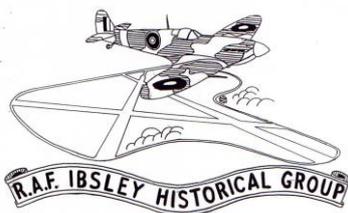


R.A.F. IBSLEY HISTORICAL GROUP

Patron: Stephen Young, Lord of Westbury and Waxham
President: Shirley Simmonds, MTC Driver, Ibsley, 1941
Vice President: Roy Chapman, R.A.F. Ibsley (Sopley) 1947



NEWSLETTER

No. 90

January 2015

BEST WISHES TO ALL FOR 2015

The first event of the year will again be

ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE RINGWOOD PARISH CHURCH – SUNDAY 15th FEBRUARY, 2.30 p.m.

This year the date 15th February marks the 74th Anniversary of when R.A.F. Ibsley became an operational airfield in 1941, when No. 32 Hurricane Squadron arrived at Ibsley under the Command of Squadron Leader Mike Crossley. It was the only Hurricane squadron to be based here. They lost two Czechoslovakian pilots in tragic accidents soon after arriving at Ibsley. On 21st February Sgt. Pilot Vaclav Skrivenek was killed when his aircraft crashed on to properties in St. Clements Road, Bournemouth, and on 9th March Sgt. Vladamir Kyselo's Hurricane spun into the ground alongside the A338 at Blashford. They are both buried, side by side, in the War Graves section of Ringwood Cemetery.

The Hyde Training Band will provide music before, during and after the Service. Standards of ex-Service organisations will be paraded. Age is now taking its toll but we hope as many members as are able will make the effort to attend. Should there be any really severe wintry weather on the day please telephone Secretary Vera (01425 474026) after mid-day when any decision as to whether the service may have to be cancelled will be made shortly before this time.

Can you help please? We really do need a bit of help on the day, from about 1.45 p.m. This involves putting out tables and chairs in the Church rooms for after service refreshments, welcoming people to the church and showing some to their pews. Brenda Dow has kindly offered to help serve tea, coffee and biscuits but she really cannot do this on her own. Please ring Secretary if you can give us a hand. We hope to enlist a few cadets from the local ATC but at the time of putting this Newsletter together we do not know whether they are available.

DECEMBER 2014 GROUP MEETING

This was held at Group Secretary Vera's home when seven members came along and had an interesting afternoon. Committee member Terry Wallis brought along his laptop computer and slides were projected from this of bits and pieces concerning R.A.F. Ibsley which form part of his simulator programme featuring Ibsley airfield. The latest slide which took Terry many hours to put together featured the 'As You Like It Motel' alongside the A338 road at North Gorley, the name by which it was known during the War, when it was used as the Station Hospital and Dentistry. Such great detail which even included two wartime ambulances outside the main building. Nibbles included mince pies, sausage or cheese rolls, pringles and chocolates. Coffee or tea was served. A most enjoyable afternoon.

Excerpts from a pamphlet and leaflet sent to us by

GROUP MEMBER SHEILA DOOLEY

The Royal Air Force Association Remembrance Garden

As part of our pledge to remember with pride and gratitude the lives of all members of the RAF family, the Royal Air Force Association has created a Remembrance Garden at the National Arboretum in Alrewas, Staffordshire. The garden is dedicated to all those who selflessly dedicated their lives to their country. The focal point of the garden is a beautiful statue of the RAF Association's 'Eagle on the Globe' emblem, standing on a black marble plinth bearing the dedication:-



"In friendship and in service one to another, we are pledged to keep alive the memory of those of all nations who died in the Royal Air Force and in the Air Forces of the Commonwealth. In their name we give ourselves to this noble cause. Proudly and thankfully we will remember them".

Sheila Dooley's brother, Sergeant Pilot A. E. 'Teddy' Joyce, served with No. 234 Squadron who came to Ibsley in November 1941. A few weeks later, while on a Circus operation, 30th December, he was lost and posted missing. He had parachuted from his plane, was wounded, taken Prisoner of War and spent time in Stalag Luft III. The first news, heard by Teddy Joyce's parents, was in a broadcast by "Lord Haw Haw". The official confirmation came later. Could it have been because Sgt. Pilot A.E. "Teddy" Joyce had the same surname as "Lord Haw Haw" (William Joyce) that the information was broadcast. In attempting to escape from Stalag Luft III, in June 1943, he was shot and mortally wounded. He is buried in Poznan (Polish) Military Cemetery. At the moment the Group's Commemorative Plaque is the only place in this country where her brother Teddy's name is recorded.

Now, Sheila and her sister, Pat Marrable (who has visited the Remembrance Garden at Alrewas) are to have a Remembrance Stone placed there. A single page leaflet accompanying the detailed pamphlet, states *'For a suggested donation of £250. a 200mm x 200mm Remembrance Stone commemorating an individual, group or organisation can be laid alongside the pathway which leads to the garden and around the central feature. The grey Zephyr stone will feature an inscription set in stainless steel, headed with the RAF Association Wings emblem, to compliment the design of the central feature. To ensure uniformity, the inscription for an individual will comprise the name of the person, without rank, squadron or personal message. Where space allows, recognised abbreviations of appropriate decorations, such as DFC, OBE etc. can be included after the name'*.

In a phone call Sheila said they have covered the cost, the requested wording has been approved and the Remembrance Stone is now being made. It will have the RAF Association Wings at the top, and three lines of 16 characters below, 1) Teddy's name, 2) RAF Ibsley, 3) Historical Group. It should be in position, hopefully, for us to include a photo in our next Newsletter. Sheila and Pat will receive an invitation to Alrewas to view it. We thank them for putting the Group's name on the Remembrance Stone to their brother Teddy.

From Jennifer Dexter's 2014 Christmas letter to Group Secretary

Jennifer is the daughter of Squadron Leader Frank Howell, D.F.C., Commanding Officer No. 118 Squadron, Ibsley from April to October 1941. In her annual letter she writes of two events she attended in 2014. The first concerns two 118 Squadron pilots lost on 6th April during the time when the squadron was based at Filton, where it was formed on 20th February 1941. Her father Frank Howell was killed in a tragic accident at R.A.F. Odiham in 1948, a few months before Jennifer was born. She has done much research into his time in the R.A.F.

“In September I went to the Dedication of Memorial, at Seagry Wiltshire, to Flying Officer John Brewster and Pilot Officer Harold A. Williams both of 118 Squadron. They both died when they collided in mid air in 1941. Dad was their CO and was at their burial in 1941 so I went to this Service as his representative. The Service was attended by over 500 people and it ended with a Hornet Moth flypast and an amazing Spitfire display.

In October I went to Dartford to help celebrate the hundredth birthday of a fantastic chap called Albert. We met at a Spitfire Society meeting, where he was giving a talk about Changi, where my Dad was a prisoner. Albert helped liberate Changi but never actually met my Dad. We have kept in touch ever since and meet up on various occasions.”

We have invited Jennifer to lay the Poppy Wreath at this year's Memorial Service, something she says will be an honour to do.

RAF Bawdsey article in October Newsletter

CORRECTION: Don Blissett pointed out to me that I had typed 'Chair' instead of Chain in a sentence in the article he had contributed. It should have read:- 'Bawdsey Manor, dating from 1886, was taken over by the Air Ministry in March 1936 for the development of the Chain Home (CH) RDF radar system. Apologies Don.

The Non Stops Concert Party

A story from 98 year old Betty Hockey a founder member of our Group in 1992 and now a Life Member.

“I was living in Bournemouth when war broke out and advertised in the local Daily Echo for people to join a concert party with me so that we could entertain the troops. I received a number of responses and the party included sixteen people with differing talents. We called ourselves The Non Stops. This was because we never had any intervals in our shows because if we did the boys would go to the bar and never come back! We rehearsed at a local hall and went around all the various local wartime camps asking if they would like a concert party. We started in 1940 and worked together until 1948. By this time TV was making its mark and theatre was dying so we wanted to go out with a bang. All those who were part of the concert party would have liked to join the forces but for varying reasons were unable to do so.

We all had wartime jobs during the day (I worked in the War Office in Manor Road, Bournemouth) and were at the camps by 7.30 p.m. to do our show. I was the Can-Can dancer which was frowned on in those days. I remember one occasion when the Entertainments Officer was told to apologise to me for saying that it wasn't right for the troops to watch me Can-Can dance. We dressed in any clothes we could find and relied on goodwill to finance the shows. We were limited in the materials we could get because of wartime rationing. I also used to do the seven veils and a fan dance but I lost the veils and feathers so could no longer do it. Day to day during the War everyone pulled together; and if there was a wedding in the street each person living there would give a spoonful of sugar from their ration.

Bournemouth got hit with some bombs and the local department store, Beales, was badly hit. Lots of the boys were lost when the Metropole Hotel at the Lansdowne was bombed and I remember helping to dig out bodies as fast as I could and then ferrying them to the mortuary in Castle Lane.

One concert we did was in a sealed camp just before D-Day, for the boys who were waiting to go to France. Our party were not supposed to be in the camp and in retrospect if we had realised the scale of the invasion and the damage we could have done by being in this sealed camp, then we wouldn't have gone there.

The most poignant memory I have is how on D-Day eve we were allowed to do a show in a marquee and there were tanks, trucks and aircrews coming and going all evening. We sang the National anthems at the beginning of the evening instead of the end. All the troops had tears falling down their faces and the air was electric. They all sang their hearts out. The next morning we heard about D-day on the radio and realised that many who saw our show were dead. We hoped that they went down singing.

Blandford Camp (Dorset) was the main camp for the American soldiers. There were five

hospitals on site and it was mostly under canvas. We went there the day after D-day and there were over one hundred stretchers in the camp with soldiers being cared for. The way they coped was incredible. Staff and patients created a beautiful Memorial Park in 1944 with whitewashed stones and it is still looked after by two soldiers to this day.

A few years after the War finished, quite by chance Betty came upon the dear little hut that served as the 'Theatre' at Ibsley, and ventured inside. Gone were the doors and windows, but right in the middle of the derelict Dressing Room stood a wicker skip, simply full of costumes. She couldn't believe her eyes and tried to guess WHY it was there after so long, or nobody had taken it. It was certainly an asset in providing lovely costumes for the Non-Stops show, especially as clothes rationing was still in being. Getting costumes was one of our biggest problems and we had to rely on Grannie's attics etc, but we were always known as the best dressed Concert Party around.

Ibsley brings back so many memories for me and I still hold lots of Forces Signatures taken over the years. May Ibsley always remain in peoples' memories and continue to keep alive the part it played in World War II. I know it will for me. *Betty Hockey, The Can-Can Dancer.*

DATES FOR 2015

The Group's Committee will be discussing dates for Group meetings in March and these and venues will be given in the April Newsletter. They are normally held on the third Tuesday in a month. Two dates for your diary for the time being.

AUGUST 1st and 2nd

ANNUAL EXHIBITION IN THE WARTIME HUT AT BROOKLANDS FARM

From 10.30 a.m. each day.

TUESDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 7.30 P.M.

2014/2015 SUBSCRIPTIONS: There are just a handful of members who have not renewed their subscriptions for the current year. You should have a blue Membership Card if you have paid. If you haven't and wish to continue receiving Newsletters, either by post or e-mail then please send payment to Membership Secretary Don Blissett, address on heading of this Newsletter. Likewise if you do not wish to renew membership, please also notify Don so that records can be kept up to date.

BY-GONE DAYS 2015 - SATURDAY 1st and SUNDAY 2nd AUGUST

This will have all the usual attractions, and probably new ones too, including Military vehicles, Stationary Engines, Cars, Tractors, Motor Cycles, and numerous other invited displays. Aircraft displays will, no doubt, be flying over the event on both days. More details nearer the time.

Joint Organiser with Campbell Sampson, Elaine Micklewright tells us that some £20,000 was raised at the 2014 event in aid of Salisbury Hospice, Royal British Legion Women's Section Funds and Alzheimer Society and a few like-minded charities.

R.A.F. IBSLEY HERITAGE TRUST

will be holding their

2015 RAF IBSLEY REVIVAL - SATURDAY 22nd AUGUST - MOYLES COURT SCHOOL

The Group has been invited to join them at Moyles Court and bring an exhibition to the event, to help tell the story of Ibsley. We have accepted their invitation and Chairman Bill Dow and Vice-Chairman Iain Barnes will take material from the Annual Exhibition to display. More details later.

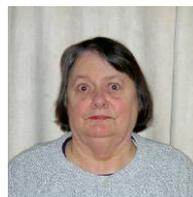
OFFICERS OF THE HISTORICAL GROUP



Bill Dow
Chairman



Iain Barnes
Vice-Chairman



Vera Smith
Hon. Secretary

Hon. Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Committee members in April Newsletter, hopefully, two photos needed.