



# RAF Elsham Wolds Association

*Looking to the future, remembering the past*



## News Archive 2015/ 2016

(For Current Updates, please refer to [Latest News](#))

*NB: Content below is 'redacted' to omit "routine items" (e.g. Newsletter despatch)*

### **2017 Diaries (15 December 2016)**

Want to be sure of keeping those important appointments and having other vital information at your fingertips? The answer might lie in purchasing (at least!) one of our sumptuous EWA Diaries, if you have not already done so. These are available at [the very reasonable - Ed] cost of £6 + £1.20 UK postage. For details please see Page 13 of Newsletter 50 OR contact The Editor.

### **IBCC Update (13 December 2016)**

Works on site continues to progress well. Most of the steel structure for the Chadwick Visitor Centre has been erected and the sub surface laid. Car parks have also been laid out and the Construction Team have made up the time lost during the severe weather that blasted the site in November. –

### **Appeal for Info**

Lancaster W4787, flown by Fl Lt John Colin McIntosh Rose DFC, RAAF (always known by his second name), crashed on 21 December 1942, en-route to Munich. The organisers of a ceremony likely to take place in August 2017 at Maubeuge, Northern France, are keen to find out information or contact descendants of the crew. Other members were:- Sgt Frank John Fisher, Flight Engineer; Sgt Gordon Thomas Hawkins, Navigator; Sgt Peter Laird Donald, Air Bomber; Flt Sgt William Edward Ryan, Wireless Operator; Sgt Edward Jack Smith, Mid Upper Gunner and Sgt Frederick Trimmer, Rear Gunner.

The Association has also been contacted by a relative writing a family history, requesting information on Pilot Officer J W Alcorn, from Australia, who was briefly a pilot with 576 Squadron in May and June 1944. The crew were lost without trace on 25 June 1944 on a sortie against the Flers V-Bomb facility .

If you are able to provide any information on either Rose or Alcorn, or anyone in their crews, please contact The Editor.

### **Newsletter 50 (8 December 2016)**

The latest [Landmark ?] edition of our Newsletter will include a very emotive item on one of the "Twenty Men" who trained with Navigator Don Charlwood (one of the first to complete a 'Tour' at Elsham); the 75th Anniversary of the poem High Flight; updates on the IBCC, BBMF and Lincolnshire's 'other Lanc', in addition to the usual features on Member visits, news of the Memorial Room and book reviews, including one written by our President.

### **Elsham Crew Musical Tribute (Nov. 2016)**

In 1996, folk singer John McAllister composed a song in memory of his uncle: a 103 Squadron Bomb Aimer, killed on the Nuremberg Raid, after whom he was named. Thus, The Ballad of John Doyle was born. Of the seven crew members only Mid Upper Gunner, Sgt Frank Fealy, from Leeds, survived.

Last year, Frank Fealy's nephew, Michael Barber, contacted John, having picked up on 'The Ballad'. Mike had collated all the family letters written whilst Frank was PoW and trying to establish the fate of his comrades. From these, John found out more about every crew-member and was inspired to write a series of songs for each one. These are now recorded on a single album N For Nan: after the aircraft call sign. Copies are available in CD format, with 50% of the £10 price going to the Association, from our Secretary.

### **2016 Reunion Weekend (1 September 2016)**

The 35th Annual Reunion to take place over consecutive years was a success and provided a memorable August Bank Holiday Weekend for those present. Events started with the traditional Saturday Dinner, preceded by the lighting of candles and one minute's silence in remembrance of those who 'failed to return' during WWII and others no longer with us. Despite slightly lower numbers than usual, a most convivial evening was had by all, judging by the buzz of conversation. One observer reckoned that this was not at a noticeably lower level than preceding years.

In addition to the formal Agenda items, Sunday morning saw the Annual General Meeting generate a wide range of opinions and suggestions on the future of the Association. These will be considered by an augmented Committee and will, hopefully, result in a series of structured proposals on our future direction being put to the Membership. Former Vice-Chair Bob Whymark's promotion to Chair was approved, with David Waldron voted as new Treasurer along with new incumbent, Paul Mellor, to the vacant Vice-Chair role. It was agreed that President, Gordon Mellor, Secretary, Jennie MacKay, and Editor, Keith Macrae, would continue to serve for a further year.

After a buffet lunch, everyone made their way to the Memorial Garden for a service of remembrance, conducted by Canon Peter Hall, with music provided by the Market Rasen Band. This was followed by a flypast from one of the BBMF Spitfires - a substitution for the unserviceable Avro Lancaster, which seems to be beset by yet more problems.

To end the weekend, musical entertainment was provided at our Sunday Supper by professional vocalist, Jayne Darling (from Get Happy Entertainment), who performed a series of 1920s/ 30s swing and big band 'standards' before concluding with a medley of wartime songs. Those present were suitably impressed with one of the best singers we have had the pleasure of booking. Catering throughout the weekend was provided by Chris Sharpe and her team from Your Chef Ltd.

Sincere thanks are also due to the ATC Cadets from 866 (Immingham) Squadron and all those who helped decorate the Village Hall, lent equipment, assisted with washing up and other tasks, including furniture moving. As always, none of this would have happened without the tireless organisation of our Secretary.

### **International Bomber Command Centre (30 August 2016)**

In June, IBCC Director, Nicky Barr, thanked the Association for its continuing support. To date, this has mainly been in the form of publicity via the Newsletter and other means. Recently the Association made a donation to the IBCC, as proposed and agreed at the 2015 AGM. So there is something tangible to show for this, an engraved paving stone in the Ribbon of Remembrance, outside the Chadwick (Visitor) Centre, has been purchased. The stone will commemorate all who were based at Elsham Wolds and act as a reminder of this to future generations. After much deliberation by the Committee, the wording will be:-

**FOR ALL WHO SERVED  
AT RAF ELSHAM WOLDS  
103 & 576 SQUADRONS**

Nicky Barr also confirmed that, "Construction is due to start in early July and, with a 42 week works programme, we are on course to open the centre at the end of June next year."

### **Reunion of Giants (30 November 2015)**

The documentary about the UK Tour of the last two flying Avro Lancasters in Summer 2014 had its UK Premier at Woodhall Spa this month and, although TV screenings have yet to be confirmed, is now available for purchase as detailed in Newsletter 47.

### **IBCC Memorial Spire (12 October 2015)**

On Friday 2 October 2015, a ceremony was held to unveil the Spire Memorial and was hosted by TV Presenter, Dan Snow. This included a series of flypasts by current and historic RAF aircraft including the BBMF Dakota and Avro Vulcan XH558, making one of its last public appearances before becoming a ground exhibit. The site remains closed, except for IBCC organised tours on selected dates.

### **Reunion of Giants (14 August 2015)**

The Suddenly SeeMore Productions film about the 2014 UK Tour of the last two flying Avro Lancasters is in the final stages of post-production. Initial release will be on Worldwide TV set to be followed by availability on DVD/ Blue Ray (in all Broadcast Formats), although Executive Producer, Morgan Iliott, was unable to confirm a Release Date, when recently contacted by the Association. A Trailer can be seen on the website of the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum, owners of Lancaster 'Vera' which journeyed across the Atlantic Ocean to join the only other airworthy Lancaster, flown by the RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. The Trailer is also available for viewing on YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5O12rem6d3g>

### **International Bomber Command Centre (14 August 2015)**

This admirable project is now making amazingly good progress and the web site they have produced (see below) is quite excellent.

Work on the recently redesigned Chadwick Visitor Centre commenced at site on 16 March 2015 and is progressing well, despite further Roman remains being found slightly later. The Memorial Spire, which will be surrounded by panels recording the names of all 25, 611 airmen who failed to return to their Lincolnshire bases, was delivered to site on two low loaders accompanied by a 72 tonne crane on the morning of Sunday 10 May. The sections were lifted into place throughout the day, so by that evening the Spire was visible from across the area. Work is continuing on finishing the Memorial (spot welding for example) and on the installation of the paving and founding of the Memorial Walls.

The engraved walls will be completed for installation by the end of September, prior to the official Unveiling Ceremony on the 2nd October. Any Members who have expressed an interest in attending the inauguration should have received Invitations by now. Any difficulties should be advised by contacting The Editor, who is co-ordinating applications on behalf of the Association.