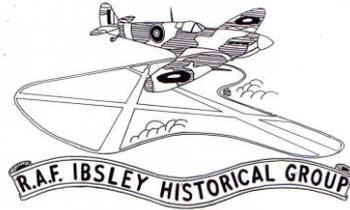


R.A.F. IBSLEY HISTORICAL GROUP

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

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NEWSLETTER

No. 93

October 2015

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, THURSDAY 17th SEPTEMBER

We begin with apologies to any member who turned up at Ibsley Village Hall on September 15th on which date the meeting was originally scheduled to take place. There should have been notices and leaflets about this at the August Exhibition. All members within travelling distance were notified, by Secretary Vera, of the change of date either by letter or e-mail at the beginning of September.

The A.G.M. itself was a successful one, with some new faces present this year including Junior member Mark Jones. We were also able to elect virtually a full Committee, with just one vacancy which, in all probability the Committee will be able to fill by co-option during the coming months.

Before the business of the meeting a short silence was observed in Memory of those who served at Ibsley during WWII and had passed away during the last year, namely Kenneth Bracey, 310 Czech Squadron, 1943/44, and Kenneth Fritz, 8th U.S.A.A.F., 1st Fighter Group, 71 Squadron, also Group member Doug Crawford.

This was followed by a short break before the business of the meeting for those present to peruse the Group Rules Revision to be considered under an Agenda item later.

There were some fourteen apologies received from members, including an e-mail from members Anthony Howard-Williams regarding his eldest son Dominic, and I quote from this; *"I thought I would let you know that our son Dominic is reading the lesson at the Battle of Britain Thanksgiving and Re-Dedication Service at Westminster Abbey on Sunday 20th September at 11.00am, and I am inordinately proud of him! This will be in the presence of The Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall and senior members of HM Government. As you know, he is currently at RAF Cranwell and will be graduating on 24th September. He has presumably been chosen due to his RAF ancestry, which includes his grandfather, 2 great-grandfathers and a great-uncle who was "One of The Few". Plt. Off. Peter Howard-Williams was at Ibsley with No. 118 Squadron 1941/42, and took part in the filming of 'The First of the Few'.*

Minutes of the 2014 A.G.M. having been handed out were then approved as being a correct record.

In his report Chairman Bill Dow expressed thanks to the Committee for all their efforts during the past year, mentioning all the work Secretary Vera puts in and allowing the use of her home for Committee and other meetings to be held there.

Secretary thanked Bill for his report and endorsed his thanks to the Committee and members who had helped in any way during the year. Their help was invaluable.

Graham Steele Hon. Treasurer circulated copies of the accounts which showed the Group to be in a healthy financial position. These were adopted and Graham was thanked for his efficient work as our Treasurer.

Hon. Membership Secretary Don Blissett said membership had remained steady throughout the year although one or two members had passed away but we had welcomed two new members, Brian Currie and Mark Bentinck.

Annual Subscriptions were the next item on the Agenda. Hon. Secretary Vera said she felt we should reduce the Membership Fee as we do not hold many meetings now, the Newsletter is down to four pages on two sheets of A4 paper, and also many distant members are unable to attend any events. She felt the Annual Subscription should be reduced to £5.00 and if we can find good speakers, which she thought we could, then members who attend should pay an entrance fee of £2.00, whereas currently, for members, there is no charge. She also felt we should publicise any meetings and events more. This was approved, by a show of hands. **The reduced membership fee will not come into effect until 1st September 2016**, but the entrance charge for any meetings, where there is a speaker and held in a hall, comes into effect from now.

Group Rules were then considered. These were discussed at length and, subject to slight amendment by the Committee at their next meeting, were approved on a proposal by David Hoskins, seconded by Roy Philpott, with a overwhelming show of hands in favour from those present. Hopefully, a copy will accompany this Newsletter, if not it will be sent in January.

Before the election of the new Committee it was reported that Iain Barnes our Vice-Chairman had resigned from the Committee in August for personal reasons, and did not seek re-election. He has done sterling work in gathering stories from some of those who served at Ibsley, including Americans, and if he can get permission will let us have a few for future Newsletters. Iain was thanked for his efforts in a letter and thanks were also expressed at the A.G.M.

Officers and Committee elected were: Officers: Chairman - Bill Dow; Vice-Chairman – John Sturgess; Hon. Secretary – Vera Smith; Hon. Treasurer – Graham Steele;. Committee: Hon. Membership Secretary – Don Blissett, Roly Errington, Graham Jones, Alan Lewendon, Terry Wallis, with one vacancy which can be filled by co-option of the Committee.

Grateful thanks to Brenda Dow for serving refreshments.

ANNUAL EXHIBITION AT THE FINAL BY-GONE DAYS

The 25th Anniversary of By-Gone Days, marked the end of of this popular event where from 1992 the R.A.F. Ibsley Historical Group held its Annual Exhibition in one of the wartime huts still standing at Brooklands Farm. During this time organisers Elaine Micklewright and Campbell Sampson have raised hundreds of thousands of pound for charity. This event will be sorely missed.

I didn't get sight of a By-Gone Days programme but did hear there were flying displays although the Ibsley Spitfire was unable to come as scheduled on the Saturday. A replacement Spitfire was due to arrive from Biggin Hill at 4.30 p.m. on Saturday but unfortunately this had a crash that day at Biggin Hill. Crowds weren't disappointed another came just an hour late 5.30 p.m.

There is not much I can say about this year's Ibsley Exhibition as I was unable to be there. I understand one room was taken up with a Fighter Plotter demonstration team, another consisted of Heritage Trust with some Group memorabilia and pictures/photos. In the third room, which over the years was the Hospitality Room there was some Historical Group information on panels, and Terry Wallis with his flight simulator. I had a few comments after the event, especially on the demise of the Hospitality Room where ex-Ibsley comrades knew where they could meet up with one another, one said he knew his friends were at By-Gone Days but couldn't find them in the large crowds, another even thought it was the end of the Historical Group. That certainly isn't the case and I am almost certain the Historical Group will have something somewhere on 6th and 7th August next year, but it will not be at Brooklands Farm. More when we have something definite.

CHRISTMAS AFTERNOON GET TOGETHER THURSDAY 17th DECEMBER – 2.30 till 4 p.m.

This will be at Secretary Vera's home, Norden, Mockbeggar Lane, Ibsley, BH24 3PR. so do come long if you can. There will be Mince Pies, chocolates, savouries and biscuits, tea or coffee. Hopefully something of interest on Ibsley too. Hope the weather will be kind, bt please phone me 01425 474026 if in any doubt, takes me a while to answer. Park in the drive or on the road outside.

FLYING OFFICER DOMINIC HOWARD-WILLIAMS SON OF GROUP MEMBERS ANTHONY AND JAN HOWARD-WILLIAMS READS LESSON AT 75TH BATTLE OF BRITAIN MEMORIAL SERVICE IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY



Flying Officer Dominic Howard-Williams, the great-nephew of Ibsley 118 Squadron pilot Peter Howard-Williams and grandson of 604 pilot Jeremy Howard-Williams, had a busy week in September. On the 20th he

was chosen to read the first lesson at the Battle of Britain 75th Anniversary Service in Westminster Abbey in the presence of HRH Prince Charles and senior members of the Government and the armed services. This was broadcast that morning on BBC1 with a highlights edition in the early evening, introduced by Kirsty Young. His boss, Air Chief Marshall Sir Andrew Pulford read the second lesson! Then 4 days later on 24th he graduated from RAFC Cranwell in a parade which included a fast pass by a Tornado from RAF Marham and a Chinook from RAF Odiham. He is now on a week's leave prior to posting and flying training, which starts in January. In addition to the above, his RAF ancestry includes 2 great-grandfathers: Air Vice Marshall FF Inglis and Air Commodore E. Howard-Williams plus numerous officers by marriage. *By Anthony Howard-Williams., 26.9.15.*

Following the Service I received several phone calls saying how well Dominic read and an e-mail from Jennifer Dexter who I had notified beforehand that he would be reading, and whose father Squadron Leader Frank Howell, D.F.C., served at Ibsley with No. 118 Squadron, which I reproduce here "Many thanks, I was there with three of my family, it was a great day and Dominic read brilliantly, Dad must be very proud. Jennifer."

I feel sure we will follow Dominic's R.A.F. career with interest and, hopefully, be able to keep you up to date in future Newsletters.

KENNETH BRACEY



In our July Newsletter we told of the passing of Kenneth Bracey. We have now received further information and a photograph from his family, so here are excerpts from this. In 1942 Ken volunteered for ground crew in the R.A.F. and

completed his training in Blackpool. All the newly trained personnel were sent overseas but Ken was posted to Exeter as his brother Mervyn had "claimed" him under the sibling rule. Ken was now in 310 Czech Squadron operating Spitfires. He was stationed up in Scotland (North of John O'Groats). 310 came to Ibsley on 1st September 1943 and stayed until 20 February 1944. In the Spring of 1944 Ken was stationed at Needs Oar Point near Southampton with 193 Squadron operating Typhoons as part of the 2nd Tactical Air Force. Within a couple of weeks of the D-Day landings he was operating from a temporary airstrip in Normandy, often shelled by German artillery especially when a cloud of dust was sent up by a Typhoon taking off or landing. The Typhoon Squadrons were always moving, following the Front Line, sometimes as close as a few miles. So Ken followed through France, Belgium, Netherlands and into Germany. In Antwerp in October 1944 Ken survived a V2 rocket attack. The nearby Hawker Typhoon was destroyed killing six of his comrades. Ken was blown off the Typhoon on which he was working and suffered concussion and temporary hearing loss. He said he came round on the floor with cotton wool coming down around him. The cotton wool material was used in V2s to keep the fuel stable. When Germany surrendered Ken found himself in Northern Germany. A Disarming Wing was formed to destroy German military equipment and aircraft. Ken was one of about 25 RAF chaps in charge of about 200 German Luftwaffe personnel. Whilst based there Ken taught himself to drive a heavy German recovery vehicle and was towing around Stukas, Dorniers and Junkers. Ken was demobbed in 1947. In 1950 he married Peggy, they had three children, but after she passed away in 2002 he kept himself busy with several interests including our Historical Group.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

These fell due on 1st September. The rate for 2015-2016 remains unchanged, i.e. Single Adult £7.50; Joint Membership £14.00; Junior Membership (14-18 years) £4.00; Under 14 Free.

Those members who renewed at the Exhibition or have already sent their subscriptions to Membership Secretary, Don Blissett will find their 2015/16 Membership Card (yellow this year) enclosed with this Newsletter. Members who have not yet renewed will find a Renewal Slip and addressed envelope (which will need a stamp) to send to Don. Please if anyone is not renewing, changes address, or is a relative or carer of a member who has passed away, then please let us know so that our records can be updated.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY 2016 ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE SUNDAY 21st FEBRUARY RINGWOOD PARISH CHURCH, 2.30 p.m.

More details in January Newsletter

Hyde Training Band are being invited to provide music again for the service.

Willis Walling and Pat Marrable

It is with great sadness that we have to announce the passing of two of our friends and Group members, both in September. There will be obituaries on them in our January Newsletter. Wally served with U.S.A.A.F. at both Bisterne and Ibsley in 1944, and was an Honorary Life Member of the Group. His last visit was in 2009 when he came to unveil, jointly with Group President Shirley Simmonds, the Ibsley Roll of Honour on the Commemorative Plaque. My thanks to his daughter Susi who has sent me an article, on Wally from his local American newspaper, and also a copy photograph in uniform. Pat's brother Sgt. Teddy Joyce was a pilot with 234 Squadron at Ibsley in 1942. He was shot down, taken prisoner, was in Stalag Luft III and when trying to escape in June 1943 was shot and mortally wounded. He is buried in Poznan, Poland. Condolences were sent to relatives of both. A donation cheque for the Royal British Legion has been sent in Memory of Pat.

ELLINGHAM AND DISTRICT ROYAL BRITISH LEGION WOMEN'S SECTION

The 2015 annual 'We Will Remember Them' dedication at the R.A.F. Memorial In Ellingham Drove will take place at 10.45 a.m. on Wednesday 11th November. It is hoped some local members of our Group will be able to attend this Remembrance event.

HOME FRONT HERITAGE WEEKEND 8th – 10th JULY 2016

Revd. Canon Stuart Holt, B.Ed, Priest in Charge of The Parish of Fawley has written to us regarding an exciting large community event they are planning for July 2016.. He says the event is to explore the stories around the role of the New Forest during the Second World War and in particular during the build up to and launch of D-Day 1944. The Parish of Fawley has a great deal of heritage to share with visitors and All Saints Church is already a repository for the flags and standards of several of the Allied Nations whose servicemen and women were stationed here during the conflict. In turn they left us a legacy through their interaction with the local community.

It is planned to invite Embassy representatives from several countries including Poland, Canada and America as well as serving members of the Armed Forces all of whom will join in an act of remembrance and a parade of the laid up standards as part of the event. Subject to prevailing legislation it is also hoped to have ceremonial flypasts of aircraft.

There will be a large camp site which can accommodate tents and caravans for visitors to the event. The Oil Refinery will also be involved telling the story of its own role in the war effort.

Your Secretary has spoken to Revd. Canon Stuart Holt and provisionally accepted his kind invitation for our Group to take part. We hope to be able to use our projector to show many of the photos, especially of U.S.A.A.F. that we have on CDs, and maybe take a few of our small display boards. Early notice gives us time for thought. I hope to be there myself. More information hopefully in January Newsletter.

Early I know, but the way time seems to fly these days, the Group's Officers and Committee send

Best wishes to you all for Christmas and the New Year