Welcome to issue 9 of Washington Times, I hope you find the items of interest. Unfortunately, this is the last of the current series and so I need to ask for a further input of subscription to allow me to produce the next 4 issues. As before, if you are interested in receiving the next 4 instalments, please can you send £5 to me to cover their printing and postage.

## Washington Reunion?

On a different topic I have been thinking for a while of organising a Washington reunion. The obvious place for this, to my mind at least, would be near Duxford as they have the only B-29 in Europe (see page 18 here!). If you are interested in attending a reunion please let me know and I will look into the costs of the package. Also, as I have never attempted such a thing before, any suggestions as to what a reunion should cover would be gratefully received!!

So far I am thinking of a 3 day, 2 night event with people arriving on day one. In the evening there being an informal drinks 'ice breaker' reception. Day two to be spent around the Duxford museum before attending a more formal 'reunion dinner' in the evening. Day three could involve trips to Marham or Coningsby (RAF willing!) and local areas before people disperse.

If sufficient people are interested I will check out the costs and let people know, either via the next issue of Washington Times or individually should the Washington Times stop here.

Enjoy this issue and I look forward to hearing from you.

Chris Howlett  
The Barn  
Isle Abbots  
Taunton  
Somerset  
TA3 6RS

e-mail [chris\\_howlett@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:chris_howlett@tiscali.co.uk)

## Letters

**Harry Stoneham** wrote:

I was called up to do my National Service (2 years) in 1950 and was demobbed November 22nd, 1952, leaving as an LAC (Leading Aircraftsman). I was stationed at Coningsby - 1951-52, after square-bashing at RAF Hednesford and then trade training at RAF St Athan's in South Wales, where I qualified as an engine fitter on radial engines.

The first couple of months I was with 44 Squadron but then the powers that be decided to slim the Squadron down a bit and myself and several others were sent to the A.S.F. (Auxiliary Servicing Flight) in one of the large hangars.

The last night before 44 Squadron broke up, there was a farewell 'booze-up' at the local pub. Then a knockout darts match was held amongst the lads, and I think I was partnered with a Flight Sergeant 'Chalky' White. 'Chalky' and myself won the match, with myself getting the winning double! This was not through any skill on my part, but the fact that I, being tee-total, was the only one sober.

I can't remember the Station Commander's name during my time there, but I think he only had one arm. (*Group Captain Gus Walker - Chris*)

Other things I remember, were taking part in a cycle race around the perimeter at Coningsby, having to retire when my chain came off and also competing in a 25-mile Time Trial, on local roads, against about 40 riders from other stations in the Group, in which I took third prize for Coningsby, presented in the NAAFI.

In the photograph I have just fitted a C.S.U. (constant speed unit). It was a fiddly job, which I always seemed to get because I was good at it. (I should have messed it up the first time!) The other photograph is of a Washington taxiing at Coningsby.

The only names of ground crew I remember working with are: McKay and Marchant (their Christian names I have forgotten.)

Well, I hope this information helps to fill in gaps in the Washington story.

One thing I don't understand: When I went to the Coningsby Museum a few years ago, I couldn't find any mention of the Washington. I wonder why?



**Jeff Brown** wrote:

Many thanks for the latest issue of the Washington Times.

I was very interested to read about the first visit to the UK of a B-29 in 1944.

There was also a second visit in 1945 which I witnessed. The Lancaster squadron that I was on (576) disbanded in September 1945 and I was made redundant.

Eventually in October I found myself at RAF Blackbushe working on the runway control caravan.

A B-29 which was visiting the UK (I don't know why) was diverted to us because his destination was fogged in. The visit created a lot of interest as this was the first time any of us had seen a B-29 at close quarters.

Some of the N.C.O. crew were billeted in my hut and next day I was invited, by them, to visit the aircraft. There were a lot of interested visitors and I was only able to visit the rear compartment. The thing that stuck in my memory was that the side gunners (scanners) seats were recessed into the cabin floor in order to be in line with the side blisters.

Little did I realise when sitting in the left gunner's seat that some years later (1950) I would be in the same position in a Washington.

With us at the caravan we had an airman fitter who did a tyre check on the aircraft prior to take off. To achieve this we held the aircraft before he turned onto the runway with a signal from a red Aldis lamp. When the tyre check was satisfactory the fitter gave us a thumbs up signal and we gave the aircraft a green to take off.

When the B-29 approached I stopped him with a red. He must have misunderstood this signal as he smartly turned around and headed back to the flight line. Air traffic control must have told him what to do because he turned back, held whilst his tyres were checked, and then took off on my green signal.

Blackbushe in the autumn of 1945 was a very interesting place. Based there was a former pathfinder squadron of Mosquitos delivering diplomatic mail etc. all over Europe. There was also a Czech Air Force unit with white painted Liberators ferrying Czech nationals back home. One of these crashed on take off and one more body than those listed on the manifest was found, presumed to have been a stowaway.

Sabena, the Belgian airline was getting back into business with former Luftwaffe Ju 52s and a converted B-17 which made a wheels up landing.

The airfield had FIDO which was occasionally used in foggy weather.

When Farnborough, just down the road, held a big flying display of captured German aircraft we saw many former Luftwaffe planes flying around.

Although at that time I was redundant as aircrew I enjoyed my time at Blackbushe.

**Gordon Galletly** wrote:

Was delighted to receive Issue 8 as I thought that the Washington Times was probably defunct now due to lack of material so I was doubly pleased to get my copy. Well done. Page 3 has a piece from Jeff Brown about the demise of his old Squadron Commander, Sqn Ldr Canton but he refers to his nickname as having been "Cork" whereas the nickname was "Conk" - possibly a reference to his nose although I never recall his nose being particularly odd in any way. I have managed to find a photo of Conk Canton which I have attached below. The caption read "**RAF CONINGSBY - 1951 or 1952** Sqn Ldr R L Wade (OC 44 Sqn) has his back to the camera and is shaking hands with Sqn Ldr "Conk" Canton (OC 149 Sqn) on whose right-hand-side is Sqn Ldr "Ben" Denny (OC 90 Sqn). Chap in white vest next to Canton is Flt Lt Eric Stuart." As you will gather from the filthy appearance of the participants, the occasion was a Station Sports Day. You may not be aware that "Gerry" Wade retired as Air Chief Marshal Sir Ruthven Wade and died in 2001.

Congratulations on keeping the Washington Times afloat and hoping to receive future issues if you manage to produce them.

Best wishes

Gordon Galletly



*(Gordon Galletly)*

**David Crawford** wrote:

Dear Chris,

I have been scanning the internet for some time, attempting to rediscover my RAF background.

My name is ex-Flt/Lt Dave Crawford (2501022). I was a GD/Nav in the RAF for 13 years and served at RAF Coningsby in mid 1952, monitoring the Wainfleet Bombing range. Subsequently, I was posted to RAF Marham on No. 207 Squadron under Sqdn Ldr Geoffrey Fisher, where I flew on B 29s for a few months. During this time my captain was Flt/Lt McNabb and my co-Nav was Flt/Sgt 'Steve' Stevens before transferring to the 'Home-Run' ferry pool where I navigated three B-29s back to Davis-Monthan AFB in Tucson, Arizona before converting to Canberras in April 1954.

On the Home Run flights I first left Marham, on 5/1/54 in WF559, with Fg/Off 'Joe Loughran' as my skipper - we lost an engine between Bermuda and Dover AFB and spent 21 very enjoyable snowbound days there. I have no idea who took the aircraft on to Davis-Monthan. Then, on 26/2/54, I took-off again this time in Washington WW344, with Fg/Off Williamson and we had an uneventful flight, via Azores, Bermuda, Dover, Delaware, to Davis-Monthan AFB (arriving 1/3/54) and being transported as usual by M.A.T.S, in a Navy R6-D, back to Prestwick, Scotland. Finally, on 16/3/54, I made my last trip. This was in either WF566 or WF567 (I can't remember which), departing RAF Marham and arriving at Davis-Monthan on 19/3/54.

After converting to Canberras, still with 207 Squadron, I remained with them until 1956, when 207 Squadron disbanded. I then moved to R.A.F. Akrotiri (Cyprus) as Operations Officer for 3 years. I completed my service with "D" Flight No. 22 Squadron (Search & Rescue Westland Whirlwind) Helicopters before joining the Australian Dept. of Aviation in February 1964 as an Air Traffic Controller at Kingsford-Smith Airport, Sydney. I retired in 1988 and here I still am.

Funny thing, Chris, I should point out the obvious. I was only operational for a couple of months with 207 Washingtons and, although I wasn't a complete 'sprog' (having spent 12 months on Avro Lincolns at RAF Upwood), I was fairly inexperienced on B 29s. Also, (and this a bit hard to explain), I didn't care for all the strict discipline of 207 Squadron at that time. The crew had to line up on a long green "prayer mat" and be inspected for smartness, hair length etc. by the 'Captain', prior to flight - I found this a bit humiliating, but it was the standard of the day. I understand from my many colleagues, later, that this was the sort of discipline that applied in the V-Force also. I did however immensely enjoy the trips to America!

I do have a couple of photos somewhere of myself and P/O Brian Day, taken at RAF Coningsby, where we were joint O/C's of the 'Pinplot' Caravan.

Regards

Dave Crawford

## **The Washington Era**

You may be interested to learn that there is a book covering the RAF's use of the B-29 (or more specifically 207 Squadron's use) that is available from the 207 Squadron Association. This book, called 'The Washington Era' costs £14 and can be ordered either direct from John Laing at the address below or, if you want, via me at the address at the front of this issue.

John Laing,  
10 Graybank Road,  
Perth  
PH2 0GZ  
United Kingdom                      e-mail                      laing\_middlechurch@hotmail.com

Please make cheques out to "J. A. Laing Washington Era Account"

The book is some 64 A4 pages long and contains a mix of personal recollections and official 'facts' covering the entire Washington story although there are no photographs. I found it a wonderful read and recommend it to you. To help you decide whether or not to buy it I have, with the kind permission of 207 Squadron Association, reproduced the contents page and a small sample of the book below (all remain copyright of 207 Squadron Association).

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The following excerpt comes from the book and is the majority of the first section of chapter 4 .....

### The Marham Commanders

The Station Commanders were firstly Gp. Capt. 'Pop' Casey, a pleasant chap with a charming wife who made no pretence of being an up-to-date aviator but ran what was a happy Station with a velvet touch.

*We last met when, he having left the Service and joined the Bristol Aeroplane Company, we had a bit of a get-together in the Raffles Hotel in Singapore, probably around 1959.*

For Marham the death of King George VI was a bit different because of the use the Royal Family made of the station. Those who had contact with the Royals were more affected than the rest of us by the death of the King, but none more so than the 'Groupie'.

*I remember the parade at which he formally announced the King's death and the succession of Queen Elizabeth he was almost in tears.*

*As I remember him he was a small man but with a considerable presence. The first time I saw him at close quarters was at a Sergeants Mess party when I thought his dress uniform a trifle shabby but realised it was probably the one he'd had for years and it therefore said much for his life style that it still fitted him.*

*Was that the party at which Alex Stewart put up a horrid black by failing to leave with the C.O.? Hard luck on him it was the NCO s in his crew who encouraged him to stay, believe me, he didn't need much encouraging.*

Our second Station Commander, a Canadian, more into the flying scene, but not intrusively so, was to all appearances thoroughly competent. I cannot vouch for the truth of subsequent gossip, which ran on the lines that he left his wife, the Station and the Service, in that order.

*During a spell on the runway caravan I experienced the Groupie's concern about breaches of rules. We were using the short runway one end of which was screened by trees. There was a roar and a flight of Meteors swept across the airfield, recognizable because I could see their tail fins above the trees. Before I had time to recover from my surprise the telephone jangled:*

*"Caravan. Sergeant Laing."*

*"Station Commander here. Did you see that?"*

*"No Sir."*

*"Why not?" barked the Groupie.*

*"They were below the trees, Sir. "*

*"Jesus Christ," and back down went his phone.*

*I suppose he then registered a general complaint to Fighter Command and perhaps some strips were torn off but I was glad not to be able to drop some specific fighter squadron in it.*

*When residents of my town complain about the low flying Tornadoes and various other dart shaped aircraft I remember the Meteors at Marham and think "You ain't seen nothin' yet".*

The resident Squadrons came under Flying Wing. When we formed, the Wing Commander Flying was a quite extraordinary character called Hackem or Haccombe (I do not remember ever seeing the name



written) Fryer. As far as we could ascertain he had no wartime operational background and appeared to have spent many years with the USAF in America. So much so that he was more American than the Americans and spoke in a sort of folksy lingo that he would have us believe was lingua franca in such circles. A bachelor and definite oddball if ever there was one; his briefings, if they can be dignified by the name, were odd to say the least. On one occasion, in response to some mutterings from the floor about the unsociable hours of some sortie or other, he advised the assembly, in what were for the day quite explicit terms, that he considered the scheduled time of return for the sortie to be no impediment to their enjoyment of a normal sex life. Did we detect a note of sour grapes? Another pilot remembers:

*The Wingco Flying in those days was a maniac called Fryer who said we were all still at war as far as he was concerned. At the first briefing for the formation practice for the Battle of Britain fly-past over London in Sept. '52, Wingco Flying, "Hackem" Fryer warned that he wanted a good tight formation. He went on to say that he would be watching from the astrodome of the lead aircraft and if things were not to his liking he would get very angry. This would cause his bald head<sup>1</sup> to turn bright red and if it looked as if the sun was setting in the astrodome of his aircraft, we would know we were in trouble. Fortunately all went well, " is Bill Adams recollection.*

When Fryer left, for where I know not, his successor Nebby Wheeler DSO OBE DFC was a totally different kettle of fish. Very much the career officer, highly decorated after distinguished war service and destined to receive a knighthood and become an Air-Chief-Marshal. Best of all, he was an ex-member of No.207 Squadron from the pre-war days in the Sudan. He thus had a very personal interest in the Squadron, which he retains to this day.

*Never, for one moment, did I feel that he was looking over my shoulder in any way. I was doubly fortunate in being able to serve under him again a short time afterwards when he was Deputy Director of Operational Requirements in the Air Ministry, with responsibility for specifying the Air Staff requirements for all new aircraft. My own responsibility being for bombers.*

Rather sadly, and illustrative of the problems experienced by married personnel, particularly at this difficult time, he decided that the best interests of his young family were served by his wife staying on in the family home while he lived in Mess throughout his time at Marham.

*Although he made light of it and was certainly not one to complain I cannot help thinking that we were all losers in one way or another from this arrangement. These were not easy times.*

No.207 was effectively the last of the Washington squadrons to reform and convert to type. The two squadrons already at Marham had captains, and in one case a Squadron Commander, of great experience, gained, it seemed, mostly in Transport Command.

*When we formed, the policy appeared to have changed, or the supply dried up, as our captains were quite a mixed bag, from the widely experienced to one or two who, by the standards of the other squadrons had relatively few hours in their log books. Rightly or wrongly we formed the impression that some of the old timers had more of a Transport Command than a Bomber Command attitude to the job and cultivated the impression that there was some 'mystique' about the aircraft; an impression that the then Wg. Cdr. Flying appeared happy to go along with. From the outset we adopted an attitude that we felt was more appropriate to the Bomber role, and maybe stirred things up just a bit.*

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<sup>1</sup> One of his nick-names was Chrome Dome

## THE B-29 WASHINGTON - FIFTY YEARS ON

A Personal Account of Life with No 44 Squadron in 1951 (Previously published in the 44 Squadron Newsletter)

by Douglas Cook



WF508 at dispersal (*Doug Cook*)

### History

By mid-1948 the front line establishment of Bomber Command had been cut from 1,560 aircraft at the end of the war to just 160: that is 48 Lancasters, 96 Lincolns and 16 Mosquitoes. The Berlin blockade imposed by the Russians and the continued fighting in Indonesia made the World a more uncertain place than had been assumed in the immediate post-war euphoria. The Air Estimates of 1949 proposed the first steps needed to produce the aircraft that would ensure the effectiveness of the RAF in the 1950s and beyond. The remaining Lancaster squadrons were re-equipped with Lincolns and orders were placed for the first of the new jet bombers. Despite this, however, Bomber Command did not possess an aircraft with the range to attack targets in Russia in the event of war.

The British Government asked the USA to supply B-29 Superfortresses under the Mutual Defense Assistance Programme as an interim measure. This was opposed by Bomber Command on the grounds that the B-29 would be expensive to operate and maintain and it required a larger crew than the Lincoln, so further exacerbating the RAF's manning problems. Despite this, on the 27th January 1950 an Anglo-American agreement was signed in Washington for the lease of 70 Boeing B-29 bombers to the RAF to fill the gap in capabilities until the arrival of the new jet powered bombers. This plan was still not met with universal acclaim and one British newspaper editorial called the B-29 both foreign and old. Our coming dependence on them was a sad symbol of this country's fall from air supremacy, it said. Significantly, from a political point of view, in addition to its long range it had been a B-29 which had dropped the two atomic bombs on Japan that brought World War II to an end. Bomber Command was not, of course, going to get a nuclear weapon until 1958, but our possession of the B-29 with its demonstrated ability was a good Cold War card to have. So the first Washington, as

the B-29 was to be called in RAF service, arrived in the UK on 22 March 1950 and No 149 Squadron began to re-equip with this type at Marham. All in all some 87 Washingtons were to see service in the RAF, replacing eight squadrons of Lincolns, until Bomber Command became an all-jet force in December 1955.

### **The Aircraft**

The Washington had a wingspan of 140 feet, an all up weight of 128,000lbs and was powered by four Wright Cyclone R-3350-23 engines with exhaust turbo superchargers. For self defence it had five remotely controlled gun turrets, any of which could be fired by any of the five aiming positions. Operationally it could carry a variety of bomb loads in its two bomb bays disposed fore and aft of the main spar; a typical load would be 12 x 1,000lbs HEs.

The fuselage was pressurized front and rear of the two bomb-bays, making life at high altitudes more comfortable than in the non-pressurized Avro bombers. It was both warmer and quieter, so leather flying helmets and oxygen masks were replaced by US issue headphones and throat microphones. It was drier, too, because unlike the Lancaster and Lincoln, rain did not percolate through the gaps in the structure onto the pilot's feet.

The normal crew was up to 10: two pilots, a flight engineer, radio operator and navigator/bomb-aimer in the front compartment, and three gunners and radar navigator in the rear compartment, with the rear gunner in his own little world behind the rudder. Most of the time we flew with a crew of nine, taking only three gunners. The Central Fire Controller was, in effect, the Master Gunner in his upper cupola allocating turrets to aiming positions. The Left and Right Scanners sat in the beam lookout stations, large bubble windows with great views when the weather was good. We did not carry a specific tail gunner, that turret could be controlled by the CFC, and the Bomb-aimer was also the front gunner when necessary.

### **The Conversion**

After gaining my pilot's wings in May 1950 I had started advanced training in the fighter stream. However, the decision by the Air Ministry to lease Washingtons brought with it a problem. The Lincolns it was to replace had only one pilot following a pragmatic decision early in the war to do away with the luxury of co-pilots in bomber aircraft, as the pilot training machine could not replace losses at the rate of two pilots per crew. The B-29 Washington, however, needed two pilots to operate it. In the press to convert the bomber squadrons onto the Washington as quickly as possible, facilities and time were short and full formal co-pilot training had not been included in the schedule. It was decided that co-pilots would go through the Washington Conversion Unit (WCU) with the converting squadrons, but would receive only minimal hands-on training. After a year on the squadron they would be offered either a full WCU course or a posting to another type. Consequently I and many other new pilots were moved sideways in the training machine to become Washington co-pilots for a year. Thus it was that I and others found ourselves flying Wellingtons at the Heavy Twin Conversion Unit at Swinderby during the early winter of 1950. The weather could be described as poor. There was lots of frost, snow and persistent fog. Owing to the generally poor visibility we did most circuits using known farmhouses and the A46 main road as markers to help us find the runway. As for the navexes, I have never flown so consistently in such poor weather since then, and all on an expired White Instrument Rating!

Marham was the location of the Washington Conversion Unit, and it was there on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1951 that I joined No 44/55 (Rhodesia) Squadron as a co-pilot. The twinning of the squadron number plate was, we were told, to keep No 55 in being until needed later on. Out of the 55 hours flying on the course I logged only 5 hours dual and I think we co-pilots were allowed only four or six landings - sufficient to be able to get the aircraft down if the Captain died! The Captains were a mixed bunch of

pilots, drawn from Lancasters, Lincolns, Halifaxes, Yorks and others. One York pilot had initial difficulty landing the Washington. He couldn't seem to keep it near the runway centre line. It was said that the York had little or no aileron effectiveness at low speeds and this pilot had become accustomed to coming over the hedge, calling for reduced power from the flight engineer and then putting on aileron and a bit of opposite rudder as he juggled the controls for the landing. The Washington had very effective ailerons, right down to landing speed, and his reflex aileron inputs with opposite rudder worked differently! The problem of old habits was resolved after the instructor made the York pilot fly some circuits with his feet firmly on the cockpit floor. Having said that, the conversion course was pretty straightforward for most people.

Squadron Leader RL Wade, the Squadron Commander, was on the course with us and I was crewed up with Flt Lt Gerry O'Donovan, an experienced wartime Master Bomber. Other crew members were: Flt Lt Gerry Maloney, Nav/Bomb-aimer; Fg Off John Marsden, Nav/Radar; Sgt John King, F/Eng; Sgt Alcock, W/Op; and Air Gunners Sgts Glen-Leary (CFC), Curtis and Bevan. The ground school part of the course was very good, based on the 'Dash One' - the aircraft operating manual. The flying included circuits and landings and emergency procedures for the pilots; high level bombing training, both visual and by radar, for the navigators; and gunnery practice, air to sea firing at a smoke marker for the gunners.



**Top:** Plt. Off. Doug Cook (co-pilot).  
**Next row:** Sgt. Curtis (Signaller), Flt. Lt. G.W. O'Donovan (Capt.).  
**Third row:** Flt. Lt. Gerry Maloney (Nav/Bombaimer), Sgt. 'Glen' Glen-Leary (CFC), Sgt. Bob Bevan (Scanner)  
**Kneeling:** Fg. Off John "Kiwi" Marsden (Nav/Radar), Sgt. John King (F/Eng)

At this time the crew were short one scanner. Bob Bevan was a National Service recruit, Glen-Leary was a Rhodesian and John Marsden was from New Zealand. (*John King*)

The aircraft had a tricycle undercarriage and the nose wheel castored but was not steerable, Turns on the ground were done with a touch of outboard engine and a jab of inside brakes. You had to be careful not to overdo it because of the momentum this large aircraft generated, but it was really quite tractable. In the air the controls were heavier than the Wellington or Meteor on which I had done my twin training, but they were well harmonized. Landings in the Washington were certainly flattered by the tricycle undercarriage, which was as well because the pilot was quite busy in the final stages of the approach. The aircraft had Fowler Type flaps which ran out behind the wing on tracks as they went down. This caused quite a change of attitude and trim. On the approach the aircraft was markedly nose down, a characteristic of all aircraft fitted with these flaps -Lockheed Neptune, Bristol Britannia, Canadair Argus, for example - and while rounding out for landing the pilot had to continuously wind back the elevator trim wheel to help get the nose up. The Neptune had an electric trim actuator for this; the Argus had a weighted trim wheel which you could spin like a flywheel! But, 50 years ago, this was all new to me.

Marham was a very Americanized place at this time. I remember that the runway lighting was bright and there was lots of it. Doing night conversion was interesting as the lights reflected off the side and ceiling panels round the "spaceship nose" of the B-29, and this took a little getting used to, Gerry O'Donovan complained bitterly at first, saying he would be far happier with the 10 seconds of Chance Light and three glims that he was used to in the War!

Anyone used to a bombing run in Lancasters or Lincolns found the Washington different. The bomb bay doors were controlled by the bomb aimer in the Washington, not the pilot, and instead of them taking an age to open, the Washington's doors opened within a second and closed just as quickly. The system opened the doors, released the selected bombs and then closed the doors. They were thus open for only a few seconds and the airspeed hardly varied at all. The speed of operation of the bomb bay doors was a hazard on the ground to anybody near them and they could lose an arm or worse if caught. So there was a strict drill to put the steel locking clamps on the actuator rods as soon as the aircraft was parked, and these locks were removed only the very last thing before the crew got on board to fly again.

Despite its external size, there was not much space inside, particularly in the front, as the remotely controlled gun turrets ate into the space, almost from floor to ceiling. The radio operator was in the rear right corner, behind the upper turret, and the navigator was in the rear left corner. His small square table folded cross-corners to give access past the turret to such vital things as the tunnel over the bomb bay connecting the front and rear compartments (which we were told formed a splendid air gun if the fuselage depressurised while you were half way through!), and, importantly, the pee tube. Forward of the turrets the two pilots had their own instrument panels with the Air Speed Indicator, Turn and Bank and Rate of Climb/Descent instruments mounted in a separate binnacle on top, seemingly as an afterthought. Outboard of the seats they each had a quadrant with throttles and the trim wheels on it. A floor console, offset towards the 1st pilot to allow the bomb aimer to get to his seat in the nose between the pilot instrument panels, housed autopilot controls, the four switches for the Hamilton Standard four bladed electric propeller pitch controls and the feathering buttons. The flight engineer sat facing aft behind the co-pilot. He had a full set of engine controls, including the magneto switches and mixture levers, and all the aircraft systems controls and indications on his panel. He was also facing the right way to see the engines, because he and the pilots sat a long way forward of the wing.

On 2nd April 1951, in the last week of the course, we flew across to Coningsby, which was to be our new home, and did some circuits and bumps, just to try the runway for size. Then on 7th April, formal conversion training over, we moved from Marham and took up residence at Coningsby as a Washington Squadron.

## **The Squadron**

The station was commanded by Group Captain 'Gus' Walker who, it was said, was a bit miffed that he had not been allowed to convert onto the Washington because of his lack of one arm. This did not stop him flying, though, both in the squadron Washingtons and the Oxfords of Station Flight. Having been a passenger in his staff car as he drove round the station, taking corners and returning salutes from airmen at the same time, I could see the Air Ministry's reservations about him controlling 128,000 lb. of airplane! However, he was a super Station Commander and we all looked up to him. [I met him again in 1965 at Gibraltar when as an Air Marshall he was RAF Inspector General, and we talked fondly of old times.]

On the Squadron, under the command of Sqn Ldr R L 'Gerry' Wade, we did things the USAF way, each aircrew being allocated its own aircraft with a Crew Chief leading a dedicated ground crew team, though some of the smaller trades had to look after more than one aircraft. While we all tried, as far as possible, to fly our own aircraft, there were times when an aircraft had to build up hours quickly to meet a scheduled servicing deadline. Then the aircraft captain "sold" his aircraft on a trip by trip basis to those crews whose aircraft were u/s or who needed to stretch out the hours of their aircraft for programming reasons. Initially we found that the aircrew knew more about the aircraft systems than the ground crew, because their training had been a bit perfunctory, and this led to long de-briefing sessions after trips explaining unserviceabilities until they caught up with us, which they did! Things are done better now... aren't they?

Our personal Washington was WF 508 which we as a crew flew for all but six trips in my nine months at Coningsby. We all got to know our own aircraft and their idiosyncrasies. 508 had an engine that kept failing at high altitude but if we went lower it would start again. After several episodes of this we found out that a vapour vent in the carburetor was blocking up with ice. Another foible was its fuel consumption. For some reason it used a bit more fuel than the others in the fleet. After I left 44 Squadron it was found that one of the oil coolers in the wing was distorted. This distorted the leading edge, causing more drag, hence a higher fuel consumption. Then there was the odd embarrassing moment. Part of the engine run up drill was to throttle back and switch off the magnetos temporarily to see that the engines were going to stop, but before they did to switch the mags back on. This was to check that no magneto was permanently live and that they could be switched off if needed. This drill usually went like clockwork. However, one day we were going to fly another crew's aircraft and when the engineer switched *off* the mags, the engines began to die as usual and he went to switch back on again. The thing was that on this aircraft the mag switches were much stiffer to operate than on 508 and, yes, the engines stopped before he could turn the switches on! We had to recall the ground crew to get the engines going again.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> April we went on our first major trip; Operation *Ombrelle*, which was a nine hour day/night Cook's Tour of Western Europe. Aircraft separation at the target was 100 feet and 10 seconds TOT. Navigation was by 3 minute Gee fixes where possible, radar fixes when out of Gee cover, and astro with a lot of dead reckoning thrown in. I noticed that after each turning point the aircraft ahead of us gradually spread out either side of our track and then mysteriously slid in again as we neared the next turning point. When it got dark it became quite interesting at the corners with pale blue exhausts gliding across our nose and the bumps of slipstream turbulence, but we did not hit anybody.

Our usual monthly routine consisted of navexes ending up at a target range for either visual bombing practice or radar bombing; gunnery practice for the gunners - always air to sea firing, I note from my log book, never any air to air firing on a drogue, though I do remember being attacked by Meteors and Vampires on one of the later exercises; and pilot continuation training. There was the odd relief, such

as the practices for the Battle of Britain Flypast over London. After one of these practices we landed at West Mailing for a leaders' debrief, where our Washington towered over the diminutive fighters. More practice followed but, come the day, the event was called off because of bad weather. Clearly the weather at Coningsby was not that bad as I logged us doing a "Battle of Britain At Home Demonstration and Beat Ups"! I enjoyed flying with Gerry O'Donovan. He was an experienced bomber pilot, he taught me a lot about flying and about crew management and he allowed me to take turn and turn about with the landings and take-offs. Some co-pilots were not so lucky and spent quite some time on the "lift that flap, dump that gear" routine.



44 Squadron rehearsal for the Battle of Britain flypast formation – 1951 taken from the Flight Engineer's window.  
*(John King)*

Flying rations were a talking point at that time, as most flights were of between four and nine hours duration. We started with the usual boxed lunch of sandwiches, fruit and chocolate bars. Drink was provided in large thermos flasks which came with each aircraft. These were filled with squash in summer and hot coffee in cooler times. I seem to remember that the flask was mounted on the upper gun turret in the nose compartment. Soon, however, the Catering Officers in the Air Ministry decided that aircrew in-flight rations should be wholesome, nutritious and variable but with a long shelf life, and the days of tinned rations arrived. There were tiny tins of butter, little ones of bacon and egg, corned beef, spam, pate, sardines, you name it, and medium sizes tins of soup. There was even an issue, purpose built, small folding tin opener, if you could find it! The only problem was that of making a meal on your knee in the air. Oh, yes, the cans of soup were a good thought, but there was no heater in the aircraft! We found that if you placed the tin between the navigator's two angle poise lamps and set the rheostat to "Bright", the soup was warm in 15 minutes. That took an hour and a quarter for the five crew in the front compartment and was not very popular with the navigators, especially at night. This was not the best piece of staff Work to come out of the Catering Branch and a lot of the unused cans inevitably found their way into married quarters kitchens.

Our high level bombing practice was done at the ranges near Theddlethorpe, Jurby and Lough Neagh. Practice radar bombing took place over Southend or Castleford Bridge. During Operation *Pinnacle*, September 29<sup>th</sup> to October 9<sup>th</sup>, we flew three trips over Europe, returning as "baddies" to test the UK Air Defences. This was when we were bounced by the fighters, providing the gunners with their only air to air aiming practice that year. I noted in my flying log book that our targets were successively Bristol, Liverpool and London. This last target was followed by dropping a single live 251b practice bomb on the Larkhill range! We were not restricted to UK targets, though, and in November we flew on Exercise *Bait* with Wunsdorf as our 'target for tonight'.

Planning for our long flights seemed to be on three levels. Some were done completely at squadron level, some routes were ordered by Group but the fuel loads were left to the station to work out, and others were completely detailed from above: numbers of aircraft, routes and timings, armament loads and fuel loads. This worked fine on most occasions, but there was one time early in November when we received a max effort order, complete with specified fuel loads. We worked out the details for us in 508 and, because of its higher than average fuel consumption, we were doubtful whether we could complete the route safely. We asked for more fuel to be authorised, but Group refused. Then the order was changed and stations were allowed to assess fuel loads. The weather was not very promising, so all Coningsby aircraft were topped up to full. Later, Group changed its mind again and ordered the original reduced fuel load. By then, however, the bowsers that had refuelled our aircraft had been refilled at the fuel farm and Mr Shell had paid his daily visit and filled up the station fuel tanks as contracted, so there was no way to defuel any aircraft and nowhere to put it if we did! We won by default!

The forecast weather was iffy all day. At one time we would all be diverted on return because of fog, then the Met man changed his tune and we would get back all right. There was still a big question mark over the weather when we took off and set course for umpteen turning points over Europe. We in 508 had almost reached the farthest one from Coningsby when the W/Op received the general recall. Fog was forming, after all. As we approached the North Sea we tuned in to the GCA frequency and heard the stream of aircraft in front of us being controlled down to the runway. They were landing. We began to smile, a bit. Then an aircraft missed the runway and overshot. Next time round he made it. Then another overshot and didn't make it next time either. Soon we heard Coningsby broadcast to all remaining airborne aircraft "You are diverted to Valley". The prospect of chugging all the way across central Britain loomed. However, soon after setting course from on top Coningsby I saw out of my window a red airfield beacon flashing WD. We called base and told them we could see Waddington. Could we go there? Yes, if you can get in, was the reply. Our call on Waddington's frequency elicited the reply along the lines of "Try by all means", so down we went and soon we landed in the same county and only a few minutes bus ride from Coningsby, rather than on the other side of the country.

We were directed to a parking spot and as we taxied we began to realize that there was an awful lot of aircraft of a wide variety of types on the airfield. Waddington clearly had been collecting diversions for some hours. One was a Harvard flown by a Cadet Pilot on his first night solo from Cranwell. The last aircraft in was an Anson from AST, Thorney Island, on a night navigation training sortie. He was on one engine and could have been in great trouble had Waddington not been open. Soon after we landed the airfield had to be closed because there was simply nowhere else to park any more aircraft. We went home by bus and came back two days later to ferry old 508 back to Coningsby.

Later that month my posting came through. After almost a year with 44/55 (Rhodesia) Squadron, which had given me a good grounding in flying a large, crewed aircraft, for which in retrospect I was very grateful, I left with mixed feelings. I cannot remember whether I elected to go to another Command or was just sent, but I was posted to the newly introduced and expanding Shackleton force of Coastal Command. I remember at the OCU at Kinloss the instructors kept reminding us how big the Shackleton was. Compared to the Lancaster Mk IIIs they had been used to, this was true. For me, after a year flying the B-29 Washington, the Shackleton was quite small... and noisy... and wet! But that is another story.





Taken outside the 44 Squadron offices at Coningsby in August 1951, from left to right: Fg Off. John Marsden (Nav/Radar O'Donovan's crew WF508), Fg Off Derek Taylor (Airplane captain unknown plane), Sqdn Ldr. Gerry Wade (O/C 44 Squadron) and Flt Lt. G. W. O'Donovan (Airplane captain WF508) (*John King*)

John King, F/Eng on O'Donovan's (OD's) crew with Doug Cook, recalls that Doug was replaced by Sgt 'Olly' Kylar a Czech pilot; a change that, as John says, was not a great success as far the rest of the crew were concerned. "Sgt. Kylar had come from Fighter Command - never flown anything but singles and had had at least one accident on every type he had flown! His most recent was in a Vampire in RAFG - hence his arrival at Coningsby. Over the course of the next few months he tried very hard to maintain his record by including WF508 a couple of times. On one occasion in particular, a night overshoot in fog during a diversion to Marham, he very nearly succeeded. It was only due to OD's skill that we averted hitting the ground. On an overshoot (missed approach, today) the flap had to be retracted to half before the gear was selected up, otherwise the resulting nose down trim was almost too much to hold. Needless to say, Kylar managed to select gear up first! I caught sight of the red hangar roof lights above the level of my window as we scraped across the airfield."

John took the photos on the following page on 7 December 1951, on the occasion of 'Olly' Kylar's first flight and just before Doug left. They give a good view of the various duties performed at pre flight as well as, as John remembers, the flight gear worn: "the 'old' style flying clothing was still in use, including the fleece-lined boots. OD still had his wartime issue Irving jacket - mine was a 'war surplus' that I purchased for use on my motorbike!"

#### Next Page

**Top Left:** Fg. Off. Doug Cook

**Top Right:** Sgt John King, Sgt 'Jock' Rankin, (Sig) Sgt 'Glen' Glen-leary

**Middle Left:** Gunners Glen Leary and Bob Bevan during the pre-flight upper checks.

**Middle Right:** Gunner Glen Leary conducting a pre-flight oil check on Number 3 engine.

**Bottom Left:** Skipper 'OD' briefs new co-pilot Sgt 'Olley' Kylar.

**Bottom Right:** 'Olley', Doug Cook, Glen-Leary and Gerry Maloney

(*All Photos John King*)





**Some more WF508 crew photos from John King:**  
**Above Left:** 'OD' reading in the left seat.  
**Above Right:** 'Olly' settled into the right seat.  
**Left:** Gerry Maloney working hard on plotting a fix. APQ 13 Radar scope above his head and fwd upper ammo bin on the left. Taken from the F/E's station.  
**Below Left:** Bob Curtis (replacement Signaller), John King, Glen-Leary & Olly  
**Below:** Glen-Leary and Bob Bevan.



## The Last B-29 in Britain

In the last issue I put in a piece on the first B-29 to ever land in Britain (YB-29 41-36963 'Hobo Queen' on 6 March 1944). Due to an article in the May 1980 issue of Aeroplane magazine (kindly loaned to me by Ken Firth) that led to me getting into contact with a crew member of the last flight I can now, somewhat unexpectedly, put an article in this issue of what, presumably, will be the last ever B-29 to land in Britain.

The last ever flight of a B-29 into Britain ended at Duxford on 2 March 1980 (almost 36 years to the day after the first!) when "It's Hawg Wild", B-29A 44-61748 landed. The B-29 was flown from the USA after the Imperial War Museum (IWM) rescued it from the US Navy's China Lake proving ranges. After landing at Duxford, 'It's Hawg Wild' was destined to undergo a lengthy restoration before becoming a non flying exhibit in the IWM's aircraft collection. The crew member that I made contact with is Taigh Ramey who accompanied his father (an ex B-29 navigator) on the epic journey. Given that the B-29 was destined for static display in Britain I asked Taigh why fly it over – would it not have been cheaper to break it down, box it up and ship it to England? The following story is his reply, and a fascinating tale it is too.....

It turns out that it was cheaper to fix up Hawg Wild and fly her over the pond than it was to take it apart and ship it. I remember Jack Kern telling a story about the project engineers from Duxford when they were assessing the possibilities of getting her airworthy. They were talking about removing the engines to have them rebuilt and Jack said "why?" The engineers thought that the engines would be frozen after having sat idle for 30+ years. Jack walked over the aircraft and pulled a prop through by hand to the amazement of the Imperial War Museum staff. He said that the original engines would most likely be perfectly good and, except for number three's "unfortunate appetite for oil", they were. Hawg Wild eventually left China Lake on 16 November 1979 flying to Tucson where Jack and his company readied her for the 6,500 mile flight to England.



"It's Hawg Wild" on one of her test flights, turning onto the base leg to land at Tucson International airport. From this angle you can see that the outer left wing panel has been replaced for the flight as the original wing had some corrosion and damage. Clearly visible are its 307 BG markings from the Korean War. (*Taigh Ramey*)

I heard that Jack's company, Aero Services of Tucson, was over \$10,000 cheaper than any of the other bidding companies. It was comforting to know that the aircraft was being made airworthy by the lowest bidder ... seriously though, Jack was the man for the job. His company made a living bringing aircraft out of the bone yard at Davis Monthan AFB in Tucson. I doubt that there was a better outfit to do that job, not to mention that he had done it two times previously with the CAF's "FiFi" and March Field Air Museum's "The Mission Inn".

How my Father and I got on the B-29 was an interesting story. I was a volunteer at the Pima Air Museum in Tucson throughout the summers of my high school years and I mostly worked on the B-29 "Sentimental Journey". My friend and boss at Pima was Bob Johnson who was the Director of Restoration. Bob called me at home to tell me about the Hawg Wild project at China Lake. He gave me the contact information for Geoff Bottomley (the head of the project for the Imperial War Museum) and said jokingly that maybe I could get a ride. I talked to Geoff about the project which was fascinating. I did express an interest in riding along at the time. My Dad had some good contacts at Hughes and he was able to arrange a trip to go and see the H-1 Hercules or Spruce Goose. The H-1 was still tucked away in secret in her original hangar in Long Beach and was not open to the public. Unfortunately we weren't allowed to take cameras in to see the H-1. My Dad invited Geoff Bottomley along to see the H-1 with us. What an incredible sight to see the Hercules in her original home. I remember as we walked in to the hangar we were standing beneath the horizontal stabilizer and elevator. We just stood there with our mouths agape looking up at this immense aircraft truly in awe. I remember Geoff saying, in his beautiful British accent, that "that horizontal is bigger than the main plane on the Lancaster".

I believe that Geoff felt he owed my Father a debt of gratitude for arranging the visit to the H-1 so he offered for us to fly on the B-29 with one caveat; He didn't want us to fly past the East coast of the United States as he didn't have complete confidence that she would make it all the way to England and he didn't want to have to tell my mother what had happened to her husband and son. Needless to say my Father eagerly accepted the offer much to the consternation of my Mother! She really was bent that my Dad didn't consult with her before deciding to go. I thought it was the right thing to do just in case Geoff changed his mind!

My Father and I were originally just passengers on the flight with no duties except to be in Jack's way. I remember Skip Cregier, the Aircraft Commander, coming into Jack's office once and asked who his Navigator was going to be. Jack said that Dr. Ramey here was a B-29 Navigator in WWII. Skip turned to my Dad and asked him if he had a sextant to which he replied "Yes, I do". Skip asked him if he could navigate the B-29 across the pond and he said that he could.

Jack had been trying to have an Inertial Navigation System loaned to the project but it didn't work out. He was also trying to get the Flux Gate Compass system operational and even had borrowed parts from Pima's B-29 but he was having trouble getting it to work. The remote transmitter was the biggest problem which mounted in the wing. There was a big concern as to how the navigation was going to go as the aircraft would be out of radio range a lot of the time and would have to rely on dead reckoning as pilotage was not that useful over the frozen North Atlantic.

My Dad was welcomed to the crew but since he was an unknown he would be put to the test on the first few legs of the trip. On 16 February, 1980 Hawg Wild departed Tucson on the first leg of the delivery flight to Flint, Michigan and thence onto Loring AFB, Maine. My Dad used dead reckoning on the flight and his positions were verified by Skip and Don with their VOR and DME. After this they were slightly more confident in his abilities but the true test still lay before us. We stayed at Loring AFB for a week fixing oil leaks to try and cut down on the oil loss/consumption. Number three engine consumed 75 gallons of oil out of 85 total on the trip from Tucson to Flint Michigan. This

consumption limited the range of the B-29 to oil range instead of fuel range which eliminated the possibility of flying across the Atlantic non stop. At Loring the U.S. Air Force was very generous and allowed us to park the B-29 in a heated hangar nose to nose with a B-52 which was quite a sight indeed. They even loaned us a Herman Nelson ground heater which was secured in the forward bomb bay and ducted into the ventilation system in the old bomber to keep out the extreme cold. This worked great as we were so warm that we had to open the windows and turn on the fans just to keep cool!

Incidentally, for the flight to Duxford, the B-29 was registered as G-BHDK. Skip used to love getting into discussions on the VHF radio with US air traffic controllers who weren't used to the foreign registration. He would also use their phonetic alphabet and called in as Boeing Henry David King. I have several audio tapes that I made on the trip with a recorder plugged into the interphone of exasperated controllers trying in vain to question and or correct Skip's call signs. Skip just loved playing with controllers. Several times when he was asked what the destination for the B-29 was, he would respond Tehran. This was usually met with interesting comments!!



“It’s Hawg Wild” at Gander Field, Newfoundland, February 1980.  
Note the UK registration “G-BHDK” (*Taigh Ramey*)

My Dad navigated the B-29 across the North Atlantic using his old WWII A-10A sextant and Astrocompass and the only modern thing was a Hewlett Packard HP-65 programmable computer that he used for the navigation tables and calculations. The Flux Gate Compass system was unreliable and the VOR's didn't work at our altitude and distance from the station so he was able to take sun and moon line fixes with the Astrocompass. I had the honour of mounting it in the astrodome and aligning it on the sun and moon. I would give it back to him and he would use the readings to calculate a line of position. On the leg between Gander and Sondestrom, Greenland a spark plug stripped out of a cylinder head in the Herman Nelson ground heater killing it. Henry Zappia spent hours in the bomb bay trying to get the heater back up but to no avail. We had originally used the ditching bars to keep the pressure bulkheads closed as the hatches were sprung. With Henry in the forward bomb bay it was

my job to lean against the door to keep it closed to prevent the blast of cold air from the bomb bay coming into the forward pressure compartment. I had a set of old WWII sheepskin flying gloves that I had placed in the tunnel above the pressure door to the bomb bay. My gloves fell down and knocked my Dr. Pepper soda can over and before I could pick it up it had frozen to the floor...it was that cold! Imagine what it was like for Henry Zappia working in the bomb bay.

After this we froze, literally. It was so cold (about 20 below zero) that the moisture from our breath frosted the inside of the cockpit glass. The same freezing moisture jammed up the air filter for the vacuum instrument system and caused the gyros to tumble. Skip who jumped back into the seat and kept the B-29 right side up by flying partial panel saved us from one of the many near death experiences. Skip went on to shoot an instrument approach into Sondestrom and did a masterful job, as usual, as there was no real missed approach available for us. I believe that this may have been Skips first night landing in a B-29 but you couldn't tell by looking as he was an awesome pilot. After we landed at Sondestrom, my Dad, Skip and I were the last to get off the B-29 and Skip turned to my Father and said "You are one hell of a tough old WWII Navigator" and he thanked my Dad for getting him there safely. I think that this was one of the best compliments that my Father ever received. I could not have been more proud of my Dad.

How lucky could I possible be; My Father Navigated B-29's out of Saipan in WWII and I got to see him do exactly that in 1980. My Dad is, in my eyes, the last true B-29 Navigator.

This whole trip was a once in a life time experiences that I am so fortunate to have been a part of. I want to thank Bob Johnson and Geoff Bottomley for allowing my Father and I to be a part of this incredible journey. – **Taigh Ramey**



“It’s Hawg Wild” resting in the desert at China Lake, California, Naval Weapons Centre, May 1979 before restoration began. (**Taigh Ramey**)

Next page, navigator’s log for “It’s Hawg Wild”’s delivery flight (**Taigh Ramey**)



MISSION FLIGHT PLAN			DATE OF TAKE-OFF		SQ		WING		CREW NO		ACFT TYPE		ACFT SERIAL NO		AR TRACK		AR FREQS		BCN SETTING		
PILOT (Name)			CO-PILOT (Name)		NAVIGATOR (Name) NAV-1		RADAR NAVIGATOR NAV-2 (Name)		EW OFFICER (Name)		GUNNER OR BOOM OPR (Name)		TANKER TCS		RECEIVER TCS						
ROUTE IDENT	FROM ROUTE	FLT COND	T.C. OR G.C.	W/V DC	T.H. OR G.H.	VAR OR GRIV.	M.H.	TEMP		IAS	TAS	GS	GRD DIS		TIME	AIR DIS		ETA	ATA	REMARKS	
								ALT	TRUE MACH				ACC. GRD DIS	ACC. TIME		ACC. AIR DIS					
	LORING TO GANDER		078	270	077	24W	101	-10	190	219	238	548	139MIN		2419M						
	GANDER KEFLAVIK			20/18				10,000													
	GANDER PRINCE CHR.		031	270/25	025	30W	055	-25	190	212	226	782	207MIN		3:27						
	PRINCE CHR. KEFLAVIK		070	220/10	071	30W	101	-25	190	212	270	618	167MIN		2:47						
	KEFLAVIK BELFAST		137	200/25	143	18W	161	-10	190	219	209	747	214M		3:34						
	BELFAST MILDENHALL		119	200/25	125	9W	134	-10	190	219	216	275	77M		1:17						
	<del>2 GANDER TO SAND. 2/25/80</del>																				
	1450 ENG. ON																				
	1509 TAXI GANDER																				
	1521 TAKE OFF		005	210/30	002	28W	030	-10	160												
	1531						030	6500													
	1535 LEVEL OFF						030	9000													
	1541 RADIO 170 MAG ST. ANTHONY						030	9000													
	1547 83N GANDER						031	9000		185											
	1557 descend to 8200						034														
	1600 RADIO COMP						005	28W	034												
	1557 RADIO FIX		005	211/8	006	28W	034	-15	185	203	211	134	38								
	1600 RADIO COMP.						005	28W	034												
	1620						036	5400													
	1626 level off						037	4500													
	1629 080MH BATTLE HARDER						033	5000		190											
	1635 RADIO FIX #2		005	198/34	001	30W	031	-20	190	195	228	137	36								
	1708						030	5100		195	200										
	1711 AT CR PT #2 5524N 5345W		006	200/20	005	34W	039	-20	195	200	220										
	1720 CLIMB TO 6000							6000		190											
	1735 ASTRO COMP		006	220/30	005	34W	039	-25	190	197	222										
	1745 descend to 6000						035	7300		190											
	1804																				
	1818 (3) FIX-01 RADIO		010	294/29	003	34W	037	-20	195		215	370	103								
	1829						003	34W	037												
	1842 10°L																				
			004	291/29	004	357	40W	037	-25	190	211										452 MI = 129 MIN 20:27 ETA
	1907						014	7100		190	214										
	1925						012	10700		195											20 40 15 21
	1930 AT ROCK		002	234	002	40W	014	7000		195	230	227	274	72							5:19
	1937						006	44W	014	190	224										
	1949						051	13100		190											
	2002 desc. to 10000						034	13100		190											
	2030 OVER FIELD																				Land at 2040



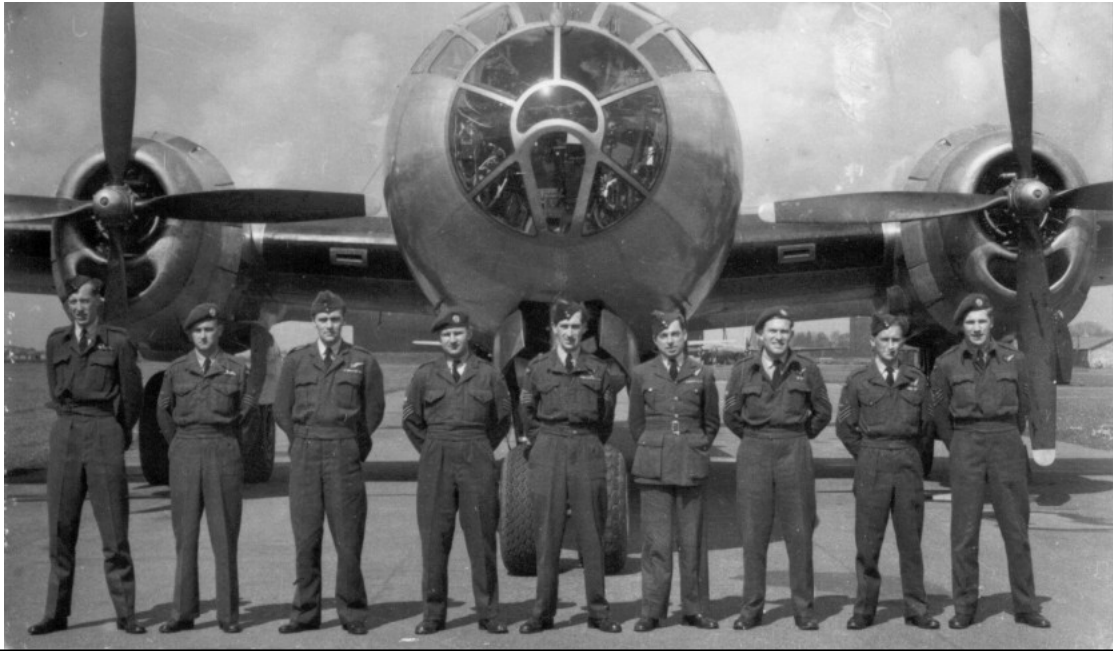


Taigh Ramey (right) and Dad Henry Ramey Jr in front of “It’s Hawg Wild” at Tucson prior to the delivery flight. (*Taigh Ramey*)



“It’s Hawg Wild” at Keflavik, Iceland February 1980. Note the lack of turrets. After serving with the 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, 44-61748 was converted to a TB-29A target tug and all turrets were removed. It was in this configuration that she was found in China Lake in 1979 and how she flew to England in 1980. However, Geoff Bottomley, the Project Engineer at the time, scavenged all of the turrets from other B-29’s at China Lake for Hawg Wild. She now has all of her turrets and gunnery equipment installed. She is pretty much all back into her fighting trim. (*Taigh Ramey*)

## Photos



**Left to Right:** Fl/Lt Edwards (Captain), Sgt Wood (Co-pilot), Fl/Lt Lowe (Nav/Bomb Aimer), Fl/Sgt Gilbert (Radar Nav), Fl/Sgt Rawlinson (Flight Engineer), Master Signaller Stuart (Wireless Operator), Fl/Sgt Macklin (Air Gunner), Sgt Brown (Air Gunner), Sgt Bryant (Air Gunner) (*Jeff Brown*)



A crew line-up, OJ-T and OJ-U behind. Captain, in front is Fl/Lt Smith, officer in peak cap is Fl/Lt Peter (Air Gunner) and 149 Squadron Adjutant. To his left are gunners Holland, Newman and Redfern. Second from left is Sgt Rawlinson (Flight Engineer) (*Jeff Brown*)



Left to Right Fl/Lt Edwards (Captain), F/O Taylor (Co-pilot), Fl/Lt Lowe (Navigator), Nav II Gilbert (Radar Operator), Engineer II Rawlinson (Flight Engineer), Master Signaller Stewart (Wireless Operator), Gunner I Macklin (Air Gunner), Gunner II Brown (Air Gunner), (**Jeff Brown**)



No 55 Air Gunner's Course, RAF Leconfield  
 Back Row: Lewis; 'Wacca' Smith; Ken Farmery; John Forster:  
 Mid Row: Jeff Broome; Mike Davies; Roger Ebrey; Bryan Jordan; K Justa;---?--;---?---;  
 Front Row: Ken Aston;---?---; Don Neudegg; Ian Quskey; Keith Atkinson; Brian Peters; 'Junior' Illingworth. (**John Forster**)

## 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:

David Roy	Alexander Arnold	ASF Marham 44 Squadron Air Gunner
Phil Gerry Ray Bunny Joe Jeff William	Batty Beauvoisin Belsham Bowers Bridge Brown Butt	44 Squadron Signaller 57 Squadron Air Gunner ASF Engine Fitter Marham Crew Chief WF437 Webmaster, RAF Marham Website 149 Squadron Air Gunner 115 Squadron Crew Chief
John Katie Pat Brian Bob Terry Doug John John (Buster) <b>Dave</b> Don	Care Chandler Chandler Channing Cole Collins Cook OBE Cornwall Crabbe <b>Crawford</b> Crossley	149 Squadron Pilot Widow of Vern Chandler, A/C 44-69680 (WF437) Daughter of Vern Chandler, A/C 44-69680 (WF437) 149 Squadron Navigator 149 Squadron Electrical Fitter (WF498) XV Squadron Engine Fitter 44 Squadron Co-Pilot (WF508) 192 Squadron aircrew 207 Squadron Crew Chief 207 Squadron Navigator 90 Squadron Signaller
Bernard Mike Keith	Davenport Davies Dutton	90 Squadron Air Gunner 90 Squadron Air Gunner 90 Squadron Air Gunner
Les Ken Charles Dave John John Ray	Feakes Firth Fox Forster Forster Francis Francis	149 Squadron Air Gunner 44 Squadron Air Gunner Bombardier 42-94052 (WF444) Researching RAF ELINT Squadrons 207 Squadron / WCU Air Gunner 192 Squadron Engine Fitter 57 Squadron Association
Gordon Norman Alan Brian Bob Tony	Galletly Galvin Gamble Gennings Goater Goodsall	44 Squadron Navigator / Bombardier XV Squadron Engine Fitter 90 Squadron Radio Operator Ground Maintenance Hanger XV Squadron Instrument NCO 90 Squadron Air Gunner
Ken Roy Tony John	Harding Hild Hill Hobbs	44 Squadron Signaller Pilot 42-94052 (WF444) Archivist P&EEE Shoeburyness 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)
Paul	Hunt	Flight Engineer 42-65274 with 40 <sup>th</sup> BG (WF442)
Jimmy	James	Engine Fitter
David	Karr	Nephew of William Karr, XV Squadron Air Gunner
J.	Kendal (Ken)	90 Squadron ??
Andrew	Kerzner	Tail Gunner 44-69680 (WF437)
John	King	44 Squadron Flight Engineer
John	Laing	207 Squadron Air Gunner
George	Lane	Navigator 44-69680 (WF437)
Peter	Large	Brother of Edward Large, Pilot 44 Squadron
Pete	Lewis	149 Squadron Engine Fitter
Gerry	Maloney	44 Squadron Navigator/Bomb Aimer (WF508)
Patrick	McGrath	115 Squadron Pilot
P.	McLaughlin	Engineering Officer, Pyote Texas
Peter	Morrey	57 / 115 Squadron Air Gunner
Mo	Mowbrey	57 Squadron Air Gunner
<b>Don</b>	<b>Neudegg</b>	Air Gunner
Brian	O'Riordan	192 Squadron Ground crew
Ralph	Painting	57 / 192 Squadron Flight Engineer
Tom	Pawson	35 Squadron Signaller
Harry	Rickwood	149 Squadron Electrical Fitter
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
<b>Sheelah</b>	<b>Sloane</b>	Daughter of Sqd Ldr W Sloane (OC 90 Sqdn)
Steve	Smisek	Son of A/C of City of San Francisco (K-29, 330 <sup>th</sup> Bomb Group)
Joe	Somerville	Engine Fitter Marham
Derek	Stanley	57 Squadron radio Engineer
Jim	Stanley	
Bill	Stevenson	35 / 635 Squadron Association
<b>Harry</b>	<b>Stoneham</b>	44 Squadron / A.S.F. Engine Fitter
Albert	Urquhart	Left Gunner K-39, 330 <sup>th</sup> Bomb Group
Colin	Williams	XV Squadron Navigator / Bombardier
Robert	Willman	A/C 42-93976 (WF440)
Charlie	Woolford	90 Squadron