



# 57 / 630 Squadrons' Association

*President Group Captain: David Houghton  
Vice President: Group Captain Tony Gunby*

**Secretary: Gordon Lodge**



## Newsletter 2015



### Centenary Badge

Designed by Flying Officer Mullins 57 (R) Squadron

## In Memoriam

Unfortunately during the year the Association has lost a number of Members who have all supported the Reunions for many years. In particular, for me personally, Ted Wilcock and Betty Lockett who, when Diana and I, joined made us most welcome. John Maunsell was the Assoc. Treasurer for many years and was a joy to work with over that time. Sir Michael Beetham, Marshal of the R.A.F. who flew with 57 during WW2 and was a great supporter of the Assoc. and instrumental in the reforming of the Squadron. Edna Ely, who many Members will have known. Edna and her husband ,Harry, lived in East Kirkby all their lives and came to know many of those serving at East Kirkby. The records they kept of people they knew, and had contact with post war, was of great help in locating those who came to form the Association. Finally, Will Chatterton a great supporter of the Association from the onset and who was well known by many members and will be sadly missed.

Sir Michael Beetham  
Doug Jennings  
John Lumsden  
Douglas Marsh  
Edna Ely

Tom Douthwaite  
John Johnson  
John Maunsell  
Muriel Nelson  
Will Chatterton

Leslie Gillard  
Betty Lockett  
Bill McCrea  
Ted Wilcock

**Gordon Lodge**

## President's Piece

When this edition of our annual Association Newsletter lands on door mat or hits your in-box, 2016 will be upon us and we hopefully may have a moment or two to pause and reflect on how events in 2015 have continued to shape the evolution of the RAF. As we saw with the Parliamentary vote to allow the UK to join Coalition action against Daesh terrorists in Syria rather than being limited to taking such action just in Iraq, the use of RAF airpower in its many guises continues to be the first 'golf club' politicians and military strategists reach for.

Arguably, since the inception of the RFC/RNAS and the formation of the RAF this has often been the case. Of course, in any 'joined-up' strategy, air power's role is to support combined operations on land, at sea and in the air, but the inherent flexibility, capabilities and global reach of air power seems to indicate that its importance in future conflicts will only increase, even as the technology the RAF uses continues to evolve.

To employ the incredible capabilities the RAF now possesses though requires the right people with the right mentality supported by the right training, and 57 Squadron's pivotal role in training the next generation of RAF pilots is critical to the future success of the RAF's endeavours. Strangely though, whenever I have the privilege to meet the young men and women who are training with 57 Squadron, I am struck by how similar in outlook they are to their illustrious predecessors.

That link between past and present will be particularly strong later this year when we mark the 100th Anniversary of the formation on 8 June 1916 of 57 Squadron. I am delighted to be able to announce that the current OC 57 Squadron has kindly invited Association Members to join current Members of 57 Squadron at a special Dining-In Night at RAF Cranwell on 3 June 2016 to mark the 100th Anniversary of 57 Squadron and the continuing spirit of 630 Squadron – further details are at **page 33**.

As ever, for those who are unable to attend the Association Reunions or Dining-In Nights, I hope that the information in this Newsletter about the 'goings on' at Woodhall Spa/East Kirkby and on today's 57 Squadron will show that the spirit of 57 Squadron and 630 Squadron remains in robust health.

I end by wishing all Association Members my very best for a peaceful 2016 from the Defence Centre for Languages & Culture, where I am attempting to learn Vietnamese before I am Posted to Hanoi later this year as the UK's Defence Attaché. I look forward to seeing all those who can make it at the Dining-In Night in June 2016 and at the Annual Reunion in July 2016. Until we meet again, my best wishes to you all.

**Group Captain David Houghton**

## Secretary's Note

It is wonderful to see the continued support of both existing and new members. Without question we must be the best supported Assoc. of all the Squadrons and the addition of new members augurs well for the future. Much of the success is due to the excellent venues available to the Assoc. at the Petwood Hotel and Air Field at East Kirkby which is central to both 57 and 630 Squadrons history.

Later in the Newsletter I have written a brief history of the Assoc. and the creation of the Memorial at East Kirkby. We are much indebted to those whose foresight and commitment formed what we now enjoy today. The 2014 Annual Dinner followed the usual format and Speakers with the Annual Accounts being presented and approved in the record time of one minute!!!

Our President and Mike Bracken achieved a record time for the Raffle and a record amount for an auction of memorabilia , see the Annual Accounts. I would like to thank the support received from the Raffle Ticket Teams who are a great help during the evening and are instrumental in the success of the event.

Roy & Jean Nash  
Roz Davis & Marian Long  
Diana Lodge & Clare Gillard

Sunday at East Kirkby, attended by around 250 people followed the usual format with the Service held by our Hon. Chaplain the Rev. Richard Benson . The weather conditions led to the Service being held in the hangar with the Wreaths laid by the 57 Squadron Standard and subsequently moved to the Memorial. The Service was supported by 57 Squadron and their C.O.Squadron Leader Mike Waring.

Our Fly Past by the BBMF had to be changed due to a fire in one of the Lancasters engines however a Hurricane from BBMF proved an excellent replacement.

The Sunday Evening Dinner Dance moved to the Petwood Suite and we were entertained by Heather Marie who proved to be a success and a change from the rather loud groups of the past. This format and Heather Marie have been reserved for 2016.

Next year is a major date for 57 Squadron being their 100 Anniversary which will be celebrated, not only at our Reunion, but at a Dinner at RAF Cranwell. Details are included in the Newsletter with details on how to apply for Cranwell.

During the year Allen Hudson began to run down his involvement as our Historian. Over the years as Secretary his support and commitment have been invaluable to the Assoc., myself and many people who have obtained information about their relatives. During Allens many years in office he compiled an extensive record of 57 and 630 operations and personnel which will prove invaluable to the Assoc. in the future.

Group Captain Wendy Rothery has agreed to become our Historian and I am delighted to welcome Wendy to the role.

Finally with next year being the 100th Anniversary of 57 Squadron the Reunion Dinner takes on a special meaning. Quite a number of Members regularly attend the Sunday at East Kirkby but not the Saturday Dinner. I hope they will consider, if only for 2016 to attend the Dinner.

Many thanks to you all for your support to the Assoc. and I look forward to seeing everyone in 2016.

**Gordon Lodge**

## Squadron News

2015 has been a year of great flux for 57(R) Squadron as the 5 Elementary Flying Training (EFT) Squadrons settled into their new homes. RAFC Cranwell has been our home for just over a year now and RAF Wyton seems a distant, but much missed, memory. Of the personnel that came with me from RAF Wyton all bar two members of those staff have since been replaced. Two notable retirees were Sqn Ldr (Retired) Jim Duckham and Mr Jesse Rahman – both long standing and committed supporters to 57(R) Squadron. The influx of personnel from our nemesis, 16(R) Squadron, was initially unsettling but we have gained some very experienced, skilled and motivated personnel and the squadron is once again in excellent shape.

For the majority of the year we have been down to 70% manning and struggled to achieve the task which, frustratingly, never matched the resource. This was definitely not down to lack of effort with an incredibly busy summer and nearly all of my staff flying above the 'white ticket' or 'contract' flying hours. Throughout the year we flew in excess of 2500 hours, graduated 5 courses of students and developed/trained 4 new A2 (above average) and 3 new B1 Qualified Flying Instructors – more than any other EFT Squadron.

Despite being under resourced we ensured that we did not take our eye off of our standards in order to give the students the best possible start to their flying careers. I am very proud to say that the Squadron achieved the rarest of accolades from Central Flying School Exam Wing, an assessment of 'Excellent'. To maintain such performance standards, against such a challenging backdrop is testimony to the continuation of the 57(R) Squadron ethos and culture which has remained at the Squadron's core ever since its inception on 8 June 1916.

Squadron personnel have not only worked hard but have also proven that they continue to play hard. Numerous squadron personnel have been crowned RAF and in some cases Inter-Service Champions in sports as diverse as athletics to surfing. 57(R) Squadron were the lynch pin of the 2015 indoor Ski Champs and also went on to win the EFT ski team competition. During enforced lulls in flying training for the junior courses the students have kept themselves busy. They have visited Fast-Jet, Multi-Engine and Rotary stations to help inform them on their streaming choices and future career path, experienced Force Development visits to numerous military heritage sites to improve their awareness of military history, spirit and culture and committed themselves to numerous charity events.

With the inclusion of many international (Kuwaiti and Saudi) students in our ranks, we have also had the honour of hosting numerous important visitors including; The High Commissioner of Brunei Major General Khalid Al-Shablan and Major General Al Qarni Commandant KFAA. Such visits underline the important role that 57(R) Squadron continues to fulfil in the International Defence Diplomacy sphere – an extremely important role in the modern UK military. Instructing, developing and mentoring the international students is the most demanding of the tasks that 57(R) Squadron staff face. Pleasingly, those international students that we have sent on to Basic Fast Jet Training on the Tucano have performed well, so clearly we are doing something right!

Plans for the celebration of the Squadron's Centenary are well underway. Regrettably we were unable to fit the event into the busy RAFC Cranwell calendar for the 8 June and instead will be celebrating on the 3 June 2016. Provisional plans are to have an Open Day for guests at 57(R) Squadron with a BBQ and flying displays and then have a Dining-In Night in the evening in the suitably grand setting of College Hall Officers' Mess (venue still to be confirmed). Initial details of how to apply to attend the Dining-In Night are at **page 33**. I hope that as many of you as possible are able to attend what promises to be a suitable celebration of this squadron's great past.

All that remains is for me to thank all my staff both past and present for their enormous efforts over the last 12 months. It is only through their tireless dedication and professionalism that such performance levels have been possible. I'd also like to thank Gp Capt David Houghton and Mr Gordon Lodge for the excellent work that they do in ensuring that the 57 & 630 Squadrons' Association continues to be such a vibrant and active organisation. I look forward to seeing many you throughout what promises to be an eventful year.

**Squadron Leader M Waring**

## Association & Memorial

Following the refurbishment of the Memorial and the Services on Reunion and Remembrance Sundays I thought it would be worthwhile to cover their history. Back in 1975 a former Squadron member, L.E. Tofts wrote to some 100 former members of the Squadrons and arranged for a Reunion to take place. This was held on Sunday 4th May 1975 at East Kirkby Parish Church. The Service was conducted by the Rev. Bob Cave who served at East Kirkby as an electrician during WW 2. Many villagers supported the event.

The Association did not really develop until 1979 when Jerry Monk took the reins and wrote to those attending in 1975 and other names obtained from Harry and Edna Ely, who at the village shop, came into contact with many ground and aircrews. Jerry Monk resurrected the fund, begun in 1975, for the erection and dedication of a Memorial and a Reunion in 1979. The Dinner was held in the Sergeants Mess at R.A.F. Scampton on Saturday 6th October.

Funds for the Memorial came, not only from Members, but the people of East Kirkby. Much of the support was generated by Will and John Chatterton and Harry and Edna Ely.

East Kirkby was changed during the war with the two Squadrons, the population increasing from around 220 to some 2200 and a close relationship developed with the village.

The Memorial was erected on the site of the old Guard House at the entrance to the Airfield.

Dedication of the Memorial took place at 2pm on Sunday 7th October. The Rev. Clifford Knight R.A.F. conducted the Service with The O.C. 57 Squadron giving the Reading and Courtney Grebby, formerly Fire Officer at East Kirkby, giving the Address.



*Wing Commander Roger Betts, then OC 57 Squadron, gives the Reading at the Dedication Ceremony for the 57 & 630 Squadrons' Memorial, ex-RAF East Kirkby, 7 October 1979.*



*O.C. 57 Squadron lays the first wreath*





*Unveiling of the Memorial*

**Gordon Lodge**

## The 1st Office Commanding 57 Squadron – Major L A Pattinson MC RFC

Elsewhere in this year's Association Newsletter, we hear from Squadron Leader Mike Waring, the current Officer Commanding (OC) 57 Squadron about recent events on his Squadron. But, as we look forward to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 57 Squadron on 8 June 2016, it is perhaps timely to look back at the life of the Squadron's first OC – Major Lawrence Arthur Pattinson MC RFC.

Pattinson was born on 8 October 1890 and educated at Cambridge University. Joining the Army at the outbreak of WWI, Pattinson was commissioned in to the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Durham Light Infantry before transferring to The Royal Fusiliers. After gaining his Royal Aero Club (RaeC) pilot's certificate (Number 1242) on 3 April 1915, Pattinson transferred to the Royal flying Corps (RFC) and initially served with 11 Squadron (flying Vickers FB5 aircraft), before becoming OC 57 Squadron on 12 June 1916, just 4 days after the Squadron was formed. Remaining with 57 Squadron until 4 November 1917, Pattinson returned to the UK for a short time before becoming OC 99 Squadron (flying DH9a aircraft) on 11 March 1918.

In an illustrious post-WWI career, Pattinson served in a number of Command and Staff appointments including Station Commander RAF Andover, ADC to His Majesty King George V, AOCinC RAF Flying Training in the early days of WWII and finally Head of the RAF's Training Mission to the Chinese Air Force from late 1942 until he retired on 30 May 1945, by which time Major L A Pattinson MC RFC had become Air Marshal Sir L A Pattinson KBE CB DSO MC DFC MiD RAF.

**Sir** Lawrence Arthur Pattinson KBE CB DSO MC DFC (8 October 1890 – 28 March 1955) was a Royal Air Force officer who became Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Flying Training Command.

Sir Lawrence died on 28 March 1955 at just 64 years old.



*Major L A Pattinson MC RAF (centre) pictured with 57 Squadron's pilots and observers, Boisdinghem, France, November 1917.*

occasions his balloon has been subjected to severe shell fire, but he has invariably carried on his observation work, calm and collected, thereby setting a fine example to other observers, notably on a recent occasion, when his balloon, under heavy fire from a long-range gun, was eventually so badly hit that it commenced to fall. Lieutenant O'Connell continued to give observations until he was forced to descend in a parachute.

Lt. William John Pace.

Since this officer joined his squadron in March last he has carried out five photographic reconnaissances and taken part in thirty-two bombing raids. His work has been distinguished throughout by keenness, efficiency and determination. When attacked by hostile planes he has invariably shown coolness and initiative, never hesitating to assist weaker pilots in critical situations. On photographic reconnaissances he has rendered most valuable service.

Major Lawrence Arthur Pattinson, M.C. (R. Fus.).

This officer is not only a capable and most efficient squadron commander, but also an exceptionally fine leader of bombing formations. On the 7th of September he led a combined formation of twenty-two machines; they were attacked by some thirty aircraft, who made the most determined effort to prevent our formation reaching their objective. By skilful leadership and manœuvring Major Pattinson repulsed the attack and dispersed the enemy formation. Leading well over the target excellent results were obtained.  
(M.C. gazetted 3rd June, 1918.)

Lt. William James Pease.

On the night previous to one of our attacks this officer was detailed for a very important duty, which entailed the patrol of a section of our lines. The weather conditions were most adverse, but after two attempts this officer started in dense clouds and rain. Flying by compass he reached his objective, and for three hours patrolled the line. A very fine performance, calling for high courage and perseverance, in face of the difficulties due to weather conditions.

Lt. Alan MacMillan Phillips, Sea Patrol.

A very gallant pilot, who displays great determination. During the past month he attacked, with one other machine, ten enemy seaplanes, and destroyed one of them, making four in all, since joining his present squadron in June, 1918. On numerous occasions he has descended to very low altitudes to bomb enemy shipping, and on four occasions he obtained direct hits. Recently he set out to attack a strongly defended enemy post, and, notwithstanding fierce firing from anti-aircraft guns, he set fire to a block of sheds and an enemy coastal motor boat.

Lt. (T./Capt.) Harry Puckle (Leic. R.).

This officer was detailed to lead a reconnaissance patrol of three machines to take photographs of a certain area, an escort of fighting machines being told off as escort.

While waiting for the escort the weather became threatening. Knowing that the photographs were urgently required, Capt. Puckle decided to proceed without the escort. Hostile aircraft was particularly active that day, and the three machines were repeatedly attacked, but in face of strong opposition this officer persevered in his duty and succeeded in taking the photographs required. This is but one example of the intrepid leadership and disregard of danger invariably displayed by this officer.

2nd Lt. Francis James Ralph.

A brave and skilful observer who has taken part in many combats with enemy aircraft, invariably displaying cool courage and presence of mind. On a recent occasion our patrol of eleven machines, after bombing a railway junction, was attacked by fifteen enemy scouts. One of these, which was engaged by this officer's pilot, crumpled and fell. The formation was then attacked by seven Fokkers from above, one of which was shot down by 2nd Lt. Ralph.

Capt. Arthur Clunie Randall.

A daring and skilful airman who during recent operations has accounted for six enemy aeroplanes. He is conspicuous for his determination and devotion to duty.

Lt. Arthur Eden Reed.

On a recent occasion, when on wireless interception duty, this officer attacked two Albatross two-seaters, both of which were destroyed, Lt. Reed shooting down one and his observer the other. On another occasion he attacked two enemy machines, destroying one; the second fled. A bold and skilful airman.

T./Capt. George Thomas Reid (Can. Forestry C.).

A very competent and gallant observer in long-distance bombing raids, in thirteen of which he has been successfully engaged. Capt. Reid displays great skill in selecting the correct altitude for unloading his bombs, and his determination is most marked in all his work.

Lt. Alan Rice-Oxley (Shrops. L.I.).

In company with another machine this officer attacked an enemy formation of fifteen aeroplanes, and promptly destroyed two of them. He then repeatedly attacked the remaining thirteen machines, who were crowding on his companion, and the battle ended in the destruction of six of the enemy and one driven down out of control. Two days afterwards he destroyed two more enemy aircraft. The gallantry displayed by this officer, and that of his companion, Capt. C. E. Howell, in attacking fifteen machines, was of the very highest order.

Capt. Leonard Henry Rochford, D.S.C.

This officer has already been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and Bar for gallantry and devotion to duty—qualities in which he revels. Since the award he has accounted for twelve enemy aircraft—six destroyed and six driven down out of control.

(D.S.C. gazetted 26th April, 1918.)  
(Bar gazetted 7th June, 1918.)

*Supplement to London Gazette, 2 November 1918, confirming the award of an MC (originally Gazetted on 3 June 1918) to Major Pattinson for his actions as OC 57 Squadron and during a raid on 7 September 1917.*

*Group Captain L A Pattinson DSO MC  
DFC MiD RAF, pictured c.1931.*



*Imperial War Museum (IWM) sketch of  
Air Vice-Marshal L A Pattinson CB DSO  
MC DFC MiD RAF from 1939 (Copyright  
IWM).*





*Air Marshal L A Pattinson CB DSO MC DFC MiD RAF, pictured in c.1941 talking to workers near Rugby following the completion of a new flying training airfield.*

Major L A Pattinson MC RFC, later Air Marshal Sir L A Pattinson KBE CBDSO MC DFC MiD RAF – 8 October 1890-28 March 1955.

**Group Captain David Houghton**

## The Sea Shall Not Have Them

During the year we had contact with Des Knock, who lives near Woodhall Spa, and who's father served in RAF Air Sea Rescue. From his research screws of 57 / 630 Squadrons were saved by this Service. The following is an "overview" by Dec Knock.

**Gordon Lodge**

My Father passed away in 2001 and sad to say all I knew was that he served in RAF Air Sea Rescue but little else. This is quite an oft heard story, but his generation was not one to boast or even talk about what they did during the War. To try to make amends, and honour both him and his comrades in ASR I combined his photographs with a picture I created called "The Rescue".

This has been sent to 22 museums and ASR associated places around the UK adding to existing displays and helping to create new ones. One such is at the Yorkshire Air Museum which is unveiling a new display this month. Of course I have also done my best to contribute to the ASR display at LAHC where you may view several pictures in the Wellington Building. These are dedicated to both my Father and all who served in the RAF Air Sea Rescue Service.



It was whilst reading around the ASR subject that I came upon an account of a ditching and rescue in a book called "A Drop in the Ocean". Here I discovered an account of the crew of A-Able, No.57 Sqn. ( Nick Nicklin's crew) and the raid on Wesseling on 21st June 1944. With permission of the publisher (Pen & Sword) I quoted from the book and created an image depicting the Lancaster as she came in to ditch. I felt it was important to have an account that put a human face on both the perils of operations and also surviving the rigours of the cruel sea.

Problems with access to original photographs meant a compromise in quality but I did the best that the technology would allow. However this has resulted in an excellent display and led to contact with family members of the aircrew, which has been most gratifying. This being but one of many stories of ending up in the drink, I am always interested in hearing more. So if any members have accounts or experiences related to Air Sea Rescue I would be very happy to hear from you.

Commercially I create other images of RAF aircraft, many as commissioned works, which aim to capture some of the dynamism and atmosphere of operational flight. I also produce landscapes, mystical, and living history subjects. Of late I have designed the business cards for Janet's Tea Shop in Woodhall Spa, where a few of my pictures reside. I moved to Tattershall 2 years ago and have been experimenting with aviation images since this time, so still learning, but it's always a challenge whose results oft times surprise even myself.

If you wish to know more you will find some examples of past and current work at my website ([www.desknock.co.uk](http://www.desknock.co.uk)) through which you may make contact.

**D.R.Knock BSc. ABIPP. ARPS.**

## Avro Lincoln B2 No. RF374 – 57 Sqd

We have a request from the daughter of the pilot Patrick Turner for contact with any member who may have known him or any of the crew. The aircraft was in collision during a night exercise whilst based at Waddington.

Please contact me with any information.

**Gordon Lodge**

## 'Where They Fell'

The Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre, as many of you will already know is based at East Kirkby, the war time home of 57 Sqn from August 1943 and for 630 Sqn from November of the same year. The Centre has a room in the original control tower dedicated to the two squadrons but this year we are working on a new exhibition for that area.

The 'Where They Fell' display will contain a very large map of Europe which will pinpoint the site where every aircraft which didn't return to RAF East Kirkby fell. This display, which is being created by the Centre with the help of Lincoln University's graphic design lecturer Chris Twigg and his partner, will hopefully be unveiled in 2016.

The map will have each crash site numbered in the order in which the aircraft came down, this will then reference to a written log showing the date and details of the operation, the aircraft and the crew. We will also display any paperwork, photos and personal stories which we hold for that aircraft and crew. We are hoping to get a photograph of every member of aircrew and ground crew killed from the two squadrons at East Kirkby.

The Centre already holds a lot of photographs but we do still have quite a few gaps which we would like to fill so we are appealing for your help. If you have any photos, which we don't already have a copy of, showing crews who were lost or indeed those who were lucky enough to return we would be thrilled to receive a copy to build our display.

We would also welcome any other information including personal stories, combat reports, photos of the aircraft and anything else which you think might be of interest. Our aim is to create a very comprehensive exhibition for the two squadrons which will hopefully grow and evolve over time. Any photos and information can either be posted to The Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre, East Kirkby Airfield, Nr Spilsby, Lincs, PE23 4DE or if preferred you can email them to [louise@lincsaviation.co.uk](mailto:louise@lincsaviation.co.uk)

**Louise Bush**

## Memorial services abroad

### Remembering the Crew of 630 Squadron Lancaster ME650 (LE-B)

On the night of 27 August 1944, the crew of Lancaster ME650 formed part of the force assigned to attack Königsberg (now Kaliningrad). As the aircraft flew over occupied Denmark, ME650 was attacked by a Luftwaffe night fighter operated by Nachtjagdgeschwader 1. Lancaster ME650 came down in flames close to village of Skarrild, Jutland, Denmark – none of the crew survived.



*The crew of ME650. Left-to-Right, Back Row: Sgt Guy Raymond Stott RAF (Flight Engineer); Sgt Alan Ambrose Michael Langridge RAF (Rear Gunner); WO William John Carrier RAAF (Mid-upper Gunner); Sgt Leslie Thompson RAF (Wireless Operator/Air Gunner). Front Row: Plt Off Burton McClachlin RCAF (Bomb Aimer); Flt Lt Evelyn George William Bowers RAF (Pilot); Plt Off Wilfred James Fingland RAF (Navigator).*



In the face of fierce opposition from the occupying German 'authorities', the people of Skarrild were determined that the sacrifice of the crew of ME650 would be recognised properly. And so, on 29 August 1944, the bodies of the seven airmen were interred in the Skarrild village cemetery. Initially the crew's resting place was marked by a simple wooden cross, but throughout the day villagers came to the cemetery to pay their respects to the crew and soon the grave was covered in flowers.



*The grave of the crew of ME650, pictured on 29 August 1944.*

Even before the liberation of Denmark on 4/5 May 1945, Skarrild Parish Council passed a motion on 30 April 1945 committing themselves to providing a permanent memorial to the crew of ME650. That Memorial was completed in 1946 in time for relatives of ME650's crew to be able to pay their respects in person.

*Relatives of the Crew of ME650 Visit the Memorial and Grave – 1946.*



Over the last 70 years, the people of Skarrild have maintained and improved the Memorial to the crew of ME650, adding a propeller to the site (probably from a Lincoln aircraft and donated by HQ RAF Germany) in the late 1940s.

*The graves of the crew of ME650 - 2015.*



Every year on 5 May the people of Skarrild and the surrounding area have gathered at what they call 'The Flyers' Grave' to pay their respects to the crew of ME650 and to celebrate the liberation of Denmark from Nazi oppression and occupation. On a number of occasions, Members of the 57 & 630 Squadrons' Association have been able to join our Danish friends at the 5 May Ceremony.

This year, which marked the 70th Anniversary of the liberation of Denmark, Wing Commander Jim Wright DFC RAF (Retired), Warrant Officer Tom Lockett GM RAF (Retired) and Group Captain David Houghton RAF travelled to Skarrild to take part in the events on 5 May. In a clear demonstration of the care still felt by the people of Skarrild and Denmark for the brave men of Bomber Command, some 300 local villagers attended the Memorial Service at The Flyers' Grave, along with the Australian Ambassador to Denmark, a representative of the Canadian Ambassador to Denmark, Danish MP Mr Chris og Kristian Thulesen Dahl, personnel from the Danish Home guard and RDAF and, most appropriately, relatives of Flying Officer Finland, ME650's navigator.

As ever, the Ceremony at The Flyers' Grave was impeccably organized by the Danish Home Guard and RDAF.



*Representatives of the Canadian and Australian Governments at The Flyers' Grave.*



Jim Wright, Neil Wright (Jim's son), David Houghton, Tom Lockett and the family of Flying Officer Fingland make their way to The Flyers' Grave.

*On behalf of The Association, David Houghton lays a wreath at The Flyers' Grave.*



*The family of Flying Officer Fingland prepare to lay a wreath at The Flyers' Grave.*



It was also wonderful to see the care and consideration shown to the Bomber Command veterans by the people of Skarrild. Following the graveside Ceremony and Service, the veterans and other guests were transported to the Skarrild Village Hall in vintage cars laid-on especially for the occasion!

*Tom Lockett (left) and Jim Wright (right) are transported in style to the Skarrild Village Hall.*



It is clear that, even after 71 years, and 70 years since the liberation of Denmark, our comrades who died when ME650 was shot down are still loved and cared for by the people of Skarrild. Should anyone from The Association pass through Skarrild in 70 years' time, I know that The Flyers' Grave will still be maintained immaculately and that the memory of the crew of ME650 will still be fresh in the minds of the people of Skarrild.



**Group Captain David Houghton**

## Remembering the Crew of 57 Squadron Lancaster NE127 (DX-J)

On the night of 22/23 May 1944 the Crew of Lancaster NE127 formed part of a force assigned to attack Brunswick. Flying over Holland on the way to the target, the aircraft was attacked by a night fighter from Leeuwarden (The Wasps Nest) and exploded, crashing near the village of Dorkwerd near Groningen. The Upper Gunner, Sergeant Paul Dalseg from Canada managed to bail out. The Rear Gunner, Sergeant Norman Wharf also from Canada, survived although badly injured and still in the rear turret this having split from the aircraft and landing in a dyke.



*The Crew of NE127. Left-to-Right: Plt Off Frank Henley (Pilot); Sgt Paul Dalseg (Mid-upper Gunner); Sgt John Manson (Wireless Operator/Air Gunner); Sgt Norman Wharf (Rear Gunner); Sgt Sydney Morris (Bomb Aimer); Sgt Arthur Armin (Flight Engineer); Fg Off Gordon Lodge (Navigator).*

The bodies of the 5 men were interred in the village cemetery in Hoogkerk and marked by simple wooden crosses. Following the burial the people of Hoogkerk laid flowers on the graves, but these were removed by the Germans. In a show of defiance, the villagers relaid the flowers on the graves 3 times until the German occupiers gave in and allowed the flowers to remain on the graves.

Sergeant Paul Dalseg and Sergeant Norman Wharf became PoWs. Subsequently Norman Wharf, due to his injuries, was repatriated to Canada by the Red Cross. Paul Dalseg remained a PoW to the end of the war, eventually returning to the UK via Odessa. In 1946/47 three of the families visited the graves and arranged for the wooden crosses to be replaced by marble crosses.

*Relatives of 3 of the Crew from NE127 Visit the Graves – 1946.*



*The Marbles Crosses Erected to Mark the Graves of Fg Off Lodge, Sgt Manson and Sgt Armin.*



Over the years the graves have been maintained by the people of Hoogkerk, lead by Auke Noordhof who witnessed the crash of NE127 as a 13 year-old boy. Auke now attends the reunions at The Petwood each year with his daughters Henny and Ida.

During the 1980's Paul Delseg and Norman Wharf visited the graves and arranged for a large marble plaque to be incorporated at the site. In Dutch, that plaque commemorates the crew of NE127 and mentions the enduring link between the 5 men who perished and Sergeants Delseg and Wharf.



*The Graves of the Crew of NE127 - 2015.*

On 4 May each year (Remembrance and Liberation Day in The Netherlands) local people attend a service at the graves of the crew of NE127, together with Dutch Veterans and representatives of the Dutch Airforce from Leeuwarden. As in previous years, the Association was represented at this year's Ceremony by our Secretary, Mr Gordon Lodge, the son of NE127's navigator, Fg Off Gordon Lodge.





*The Ceremony at the Graves of the Crew of NE127 - 2015.*

A number of years ago Auke Noordhorf, together with friends, managed to locate NE127's engines 20ft down in a dyke. After excavation and cleaning and with the assistance of Dutch and British aviation archeologists, the engine returned to East Kirkby and is on display at the hanger.

It is clear that, even after 71 years, and 70 years since the liberation of Holland, our comrades who died when NE127 was shot down are still loved and cared for by the people of Hoogkerk and that their memory will always be treasured by the people whose eventual freedom they fought and died for.

**Gordon Lodge**

## Remembrance Sunday Service East Kirkby

On the 8th November the President, Diana, and myself attended the Service , which due to the weather, was held in the Hangar rather than at the Memorial.

The programme was organised by Mike Chatterton and attended by some 70 people including;

Squadron Leader Mike Waring OC 57(R) and a number of the Squadron Students

Squadron Leader Si Devenish 3(F) Sqn. Coningsby

57(R) Squadron Standard Party

The Panton Family were represented Philip, Andrew and Louise and the Service conducted by Canon Stephen Holdaway. Music provided by Mrs. Elizabeth Pinion with the Bugler John Jackson from the Waddington Voluntary Band.

It was very pleasing to see so many villagers at the Service. All Members would be very welcome should they wish to attend.





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## France

Over the years I have been Secretary I have been amazed by the support given to our fallen Crews by the residents of many countries in Europe, not the least of which is France.

During the year I received an enquiry from France which Group Captain Rothery researched and answered. I thought it worthwhile for members to see this example of work involved and to add any further information they may have.

**Gordon Lodge**

**From:**  
**To:**  
**Sent:** Saturday, July 25, 2015 8:57 PM  
**Subject:** in memory of a 630 squadron pilot

Dear Sir,

I have recently become a member of the French association «Poppies of the Commonwealth» and have committed myself to put flowers on Alan William WILSON's grave in the Bayeux Cemetary in Normandy at least once a year. I have also made the commitment of doing research about him and share it with the other members of the association. I am therefore looking for all data, including an individual photo or a group photo, one of his plane, family information (which could help me contact his nephews and nieces if any) .... which could help me keep his memory alive. Here is what I have gathered so far:

- Alan William WILSON was a RAAF pilot officer belonging to the RAF 630 squadron. Service Number: 410510.

- He died on June 7th 1944 00:29 h in flying battle in Franqueville, aged 22. Franqueville could be Franqueville, a suburb of Caen in Normandy or Franqueville in the département of Seine-Maritime (Le Havre).

- He was the son of Alfred and Myrtle Wilson, of Murrumbeena, Victoria, Australia. He was born in 1922 (or circa).

I am looking forward to your answers or help. Many thanks for helping us maintain the memory of the fallen heroes who gave their lives for our freedom (I am French).

Martine Josselin, Côtes d'Armor, Brittany

Dear Ms Josselin,

Your enquiry has been passed to me by the 57/630 Squadrons Association Secretary. Firstly, may I take the opportunity to thank you for your kindness and for the honour you give to the memory of Pilot Officer Alan William Wilson. This is very much appreciated by all those who are connected with the Squadron Association.

The information you have gathered on Pilot Officer Wilson is correct. He and his crew were part of a raid to disrupt road and rail communications around Caen, so it is the Franqueville near Caen where his aircraft crashed. His mission was in support of the invading allied forces and was one of the first uses of heavy bomber aircraft in tactical support of land forces. Up until then, the aircraft had been used in the strategic bomber campaign against Germany.

Pilot Officer Wilson was a pilot and the captain of his aircraft and was flying a Lancaster Mark III, number ND 685 marked as LE-Q. He and his crew took off from RAF East Kirkby in Lincolnshire at 0029 hours on 7th June 1944. In trying to avoid French casualties the bombing was conducted from a height of around 1000 metres, which was much lower than normal. This meant that his aircraft would have been fully exposed to the German defences. Five other Lancaster aircraft were lost on the same mission.

Three members of Pilot Officer Wilson's crew were killed and are also buried at Bayeux:

Sergeant R C H Wakeley Wireless operator  
Flight Sergeant A M Henderson Gunner  
Sergeant J Hanna Gunner

Three members of the crew survived and were all taken as Prisoners of War:

Flying Officer J R G Morschell Royal Australian Air Force Navigator  
Sergeant F J Roche Royal Australian Air Force Bomb Aimer  
Sergeant G Bellman Flight Engineer

Regrettably, photographs of crews were rare as cameras were not permitted on base, and I have not been able to trace any photographs of Pilot Officer Wilson or his crew.

The Australian connection may be helpful as the numbers of Commonwealth crew members were much smaller. I will pass this information to the Australian Air Attaché in London to see if he is able to help with tracing Pilot Officer Wilson's family or any of the surviving crew members's families. I will let you know if I have any success with this route.

Once again, thank you for your commitment to the memory of these fallen heroes.

Very best wishes,

Wendy Rothery  
Group Captain RAF  
For 57/630 Squadrons Association

# Reunion 2016

## Friday 1st July- Monday 4th July

### Petwood Hotel Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July

Saturday afternoon tea from 2.30pm  
Dinner 7.00pm for 7.30pm in the Woodland Suite  
Dress lounge suits/blazers  
Chief Guest and Speaker O.C. 57 Squadron

### Sunday Service 3<sup>rd</sup> July East Kirkby

11.45 am 57 Squadron Standard Party and Service – Medals  
Memorial – Last Post –Laying of Wreaths  
3pm BBMF Fly Past

### Dinner Dance

Sunday Evening 7.00pm for 7.30pm, informal Dinner Dance in the Petwood Suite. Music by Heather Marie.

### Costs

Those staying at the Petwood for any period will have their costs charged to the room and will include dinners/functions. Those staying elsewhere will need to send me a cheque for the Dinner and/or Dinner Dance together with the Reunion Form. Cheques payable to 57/630 Squadrons Assoc. Members staying at the Petwood need to send the Reunion Form with any Donations by cheque payable to the Assoc.

### 4 Nights

£368 pp Includes 4 nights accom.& breakfast. 2 Restaurant Dinners, 2 Function Dinners  
Sat.& Sun. Entertainment.

### 3 Nights

£280 pp Includes 3 nights accom. & breakfast. 1 Restaurant Dinner, 2 Function Dinners  
Sat. & Sun. Entertainment

### 2 Nights

£188 pp Friday & Saturday, includes 1 Restaurant Dinner and 1 Function Dinner  
£192 pp Saturday & Sunday , includes 2 Function Dinners

1 Night

£100 pp Includes Function Dinner

Non Resident

£39 pp For each Function Dinner

The Reunion Form is at the end of the Newsletter.

**Gordon Lodge**