

ME846 Family

Summer Newsletter 2024– Vol.14



*** Please see the bottom of page 4 for crew details*

This edition of the ME846 Family Newsletter has been prepared to coincide with the 80th Anniversary of the aircraft being lost over northern Belgium on 21st/22nd June 1944.

The family's aim to remember the events around that fateful night remains as strong as ever; as does their desire to perpetuate the memory of the crew and their descendants.

A focal point for some of these memories remains at the Newark Air Museum (NAM), which is located on part of the former RAF Winthorpe, where the crew trained with 1661 Heavy Conversion Unit (HCU) in spring 1944.

On Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd June, 2024 the museum is hosting its annual Cockpit-Fest event. As ever with activities related to ME846 fate seems to have once again stepped in. On both days the event will be graced by a flypast by the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (BBMF). In a rare occurrence the flypast on both days will be made by the BBMF Lancaster; what a fitting way to remember the ME846 crew and their families.



On site co-ordination for these flypasts is being handled by Howard Heeley. They promise to be much appreciated by those able to attend the two-day event.

619 Squadron Lancaster, Venray

In recent weeks NAM has also been trying to assist with further enquiries about another crew from a 619 Squadron Lancaster loss that occurred in the Netherlands.

Here is the text that arrived on the Newark Air Museum (NAM) email account:

"I saw a You Tube video that Howard Heeley did on 619 Squadron.

I am a volunteer researcher for Venray War Cemetery. We have a special 80th commemoration this year and we are trying to find a photograph of Leslie William Leonard and William Johnson of 619 Squadron who died on 20 September 1944.

We are trying to place photo grave markers at the side of each grave in time for the commemoration.

Would you have any information or photographs of them or have any ideas of where else we might try?

Thanks for reading my message.

The Dutch people feel very strongly about ensuring these young men are never forgotten"

Searches in the NAM Archive have not been able to turn up any photographs, so details of the enquiry have been forwarded through to the 619 Squadron Association.

Memories & Connections

Over the years, some of the joys of being part of the ME846 Family have been preserving memories and connecting people together from around the world.



During the celebrations back in 2008 a visit was made to the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (BBMF) at RAF Coningsby. During that visit one of the youngest participants was Ellie Mason, who is the granddaughter of Jane's sister Liz and her husband Sir David Wootton. Ellie now lives in Chicago, USA and was pictured on her father's and mother's arms in two photographs taken at RAF Coningsby.



Some of Ellie's early memories from that visit live on, as does her love of aircraft and she recently modelled a wonderful piece of ceramic pottery that features the BBMF Dakota, and it can be seen opposite.

Ellie also sent the following message to Jane.

"Despite, sadly, never meeting my great grandfather, Peter Knox, the story of his bravery and courage to keep fighting on have ensured that I will never forget his memory.

With the story told top to bottom, with the plane on fire, to the men parachuting down, and the journey home though the wheat fields and towns, the narrative piece commemorates and immortalizes the lives of my great grandfather and the men with him that day."



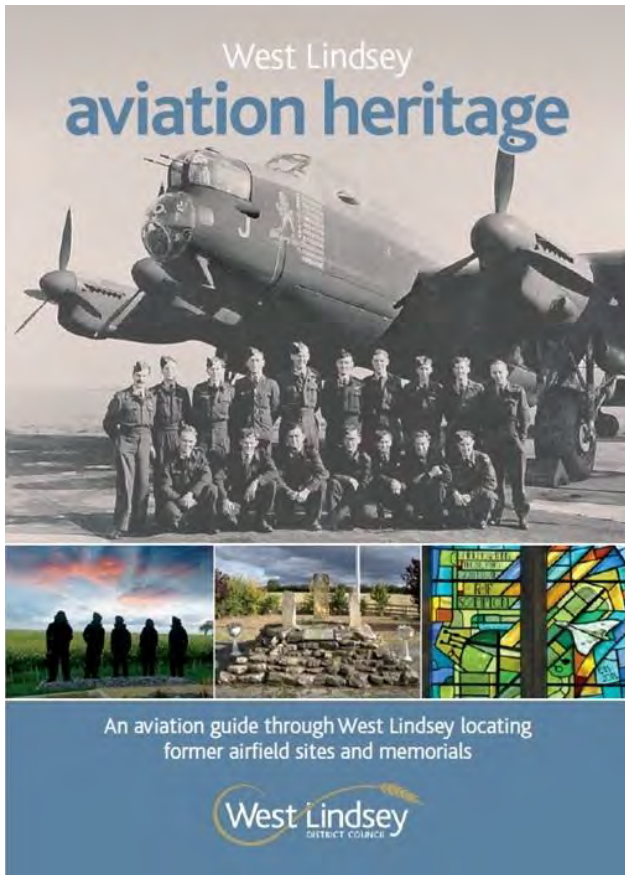
A D-Day Message From Chris Cardose

*"Good morning all
Watching the marvellous coverage this morning on the 80th commemoration of D Day. The veterans interviewed are so humble and many, as we know, didn't talk to family of their experiences. We should be so proud and mindful of their sacrifices, not least because our own 80th anniversary is in two weeks' time.
Hope you are all well
Christine and Chris xx"*

West Lindsey Aviation Guide

Away from NAM, Howard Heeley has recently completed an update for the West Lindsey Aviation Guide. This publication is now in its tenth year and features two Lincolnshire locations with close ties to both the Knox family and the ME846 Family.

South Carlton, was the location in Lincolnshire that Sir Errol Knox was posted to with 3 Squadron Australian Flying Corps in 1917, before moving with his squadron to the Low Countries. This site is featured in the Guide along with RAF Dunholme Lodge, where ME846 took off from on 21st June 1944.



In recent years this latter location has seen some of its former wartime runways taken up. This resulted in some significant changes being made to that section of the Guide.

So much so, an extract from ‘Porky’ Bowering’s log Book, which is retained in the Newark Air Museum Archive, is now featured prominently on the Dunholme Lodge page of the Guide.

Date	Time	Remarks	Notes
5-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
6-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
6-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
7-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
7-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
10-5-44	2210	LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
12-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
13-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
14-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
15-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
17-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
18-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
20-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
21-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
22-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
24-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
25-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
26-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
27-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
28-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
29-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G
30-5-44		LANCASTER	P/O DAVIS R/G

A wonderful stained-glass window from the nearby St Mary’s Church, Welton has also been added to the Guide for the first time. It provides a daily reminder of the many sacrifices made by wartime personnel who were stated in Lincolnshire during World War II.



Footnotes

Jane Knox-Kiepura and Marjan Kiepura would like to thank Howard Heeley for preparing this Newsletter. Also for his work with Newark Air Museum and for the commitment of the other museum volunteers and staff who help commemorate the heroes who trained in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire. This includes the American, Commonwealth, Polish and of course RAF airmen and members of the airborne forces. We will remember them.

We welcome comments and additional stories for our next Newsletter, which will be part of the 80th Anniversary Commemorations.

*** The crew at RAF Winthorpe, HCU in early March 1944 in front of their Short’s Stirling (left to right): F/S Peter Edmund Knox – A418433 RAAF – Bomb Aimer; Sgt Thomas. A. Newbery – 1602063 RAF – Wireless Operator; Sgt W. Dennis “Geordie” Belshaw – 1808996 RAF – Flight Engineer; P/O Mark Anthony Hamilton “Dave” Davis – 174023 RAFVR – Pilot; F/S Leslie E. J. “Tagger” Taylor – 1585057 RAF – Navigator; Sgt George Harry Moggridge – 1896779 RAFVR - Mid-Upper Gunner; P/O John Ernest Ralph “Porky” Bowering – J/88199 RCAF – Rear Gunner*

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