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Vice Chair:

Mr David Routledge

Hon Secretary:

Mr Damian Harriss

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Hon Treasurer:

Mrs Mazza Holland

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Social Events Coordinator:

Mrs Julie Mullis

Wings Appeal Organiser:

Mr Graham Croft

Conference Delegate:

Mr Steve Mullis

Newsletter Editor:

Mr Bryn Holland

Webmaster:

Mr Kris Mercer**From the Editor:**

Welcome to Issue 3 of this years Branch Newsletter, I do hope everyone is fit & well and staying safe from this terrible pandemic. We in New Zealand are now at level 1 and looking forward to getting out and about again. You will be in your summer months there in the UK with us here in NZ in our winter months, it's funny how things are so opposite at the other side of the world. We are having very cold weather blasting from the south pole at the moment, with snow on the mountains and clear frosty mornings, but with that comes nice toasty warm log fires keeping us warm. Like you, we had our ANZAC day and other remembrance days cancelled and the RNZAF Association is hoping to have its 75th Conference go ahead in October, which is to be held at the RNZAF Base Woodbourne so fingers crossed!

Best Regards and Stay Safe

~Bryn~

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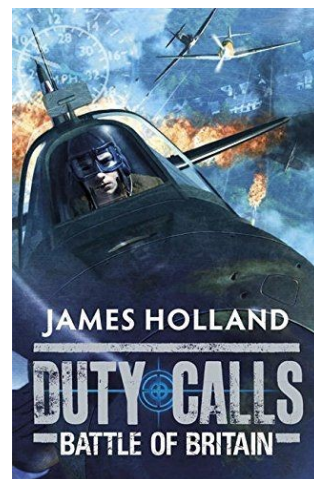
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Disclaimer - The views and opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the RAFA Global Branch, the Newsletter editor, Branch Committee or membership and therefore should not be construed as such.

We Welcome:

Gavin R Dyer
Clive Mann
Clive Elsbury
David Griffin
Dave Gibbs
Phil Martin-Thompson
David Owen,
Bryan Berry
Peter Bensley
Martin Watt
Roger Cleverly
Craig Smith
Alan Fello
Christopher Gunn-Malcolm
Thomas England
Lori Monks
Sylvia Walker

Irene Hunt
Morag Lightning
Chris Clark
Dave Is-Rees
Jan Parish
Andrew Thomson
Derek Lambert
Ian Black
Conrad Steele-Benn
Tony Wood
Mark Anderson
Fred Bree
Ken Jackson
Susan Kidston
Paul Hayward
Brad Chappell
Will Hughes
Peter Farrant
Harry Peel
Rina Maw
George Bell

Book of the Month

Duty Calls: Battle of Britain, throws you deep into the heart - and horror - of Britain's darkest, and finest, hour.

Pilot officer Archie Jackson, 19, is in control of the RAF's newest fighter aircraft, a Supermarine Spitfire.

Now he has the Luftwaffe in his sights and only one thing matters: defending Britain.

Suddenly planes are falling from the sky, exploding and spiralling into the English Channel.

France has fallen and the swastika flies over Occupied Europe. Only these young pilots - barely out of boyhood - stand between Britain and a Nazi invasion . . .

Format: Paperback

352 pages

ROYAL AIRFORCE **museumshop**

[https://](https://www.rafmuseumshop.com/duty-calls-battle-of-britain-may-13-dc.html)

www.rafmuseumshop.com/duty-calls-battle-of-britain-may-13-dc.html

Shawbury reunion

One of several ex-RAF Shawbury personnel to have recently visited the Station to renew acquaintances was Mrs Ethel Wilson, who also took the opportunity to display a 'Good Show' award presented to her and her fellow parachute packers from the first Aries crew.

Ethel now has custody of the document which records the appreciation felt by the pilot and crew of the first Aries flight, a Stirling aircraft. The pilot, Sqn Ldr (later AVM) McKinley (who, you may remember, visited RAF Shawbury in October 1994), was forced to ditch the Stirling in Northern Ireland; he stayed with the aircraft after

ordering his crew to bail out. All lived to tell the tale and thank the team of parachute packers for their good work! But, as Ethel recalls, the time between hearing of the crash and receiving confirmation that the crew had survived was a distressing time.

'I arrived back on camp late afternoon. I knew something had happened; the camp felt strange and quiet. I arrived at the billet where my sister and two other parachute packers were waiting for me. I didn't have time to ask them anything before they both spoke as one, 'the Stirling has crashed, all crew dead, if any did bail out the chutes didn't open. How? Why?

nobody knows - that's the rumour going around camp.' We did not get much sleep that night. We had a lot of remarks thrown at us including, 'who would bail out with your parachute?'

Ethel Wilson now has charge of the 'Good Show' document and, as she is the only surviving member of the team of parachute packers named in the appreciation, she has promised to donate the document to RAF Shawbury. Although Ethel met and married her husband while at Shawbury, she is perhaps lucky to have retained nothing but fond memories of her time here. Things could have been

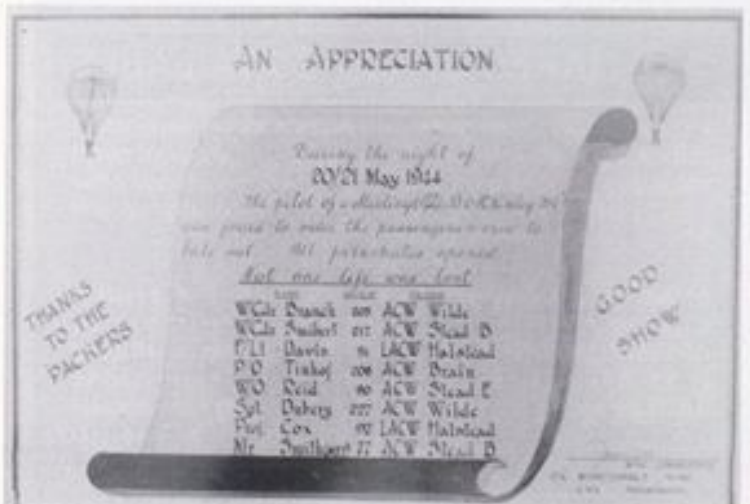
very different.

Indeed, a courtmartial was nearly the fate of the young Aircraftwoman Stead, following an incident in the Far East. A parachute allegedly packed by Ethel was unfortunately found to be filled with a blanket instead of the usual valuable silk!

However, after an extensive investigation by the powers that be, it was concluded that the substitution of blanket for silk was not brought about by Aircraftwoman Stead but by one of the less scrupulous local inhabitants. Apparently the theft and substitution of valuable silk parachutes was not an uncommon practice at the time, and it occasionally led to tragic results.



From left: Mrs Peggy Fiddy (nee Nurse), Equipment Assistant. Mrs Ethel Wilson (nee Stead), Safety Equipment Fitter. Mrs Margaret Edwards (nee Hanson), MT Driver. Mrs Dorothy Noctor (nee Woodhams), PA to CO RAF Conover. Mr Jack Williams, MT Electrician.



RAF Mosquito Mk XVIII "Tsetse" Part One



The RAF Assoc. (Global Group) would like to thank Mike Nevin and the team at the de Havilland Aircraft Museum who granted us permission to extract the text and pictures for this article, for you all to enjoy.



The History of the de Havilland Mosquito has been well documented. In real terms it was probably the first multi-role combat aircraft the heritage that has continued on to the present day with the Tornado and more recently the typhoon.

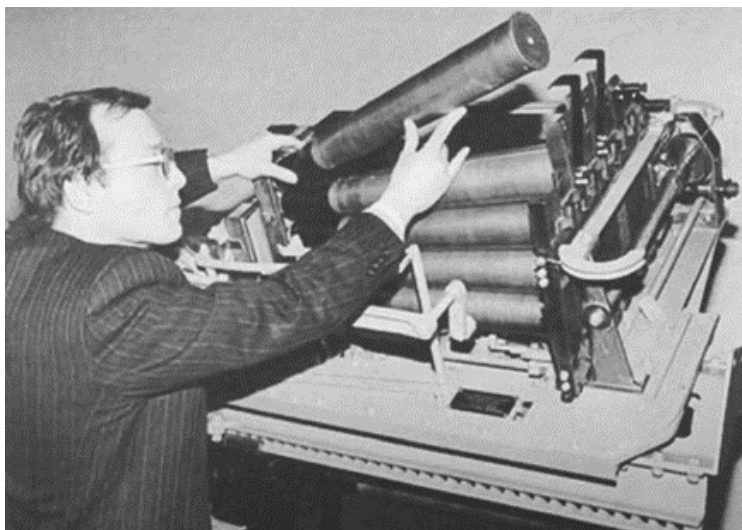


During its ten year production run, over seven thousand aircraft were built in various versions.

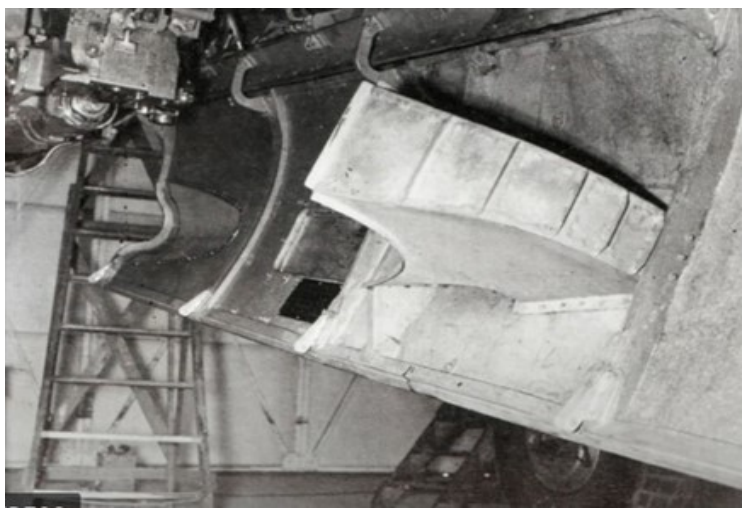


In 1943 the Mosquito was required to carry a 6lb quick firing gun.

It was a field weapon weighing nearly a ton and had a Kick like a mule. This also entailed carrying over half a ton of armour, steel plates up to 3/8" of an inch thick to protect the engines from enemy cannons.



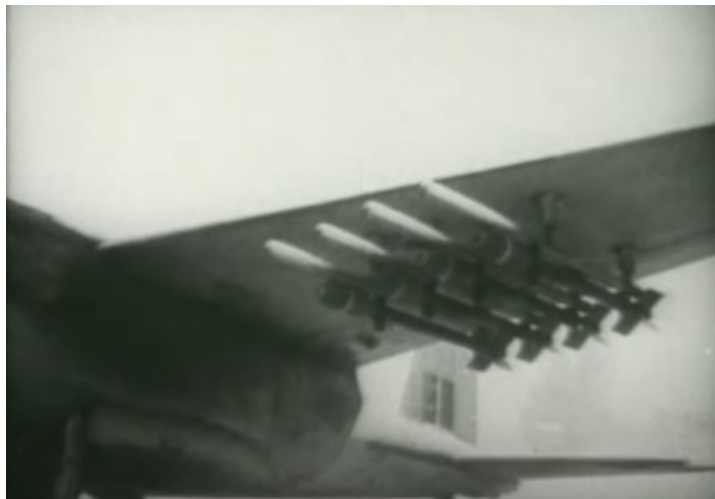
The weapon chosen was the Molins 57mm type "M" which was based on the ordnance QF 6 pounder anti-Tank Gun used by the British and American Armies. The Molins Company modified the Gun and designed a 21 shell automatic magazine, capable of firing 55 rounds a minute.



RAF Mosquito Mk XVIII "Tsetse" Part One

A single prototype, a converted FB Mk 6 was built in secrecy and officially designated the Mk18, in service it was usually referred to as the "Tsetse" after the vicious biting fly of Africa.

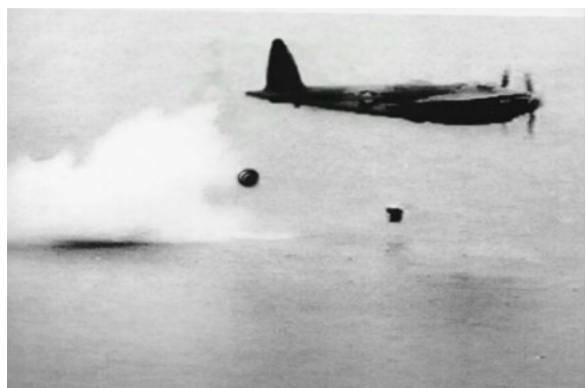
The Molins gun and magazine were fitted in the cannon bay along with extra armour plating, the four machine guns were left in place.



At the time there were differences within the RAF between those that preferred rocket projectiles over big guns, ultimately rockets won the day and only 17 production Mk18's were built.



In February 1944, a special detachment of Mk18 Tsetse from 618 Squadron joined 248 Squadron at Predannack in Cornwall, they flew alongside Mosquito Mk 6's against shipping and "U" Boats entering and leaving the bases along the French Atlantic coast. Flt/Lt Des Curtis DFC was a navigator with the secret 618 Squadron test flying Mosquitos fitted with the Barnes Wallace High Ball Bouncing Bomb intended for use against the German surface fleet. In the event, the High Ball was never used in action. He joined 618 SD Special Detachment Flight.



Flt/Lt Des Curtis DFC Interviewed in 2016 tells his own story

We reported back to RAF Benson to be asked, why are you here? You should be at Predannack. Well where is Predannack we asked, and they said its somewhere in the South of Cornwall. What have we got to do down there? You will find out when you get there. How do we get there? They said there is an Oxford coming in later on from Shawbury's maintenance unit, we might persuade him to fly you down to RAF Predannack. Which we did, so we went down to this place Predannack which was a satellite airfield a few miles from the Lizard Peninsula, where we met up with the former Flight Commander of 618 Squadron Charlie Rose, who had been doing much of the experimental flying with the Bouncing Bomb and we formed 618 Special Detachment. There were three crews and we were then told that there was an aircraft coming down from RAF Boscombe Down, the research establishment, with another secret weapon. In fact we went up to Boscombe Down to collect this aircraft, which turned out to be a Mosquito MkXVIII the fighter/ bomber version, but this time the Cannons had been removed and in their stead a 57mm 6 pounder Anti-Tank gun had been mounted in the fuselage. A little while later one of the other chaps, a Canadian, was out on his own and he came across a German U Boat and severely damaged it, it was on its way out on a mission and it had to return to Base and it was out of service for a long, long time. So, we were starting to adjust the balance a little.

Move on to March 1944 by which time the Germans had come to realize that amongst the Mosquitos there was a rather dangerous version firing this gun. So, we were then given a fighter escort and a typical formation for us was the two aircraft with the Molins big gun which we called the "Tsetse" aircraft because it was more dangerous than the standard Mosquito and we were escorted by four Mk 6 fighter versions from another Squadron or from our own Squadron

25th March we went down to point "C" which was a mine swept channel leading to St Nazaire Harbour and just started in on the channel when we suddenly saw some ships on the horizon, we were down then to about forty or fifty feet off the sea, as soon as we recognized that they were ships we pulled up to find a German U Boat was just meeting up with the mine sweepers and destroyer that had been sent out to accompany it back to port.

To Be Continued:

Buzz Hope - 'and in the morning'



Times Remembered – 'and in the morning'

As evening shadows fall as they did on Monday 17th May 1943, the cost of the previous night's operation was reconciled, of the 86 aircraft operating that night, nine aircraft were missing crewed by 62 airmen, eight aircraft from No.617 Squadron and 56 airmen and one aircraft from No.466

Squadron RAAF with six airmen missing. Fifty-nine airmen would be killed, and three airmen taken prisoner. This meant that 62 telegrams would be sent to families 'Failed to return from night operations.' The trauma cannot be imagined, small communities would be affected, then the wait! A rare telegram would later arrive via the Red Cross stating 'Prisoner of War' but for many the long wait would be in vain, the terrible telegram stating 'regret to inform you that' etc.

As of every morning Bomber Command was counting the cost of the night's operation, Monday 17th May 1943, was no exception, the cost of the night's operation was being counted; of the 86 aircraft operating nine aircraft were missing as well as their crews. Fifty-nine sons lost, some fathers and husbands many with girlfriends and some single, all had friends, all never to be seen again, gone forever save the memories, the last kiss, the last good bye and the last farewell, the last hug. The cherished smile and sometimes wink, the last letter home to be read and read, photographs to be cherished. The missing bomber men were human, men were men and did men's things, danced, partied, got drunk, times were for living, they loved and were loved; death was only around the corner. But what of the families, left behind? The ugly scene of war, a grave marker in Portland stone, a name carved on a memorial, their stories need to be told, their names mentioned so they should not be forgotten. They did not die in vain.

A medal clasp awarded now to honour their actions for taking the war deep in to the black heart of the Nazi Third Reich with Churchill shouting Bomber Commands praises in the House of Commons on Tuesday 20th August 1940 in the House of Commons:

'but we must never forget that all the time, night after night, month after month, our bomber squadrons travel far into Germany, find their targets in the darkness by the highest navigational skill, aims their attacks, often under the heaviest fire, often at serious loss, with deliberate, careful precision, and inflict shattering blows upon the whole of the technical and war-making structure of the Nazi power.'

Five years later Churchill snubbed Bomber Command and the Poles in the celebrations of victory, and yet without Bomber Command and the sacrifice of the aircrews, the unsung work of the ground crews and all the supporting staff, the outcome of the Second World War may have been very different. Bomber Command should not be forgotten as Churchill forgot them in the War celebrations, snubbed by so many, they should be remembered for their part in freeing the world of tyranny with honour and pride.

As evening shadows fall as on this day many years ago, Monday, 17th May 1943 it should be remembered that the lives of 61 families would be changed forever.

That day Sunday, 16th May 1943 started as an ordinary day for Bomber Command, the weather in Lincolnshire was sunny and warm, Bomber Command had issued the 'Battle Orders' for the forth coming night's operations with No.617 receiving

'night operational flying orders' The 'Battle Order' for the evening. Bomber Command would operate 86 aircraft with 19 aircraft from No.617 Squadron detailed to attack the dams in the Ruhr valley which stored millions of tons of water ready to be used in preparation for generating electricity for the industrial and war making machine of the Nazi Third Reich.

A total of 133 airmen flying nineteen Lancaster's from No.617 Squadron based at RAF Scampton Lincolnshire were briefed to carry out the very daring low level raid dropping a 'Bouncing Bomb' with 6.600 lbs of explosive with precision in the dark, flying at over water at precisely 240 mph IAS at a height of 60 feet releasing a mine back spinning at 500 rpm from 450 yards away from the dam with the aim of striking the dam wall and sink to a depth of 30 feet before a hydrostatic pistol exploded the charge. Weeks of training and preparation where about to be put to the test, the hours of work by the ground crews in preparation and the boffins who had worked in perfecting the idea of a bouncing bomb should not be forgotten. Each member of the crew played an important role in this operation and needed to be fully operational.

Described by Gibson, 'F/L Hopgood, was one of the most outstanding Officers of No.5 Group.'

With much written and analysed about the operation a total of 34 Gallantry awards credited to the survivors and the various stories unfolded over the decades since the raid, little is known of one act of bravery by one particular crew and worthy of the Victoria Cross, this action fulfilling the criteria beyond and above. An award of the Victoria Cross richly deserved more than any other crews action that night. The crew of 21 year old, F/L. J.V. Hopgood DFC, flying in Lancaster ED925/G, 'M' Mother, taking off in the 1st Wave at 21.39 hours only to be shot down and crash having dropped its mine at 00.34 hours. With little flying time to the target and flying near an unmarked area of heavy flak by the aerodrome near Dorsten, Germany. Flying through a curtain of searchlights and anti-aircraft fire a flak shell burst close to the aircraft M-Mother, captained by F/L Hopgood. Splinters from the bursting shell tore into the aircraft, damaging the port engine and mortally wounding the front gunner P/O Gregory, injuring the rear gunner P/O Burcher and wounding Hopgood in the forehead. With blood pouring out of the head wound down his face, Hopgood instructed the F/E Sgt. Brennan to press a handkerchief over the wound and to see if he good stem the flow of blood running down his face. With wounded on board, the port outer engine damaged and with a glycol leak, but by juggling the engine revs the decision was made to carry on!

One of the criteria for consideration for the Victoria Cross is "the most conspicuous bravery, a daring or pre-eminent act of valour or self-sacrifice or extreme devotion to duty, in the presence of the enemy" F/L Hopgood could have dropped his 'Upkeep mine' live so it self- detonated and turned for home. With a crippled bomber and wounded crew on board the decision to carry on was not a decision taken lightly. As Captain of the aircraft it was a heavy responsibility for the safety of the aircraft and the safety of his fellow crew members. The decision to 'Press on Regardless' was in true spirit of Royal Air Force tradition... A daring pre-eminent act of valour, a most conspicuous act of bravery, and an extreme devotion to duty as F/L Hopgood dived his crippled aircraft to 60 feet in height over the Möhne Dam, dropping the 'Upkeep mine'... A true act of valour in the face of the enemy, of himself and his crew as they completed the task they had trained for... WHY? was F/L Hopgood not awarded a 'Posthumous Victoria Cross' His demise was seen by Gibson

and fellow Officers of the Squadron and also the German gunners throwing up a veil of 20mm cannon at the already stricken aircraft 'M Mother'... Perhaps F/L Hopgood was the pilot that night to stand above the rest, the 'Best of the Best' a mere 21 year old; a stalwart of a man, now lies in Rheinberg War Cemetery Germany along with four other fellow crew members... 'Duty nobly done' R.I.P. Brave Warriors of the skies' Per Ardua Ad Astra...

Of the nineteen aircraft taking off in the 'Dams' raid eight aircraft failed to return, 53 young lives lost, the United Kingdom, the Empire and the free world wanted a hero, a live hero! A hero Churchill could use to his own ends capitalising on the propaganda war and the success of 'Dams' raid as he toured Canada and America.

Let us remember the fallen, especially Hopgood's crew who could have turned back, but in true Royal Air Force tradition carried on regardless.

Listed below are the fallen From No.617 Squadron...

F/S (R/119416) Arthur J.L. RCAF aged 25
 F/L (60283) Astell W. DFC RAF aged 23
 F/L (401899) Barlow R.N.G. DFC RAAF aged 32
 F/O (115775) Barrett J.K. DFC RAF aged 22
 SGT (1211045) Bolitho R. RAF aged 23
 WO2 (R/93554) Brady J.G. RCAF aged 27
 SGT (942037) Brennan C. RAF aged?
 F/O (124881) Burgess P.S. RAF aged 20
 P/O (J/17115) Burpee L.J. DFM RCAF aged 25
 SGT (1503094) Burrows N.R. RAF aged?
 P/O (J/17474) Byers V.W. RCAF aged 32
 WO2 (R/93558) Cottam A.P. RCAF aged 30
 F/O (J/10891) Earnshaw K. RCAF aged?
 P/O (143760) Fuller M.J.D. RAF aged 23
 F/S (R/103201) Garbas F.A. RCAF aged?
 WO2 (R/84377) Garshowitz A. RCAF aged?
 P/O (144205) Gillespie A. DFM RAF aged 20
 F/O (J/10212) Glinz H.S. RCAF aged 22
 P/O (141285) Gregory G.H.F.G. DFM RAF aged?
 SGT (1172550) Guterman J. DFM RAF aged 23
 F/L (61281) Hopgood J.V. DFC* RAF aged 21
 F/O (127817) Hopkinson D. RAF aged 22
 SGT (568924) Horsfall D.T. RAF aged 23
 SGT (655431) Ibbotson W. RAF aged 29
 SGT (1299446) Jaye T. RAF aged 21
 F/S (1060657) Johnston T.B. RAF aged?
 SGT (635123) Kinnear J. RAF aged 21
 SGT (1338282) Liddell J.R.G. RAF aged 18
 SGT (1600540) Long W.C.A. RAF aged 19
 F/O(J/15309) MacCausland V.S. RCAF aged 30
 SGT (1003474) Marriott DFM RAF aged 23
 SGT (568415) Marsden R. RAF aged 23
 S/L (62275) Maudslay H.E. DFC RAF aged 21
 SGT (1058757) Jarvie McA C. RAF aged 21
 F/S (R/101749) McDowell J. RCAF aged?
 SGT (1181097) Minchin J.W. RAF aged 27
 SGT (137794) Nichols L.W. RAF aged 33
 P/O (141460) Ottley W. DFC RAF aged?
 SGT (573474) Pegler G. RAF aged 21
 F/S (1269945) Roberts C.W. RAF aged?
 SGT (1395453) Strange H.J. RAF aged 20
 SGT (575430) Taylor A.J. RAF aged 20
 F/O (120851) Tytherleigh W.J. DFC RAF aged 21

F/O (J/9763) Urquhart R.A. DFC RCAF aged?

F/O (128619) Warner J.H. RAF aged?

P/O (142507) Weller L.G. RAF aged 28

P/O (144619) Whillis S.L. RAF aged 31

P/O (144777) Whitaker A.N. RAF aged?

P/O (J/16872) Wile F.A. RCAF aged 24

SGT (1025280) Wilkinson J. RAF aged 21

F/O (405224) Williams C.R. DFC RAAF aged 34

SGT (1317656) Yeo G.A. RAF aged 20

S/L (72478) Young H.M. DFC* RAF aged 27

Wellington Mk.X HE386 coded HD-Z from No.466 Squadron which took off at 21.59 hours from RAF Station Leconfield, Yorkshire on a 'gardening' sortie. Monitoring stations picked up faint W/T signals and an air-sea rescue started searching as far as 70 miles south of the Lizard; the aircraft and crew were lost without trace.

As well as remembering those killed on the 'Dams' raid let us not forget the crew of the Wellington HE386 No.466 Squadron RAAF that died that night.

Sgt. (8686) J.W. Lawson RAAF aged 27

Sgt. (414642) R.D. Carne RAAF aged 22

Sgt. (413256) R.L. Robertson RAAF aged 27

Sgt. (1270871) D.C. Robertson RAF aged 20

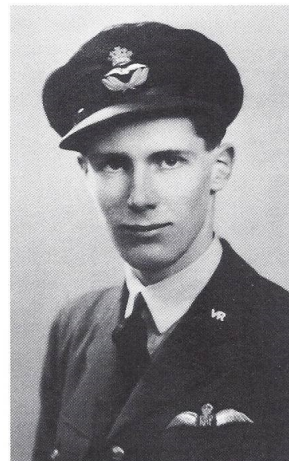
Sgt. (1547702) G.E. Harmes RAF aged 21

During the day 61 telegrams would be composed and dispatched to families across the free world. They, the families, being so proud of the moment when their kin received their 'Flying Brevet' and wings, then sent to the depth of despair when that fateful telegram arrived.

May those that served and those that died find eternal peace.

Less we forget...

(Extracts from 'and in the morning...' series and from 'and in the morning...' data base - Photographs Through the Lens Helmuth Euler & 'M' Mother - Jenny Elmes)



M-Mother crew for Operation Chastise



La Tumba del Piloto Ingles (The English pilot's grave)



This story begins many years ago back in 1915 when, near Malton in North Yorkshire, a first son was born to Lawrence and Jessie Walker. Although I was not to come across Donald Cecil Broadbent Walker until some 90 years later whilst researching different RAF graves in Spain on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's website.

From a fairly well to do family, his family tree included at least one Baronet, Sir William Henry Broadbent, an English neurologist who was a leading British authority in the field of cardiology as well as neurology. He also performed research involving diseases such as tuberculosis and cancer back in the 19th century.

Donald Cecil Broadbent Walker was destined to join the British Army, via Sandhurst. After an undetermined period of time in the army, Donald transferred to the Royal Air Force and was a member of 613 Squadron based at RAF Firbeck near Rotherham. This would have been sometime in 1940 when the squadron's Lysanders were used to dive-bomb German positions and drop supplies to friendly troops near Calais during the late May 1940 Dunkirk evacuation from various other bases further south in the UK. Donald also attended the No 9 Air AOP course at RAF Firbeck during 1940. My interest in the story was further piqued by this



fact, as my father's squadron, 659 RAF Squadron, was formed at the same airfield on 30 April 1943 flying Auster's and Spitfire's.



During August 1941 the squadron became a tactical reconnaissance unit and it began re-equipping with the faster Curtiss Tomahawk. It re-equipped with the early Allison V-1710 powered Mark I version of the North American Mustang in April 1942, continuing to operate within RAF Army Cooperation Command. During the spring and summer of 1943 the Mustangs were flown on "Lagoon" low level shipping reconnaissance flights over the North Sea to near the Dutch Coast, calling in heavy Coastal Command strike aircraft when enemy shipping was located.

At some stage during this period Donald had been promoted to Wing Commander and became the Officer Commanding 544 Squadron based at RAF Benson. The squadron formed at RAF Benson on 19 October 1942 and had been equipped with Anson's, a detachment then went to Gibraltar where it operated Wellingtons.

It then operated Spitfires and Mosquitos on reconnaissance missions. Donald's part in this story though is concentrated around the night of Wednesday 10th November 1943. Flying the first Mk.IX Mosquito that had been delivered to 544 Squadron some 3 weeks earlier, mission E/518 was quickly planned by the staff at RAF Benson, which would take in a series of French targets in the south of that country, including the Fréjus Rail Tunnel at Modane between Italy and France and the Antheor Viaduct, which was due to be attacked the following night by 617 "Dambusters" Squadron. The idea was that a Mosquito would cover these targets, then land, eventually, at the RAF base at North Front, Gibraltar before returning to Benson. A Mosquito PR.IX, LR478, from 544 Sqn, was chosen for this task. It was to be piloted by Wing Commander Donald C B Walker, the Commanding Officer of No 544 Sqn, and his navigator, Flying Officer Arthur Crow, DFM, RAFVR, a Scot; their take-off time was 11.14, British Double Summertime. (During World War II the UK went on an extended DST period from February 25, 1940 to October 7,

La Tumba del Piloto Ingles (The English pilot's grave)

1945, effectively adding 1 hour to the time zone (UTC+1). During the DST period in the summer, another hour was added to the time zone)



It is thought that the early phases of the planned sortie from Benson went well, at least until the Mosquito reached the vicinity of the viaduct. Shortly after leaving the last target in the area, the navigator looked to his right and – according to his report (S/PG/1599), subsequently given to M.I.9, the organisation which dealt with returning prisoners of war and escapees – he said, “On leaving the target, I noticed a stream of metal coming from the starboard engine”. Although mechanical failure of the engine could not be ruled out, it would seem more likely that flak had played some part in the trouble the Mosquito crew now faced. Any thought of following a track which would take them out over the Mediterranean to Gibraltar would have to be abandoned. Their only hope of reaching the North Front airfield on Gibraltar would now be to cross the range of mountains, the Pyrenees, and enter the neutral airspace of Spain on a direct heading towards friendly territory. Yes, there would be an unholy diplomatic row afterwards, but better to traverse the more than 600 miles of neutral Spain between them and their destination, than fail to bring their precious films back.

Wing Commander Walker and Flying Officer Crow managed to nurse their aircraft over the Pyrenees crossing the French-Spanish border to the south of the town of Lourdes near to The Vignemale, which at 3,298 metres high is the highest point in the Pyrenees. Having successfully cleared the high mountains the aircraft was still losing height and they were going to be very lucky to manage to cross neutral Spain before hopefully making a safe landing at the British enclave of Gibraltar.

On the ground in the village of Sos del Rey Catolico, which nestles in the foothills of the Pyrenees, the local population were leaving Mass just before 11am local time. They were celebrating their patron saint, St. Martin of Tours.

The following is part of a letter written by a Doña Gloria Elio describing the day. It was addressed to the mother of the friend, Gabriel, she was with, Doña Mcided Luisa who owned

the local estate. I have had to correct some of the Spanish translation but the general gist is not lost.

“With a good sun we went out this morning, Gabriel and I, mounted on the horses; We arrived at Peña, where there was a great crowd (remember that it was the day of the patron saint, San Martín de Tours) and, after resting for a while, we went to the church where there was a great mass and sermon, all officiated by the priest of Rocaforte. At the exit and after greeting all the people, we invited the pastor to lunch and with him we left through the gate that leads to the shortcut. There was, for a change, a lot of wind and when going down the road, next to the mass of the Castle, says the priest: "How much noise does the wind make here!" Surprised, Gabriel answered and immediately exclaimed: "That is not the wind it is a plane!" We all look up at the light cloud, and at the brief moments of looking up at the sky, we see a large airplane come out of said cloud. And what is our horror when noticing that a long trail of smoke followed behind it!

The plane was going down at high speed. There was a moment when it straightened up, but abruptly it turned around, with which we could see that it was twin-engine or trimotor and with a great trail of smoke it entered an auger and stung towards Verduces, disappearing behind that mountain and hearing an tremendous explosion within a few seconds, followed by a huge black cloud !! We ran back to pass the gate and we found the Peñuscos (name of the Peña people) looking in horror at the show and pointing to a parachute that, high in the sky, was swinging through the mountains towards Sos del Rey Catolico.

Someone went there, but the interesting thing was to go to the accident site, in case there had been a victim. We all quickly went and, after a half hour of walking, we arrived at the site, finding that it was a huge and completely destroyed plane; he had struck against a slope and from there had passed to the one behind it, so that a val (a valley) was completely full of all kinds of debris from the plane and a lot of smoke.

There were already people and the Civil Guard, but they no longer allowed anyone to approach, since there were several bombs and, what is more terrible and that we all feared, a completely charred and destroyed corpse, with the parachute deployed next to it. Imagine the impression it made on all of us. From the many maps and a book, we see that it was an English plane; He brought maps of the passage of the English Channel and one of the Bearn, since apparently the mission brought - as the bombs showed - to drop them on part of France.

What could have happened to them, anti-aircraft or breakdown? The thing is that that unhappy man has disappeared for his own and that the others - because that type of apparatus has more than 2 crew - where will they have fallen and how“

This story continues in the next edition of the newsletter.

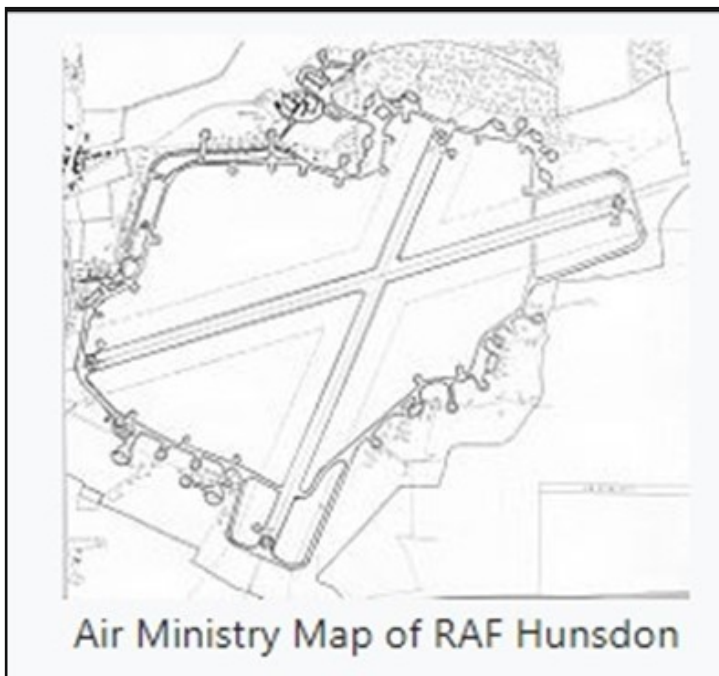


HISTORIC Airfield's- Royal Air Force Hunsdon



Hunsdon Airfield is a largely defunct airfield near Hunsdon, Hertfordshire and 2.8 miles (4.5 km) north of Harlow, Essex, England. Some flying still takes place at the airfield by a local microlight club. The airfield was used by the Royal Air Force between 1941 and 1945 under the name of **RAF Hunsdon**.

RAF Hunsdon, as Hunsdon Airfield was once known, became operational in 1941. The first unit to arrive at the Airfield (in May 1941) was No. 85 Squadron RAF, flying Boston Havocs. In June No. 1451 Flight RAF was formed. This experimental unit flew Boston's with searchlights fitted in the nose of the aircraft. This experiment was not successful and the unit was reformed as No. 530 Squadron RAF in September 1942. Numerous Squadrons and Wings used the airfield during its operational life. Hunsdon is most closely associated, however, with the de Havilland Mosquito, which first arrived in 1943. On 18 February 1944, Mosquitos from No. 21 Squadron RAF, 464 Squadron (Australia) RAF, and 487 Squadron (New Zealand) RAF which formed No 140 Wing (Wing Commander P C Pickard DSO DFC) carried out Operation Jericho, otherwise known as the Amiens Prison Raid. The airfield was closed in 1945.



Units based at RAF Hunsdon:

RAF units based here during the Second World War were:

No. 140 Wing of the RAF Second Tactical Air Force

No. 21 Squadron RAF

No. 464 Squadron RAAF

No. 487 Squadron RNZAF

No. 1451 Flight RAF

No. 1530 Flight RAF

Hunsdon Wing

No. 611 (West Lancashire) Squadron

No. 154 (Motor Industry) Squadron

No. 442 (Caribou) Canada Squadron

Summary	
Airport type	Disused
Owner	Air Ministry 1941–1945
Operator	Royal Air Force 1941–1945
Location	Hunsdon, Near Ware, Hertfordshire
Elevation AMSL	262 ft / 80 m
Coordinates	51°48′26″N 000°04′16″E



HISTORIC Airfield's- Royal Air Force Hunsdon

Ensign	Squadron	Aircraft	From	To	To	Notes
	No. 3 Squadron	Hawker Hurricane IIB Hawker Hurricane IIC Hawker Typhoon IB	9 August 1941 9 August 1941 February 1943	October 1941 February 1943 14 May 1943	RAF West Malling	Detachments at RAF Manston and RAF Shoreham .
	No. 29 Squadron	de Havilland Mosquito XIII	19 June 1944	22 February 1945	RAF Colerne .	Squadron Code:RO.
	No. 85 Squadron	Douglas Boston I Douglas Boston II de Havilland Mosquito II de Havilland Mosquito XV de Havilland Mosquito XII	3 May 1941 July 1941 August 1942 March 1943 March 1943	November 1941 September 1942 13 May 1943 13 May 1943 13 May 1943	RAF West Malling .	Squadron Code:VY.
	No. 107 Squadron	Bristol Blenheim IV	3 May 1939	3 March 1941	RAF Leuchars	As an detachment from RAF Wattisham .
	No. 285 Squadron	Hawker Hurricane IIC North American Mustang I	4 January 1945 February 1945	20 June 1945	RAF Weston Zoyland	As a detachment from RAF North Weald .
	No. 287 Squadron	Bristol Blenheim IV Lockheed Hudson III Westland Lysander III Hawker Hurricane I/IIB/IV Miles Master III Boulton Paul Defiant I/III Airspeed Oxford Miles Martinet Supermarine Spitfire VB Bristol Beaufighter VI Supermarine Spitfire IX Hawker Tempest V	19 Nov 1941 19 Nov 1941 19 Nov 1941 19 Nov 1941 19 Nov 1941 19 Nov 1941 19 Nov 1941 19 Nov 1941 19 Nov 1941 19 Nov 1941 3 May 1945 3 May 1945 3 May 1945	3 July 1944 3 July 1944 3 July 1944 3 July 1944 3 July 1944 3 July 1944 3 July 1944 3 July 1944 3 July 1944 3 July 1944 15 June 1945 15 June 1945 15 June 1945	RAF North Weald RAF Bradwell Bay	As a detachment from RAF Croydon As a detachment from RAF Hornchurch .
	No. 410 Squadron	de Havilland Mosquito II de Havilland Mosquito XIII	8 November 1943 29 April 1944	30 December 1943 18 June 1944	RAF Castle Camps RAF Zeals .	Squadron Code?
	No. 442 Squadron	North American Mustang III	23 March 1945	17 May 1945	RAF Digby .	Squadron Code?
	No. 487 Squadron	de Havilland Mosquito VI	31 December 1943	18 April 1944	RAF Gravesend .	Squadron Code:EG.
	No. 488 Squadron	de Havilland Mosquito XXX	9 October 1944	15 November 1944	B 48/Amiens/Glisy.	Squadron Code:ME.
	No. 515 Squadron	Boulton Paul Defiant II Bristol Beaufighter IIF	1 June 1943	15 December 1943	RAF Little Snoring .	Squadron Code?
	No. 530 Squadron	Douglas Boston II (Turbinlite) Douglas Boston III (Turbinlite) Hawker Hurricane IIC	8 September 1942	25 January 1943	Disbanded	This squadron only used Hunsdon during its timespan.



De Havilland Mosquito FB Mk VI of No. 487 Squadron RNZAF based at Hunsdon, Hertfordshire, 28 February 1944.

BIRTHDAYS

April, May & June Birthdays

Philip Boulton, Steve Signorelli,
Ken Herts, Damian Harriss,
David McAlister, Robin Ward,
Richard Wiltshire, Andrew Sollitt,
Dean Zimmer, Andrew Quinn,
Andrew Manley, Paul O'Brien,
Raymond Stokes, Mark Gipson,
Kevin O'Neill, Stephen Loxham
Graham Marsden, Colin Middleton
John Pearce, Thomas Gilbert,
John Clawson, Chris Mercer,
Mary Palmer, Glen Pagdin,
Andy Walker, Kris Aylett,
Stephen Shakeshaft, Brian Morley,
Paul Phillips, Steven Carlisle,
Paul Patterson, John Hannaford,
Peter Cross, Diane Child,
Catherine Halkett, Guy Livingston,
Barry Higgs, Kevin McIntyre,
Geoffrey Anstey, David Beardsall,
Dave Langford, Patrick Cobb,
Paul Stephens, Derek Plummer,
Nick Mitchener, John Singleton,
Rob Thomas, John Oliver Taylor,
Steve Mullis (WOW!!), Ken Daynes,
Louisa Lumsden, David Petersen,
Paul Larkin, Brian Watling,
Derrick Stone, Clive Buckland,
Geoff Clarke, Tony Plunkett,
Terry Boissel, Dave Frost

*Here's wishing you all a
"Very Happy Birthday"
From us all at the Branch*



WINGS APPEAL



One of the major tasks for 'Global Branch 1370' is to raise funds so that the 'Royal Air Forces Association' can carry out its charitable work within the RAF Family. This is never easy, even for the many Local Branches in the UK that operate as a closely organised group. But it is even more difficult for our Branch Members 'flying solo', so to speak, and usually within the area of a local RAFA Branch who's toes we do not want to tread on.

The 'Wings Appeal Week' in September is the time that local RAFA Branches will be camped in the entrance of your local supermarket with an RAF Ensign covered table laden with 'goodies', 'stickers' and 'Collecting Tins'. This is not to be ridiculed as it is a very effective and proven method of raising Awareness and Funds, but they will be there as part of their team. This is something that is not so easy for you to do as you could well be flying solo!! However, there may be one or two of you that find a local 'venue' that has not any other Branch booked in to collect during September and that you think could well suit you, if so now is the time to start organising it. All you need to do is to let me, Graham Croft, have the details of the store and we will arrange all the necessary and legal requirements. Plus of course we can organise delivery of the necessary goodies for you.

Whilst some of you might feel slightly put off by the last paragraph. Please don't be. Very few, if any, of us have the Time, Ability or even Willingness to operate at the level of a physical branch. But that does not mean that you couldn't do 'something', and of course we should not have to limit our efforts to September. Why not Tomorrow? Next week? Or next Month?

I intend to publish a list of suggestions as to methods of raising funds, from inviting a few neighbours to your house for 'Tea and Cake' to making a sponsored 'Parachute Jump'. Prior to that we would like to have any thoughts that you may have on the subject and I would appreciate it if you could initially let me know by e-mail on wings.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com as soon as possible (please put RAFA as the start of the 'subject' line to help me identify e-mails).

One of the 'things' I found out at the Conference 'Workshop' was that RAFA HQ can provide all sorts of useful paraphernalia, especially 'collecting boxes', to help us. We have only to put forward a convincing reason to have them.

I am here to provide 'Advice', 'Assistance' and 'Ideas'. Please use this facility and also keep us informed of your progress.

Graham Croft

Wings Appeal Organisers
How "Wings Appeal" worked for three of our Group.

Merchandise Shop (A small Selection)

Why not visit our Merchandise Shop from which we sell Polo Shirts, T-Shirts, Sweatshirts, & Hats etc. These are of a very good quality & come with a choice of logos on them including, obviously, our branch logo. The prices are very reasonable & the branch gets a donation for each item purchased. Just copy and past this link into your search engine <http://stores.clothes2order.com/royal-air-forces-association-glo/> and click on it to view our store - 'happy shopping'.

Every purchase made will donate a small amount to the branch funds that will help us to function fully as a branch of The RAF Association.



114 Fruit Of The Loom Heavy Cotton T-Shirt
£11.99



Ladies Vests
161 Fruit of the Loom Athletic Vest
£11.99



141 Fruit of the Loom Hooded Sweatshirt
£20.99



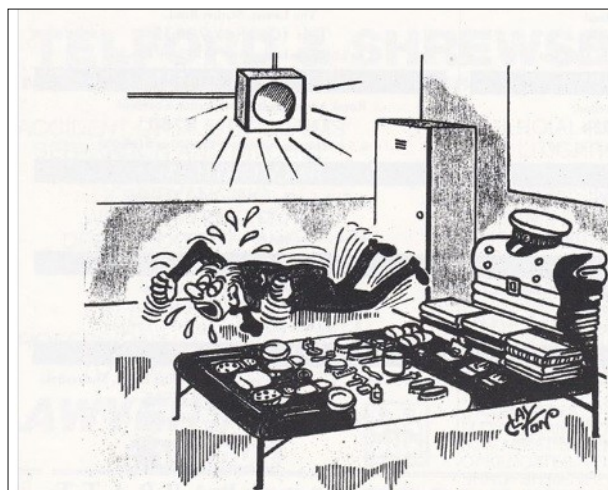
050 RAFA Branch Logo 8cm 5 Panel
Memphis Baseball Cap
£9.99



054 Veteran Logo 8cm 5 Panel
Memphis Baseball Cap
£9.99



027 Fruit Of The Loom Raglan Sweatshirt
£19.99



'The kit inspection due to take place at 0830 has been cancelled...'



9CAG.COM/GAG/4692621



INFORMATION & EVENTS PAGE



2020 Events

at the most complete WW1 Aerodrome in the UK

- Mothers Day
Sunday 22nd March
- VE Day Street Party
Saturday 9th May
- Wings & Wheels *
Sunday 31st May
- Armed Forces Day
Saturday 27th June
- Strings & Wings
Saturday 4th July
- Stow Maries At War *
Saturday 18th & Sunday 19th July
- Guild of Craft Day
Sunday 13th September
- Large Model Airshow
Saturday 19th & Sunday 20th September
- Remembrance Day
Sunday 8th November

GLOBAL BRANCH 1370

AGM 2021

FRI, 12 MAR 2021-14 MAR 2021
GLOBAL BRANCH 1370 AGM 2021
WO's & Sgts Mess, RAF Valley, LL65 3NY



Free Admission

We're open daily from
10.00am
(Parking Charges Apply)
Also Support us at:
COSFORD
&
DUXFORD
[https://
www.rafmuseum.org.uk/
london/](https://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/london/)



Wings Appeal Week' in September is to raise funds
for the 'Royal Air Forces Association' Contact
Graham Croft, for more information at:
wings.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com



The RAFA Global Branch's Dirty Half Dozen

Team fundraising for [The RAF Association \(RAFA\)](#)

Event: The RAFA Global Branch Dirty Half Dozen, on 10th September 2020

Friday 10th September 2020 at RFC Rendcomb Airfield, The Whiteway, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 7DF will see 6 members/supporters of the RAFA Global 1370 Branch take to the skies like no sane person ever should, tied to the top wing of a bi-plane. Crazy, stupid or just plain idiotic? Maybe yes to all three points, BUT they are doing it for one reason only and THAT is to raise money for the RAF Association and that means The RAF Family. In order to do that all of us crazy people need YOUR help.

Without **YOUR** help it is totally pointless us turning up on the 10th. So please, please folks dig deep and donate to our cause. Our thanks will be never ending. You might hear it in our screams from 1,000ft!!!!

We provide welfare support to the RAF family
Charity Registration
No. 226686 (England & Wales) - SC037673 Scotland)



Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund
CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

1919
2019

We are working with The Recycling Factory to raise funds through the recycling of unwanted inkjet cartridges. The RAF Benevolent Fund receives up to £3.50 for every recyclable inkjet cartridge! To download your freepost label, please visit The Recycling Factory on the link below
https://bit.ly/2WOqg2r?fbclid=IwAR0JyllezMbSAIsY8pIWYWPnYGHrK2CuEXPp-4Gw9JgsiK9VZAg_2hmN4