



NZ Bomber Command Association (Inc)

NEWSLETTER February 2012

A Word From Our President:

To the committee and members of Bomber Command,
It is with much regret that I have to give up my post as President.

Old age has caught up with me both physically and mentally. Nothing wrong with me other than old age I hope!!! At least, so the Doc says.

Ron Mayhill has graciously agreed to take my place and I feel sure he will be the right bloke for the job. Lots of experience in Bomber Command and wears the DFC.

A great chap to take the place of a Nav who now feels he cannot really do a good job.

To those members who may have had a bit of a struggle on the phone with me at times, I apologise and blame it on tone deafness!!

Thanks a lot to Peter Wheeler and his hardworking team who have nursed me along with patience and good humour. Good luck and press on through 2012.

Cheers,

Bunny Burrows

Thanks Bunny for keeping us all on track.

From Ron Mayhill Our New President

Greetings to all. And what a New Year with this wonderful trip to London.

I greet you as your new President, albeit acting, temporary, and unpaid.

Last year I had a call from Bunny Burrows asking me to take over as age was catching up fast. I declined but readily agreed to help in any way possible.

Next thing I was "administrated" by our very able, on-the-ball Peter Wheeler, first as VP and then as London trip President.

It will not be easy to follow Bill Simpson and Bunny Burrows, two great fellows. I had a long and happy association with Bill, as Secretary and I first saw Bunny at Chedburgh HCU.



Bunny and the boys at MOTAT to look at the new BC display area

The Dedication of the Bomber Command Memorial by the Queen is the fulfillment of our hopes and dreams, regrettably belated but nevertheless most gratifying.

It is a magnificent memorial in a prime Green Park location near the Duke of Wellington Arch.

I am sure all those who are fortunate enough to be able to travel will have a memorable experience.

We will be well taken care of and we are grateful to the government through the Veteran Affairs and Defence Departments.

(Ron Mayhill DFC, did a tour on 75 Sqn as a Bomb Aimer. He is also author of *Bombs on Target*.)

CONTACT US

President: **Ron Mayhill**
Appt 440, Edmund Hillary Retirement Village
221 Abbotts Way, Remuera, Auckland 1050
Phone: 09 570 2213
Email: ronmayhill@xtra.co.nz

Administration: **Peter Wheeler**
PO Box 317111, Hobsonville 0664
Phone: 09 416 5302
Email: spirits@xtra.co.nz

MOTAT Rebuilding

All will be aware of the great new 'super hangar' built at MOTAT. Additional funds were found to carry out work on the original NZBCA / FAA Solent Society funded hangar. It is now water proofed, sound proofed and very smart.

At the same time much of the original Bomber Command display area was rebuilt with many items being removed from show.

Following an inspection by Auckland based Bomber Command veterans, MOTAT have agreed to change some items and add others to improve historical accuracy and better reflect New Zealand's service in RAF Bomber Command.

This work continues.

On the plus side, the Lancaster went back onto its wheels after two decades or more on stands, while the new colour TV displays include an interactive touch screen system that seems to keep both young and old boys very involved.

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NZBCA Membership

Membership is free and open to any service member of RAF Bomber Command. This includes all Groups, OTU, HCU etc.

Recognition of Middle and Far East heavies and 2nd TAF bods are also now included.

The RAF Heraldic Trust kindly designed an Association emblem at NO cost and badges have been produced from Association funds. The badges have a blue background, carry the Kings Crown and are fully approved for dress and formal use. Associate members badges have a black field.



Badges and membership cards will be presented to veterans at the various functions held around the country or mailed to those who can't attend.

If you know of any Bomber Command veteran not a member please pass on his details to us for follow up.

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Associate Membership

This has always been available to other Air Force servicemen, historians and family but as we all get older it's important that others come along and join so the responsibilities of NZBCA to maintain the displays, memorials and the rightful recognition of Bomber Command crews continues.

We ask that you propose a friend or family member to become an Associate. A \$15 joining fee covers the cost of a NZBCA badge, membership card and postage. Like veteran members the newsletter is free and there are no annual subs. Just contact NZBCA Admin.

NZBCA Charitable Trust

As your Association depends upon donations to fund any major works (like the 2009 Memorial) we have been required to meet the changing requirements of donors. Initially this was to be an Incorporated Society (which we are) and now the requirement has been lifted to Charitable Trust status.

As the NZBCA may require funding in future, applications have been made in the name of NZBCA.

The Trustees listed are:

R (Bunny) Burrows President
Ron Mayhill Vice President
Des Andrewes Veteran Executive
Roy Montrowe Veteran Executive
Frank Prebble Veteran Executive
Peter Wheeler Admin (Veterans nephew)
Ian Barron Membership (Veterans son)
Phil Furner Archives (Veterans son)

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Archives

The NZBCA archives are a treasure trove and today with email and digital photos, they are being used every week to help researchers and families get details of RAF Bomber Command and the New Zealanders in it.

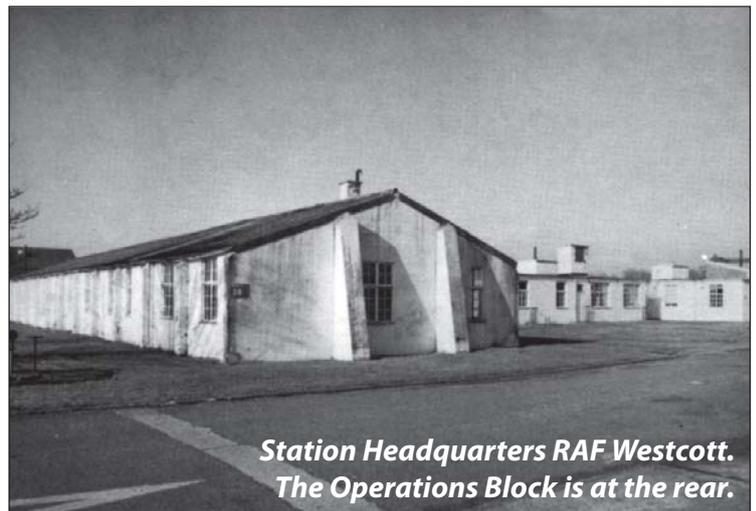
Just to give you an example, since the New Year we have responded to enquiries from families (5), overseas researchers (2), local historians (2) and TV production companies (2).

So those old photos, log books and scraps of paper are historically valuable - so don't throw them away.

NZBCA archives will copy photographs and scan log books, we don't need to keep the originals (but are minders for many). This can often be done at your place using digital cameras.

The back page photos show just what is still available out there, we need to record it before it is lost.

Contact Peter Wheeler 09 416 5302 (see admin listing).



**Station Headquarters RAF Westcott.
The Operations Block is at the rear.**

Grandslam

In January we held an impromptu get together at MOTAT with S/L Tony Iveson DFC (VP RAF BCA) who was on holiday.

Also at this 617 meet up were Arthur Joplin (a fellow 617 skipper on the Tirpitz raids), John Gumbley (nephew of Barney Gumbley) and June Woods (neice of Bruce Hosie).



Pictured are June Woods with Arthur and in the background W/C Ian McPherson recently returned from London as NZ Defence Liaison Officer with Tony Iveson.

Tony with Arthur and our Grandslam replica being built by Association members at MOTAT

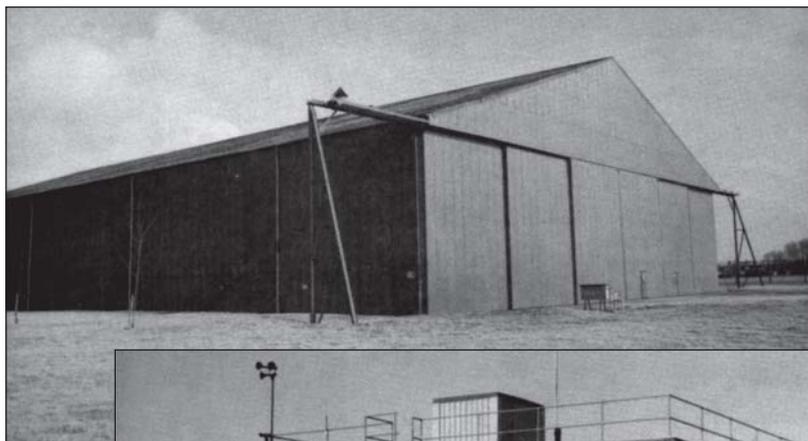


11 OTU Westcott

This RAF base was home to many Kiwi airmen. Some as trainees, others instructors. Some (like Des Andrewes) were both, but at different times!

The airfield has been a test area for MOD rocket engine research and development. Ed Andrews has been based at Westcott for the past 50 years and now approaching retirement. He is very keen to produce a leaflet / handbook for all those visitors who come back to look. A small display area has been built but Ed needs more photos of the war years as he has tracked down only five. If you have any photos, mementoes or notes you can share please contact admin. If you have any special stories I will get Ed to contact you directly.

Do you recognise these recent pictures of Westcott?



One of RAF Westcott five hangars. Note the Tannoy loud-speaker



The wartime Watch Officer/Flying Control now with weatherproof cladding. The original 24 hour clock is still in use.

Calendar

March 25 1100 MOTAT Aviation Meola Road - NZBCA meeting and re-dedication of the Memorial room. Light refreshments. All welcome. RSVP attached. Thanks to Phil Furner for arranging this.

March 30 – 75 Squadron Reunion.
Contact: Glen Turner,
Phone 021 732 855
Email 75sqn.assnz@windowslive.com

March 31 0700 – DC3 Departs Ardmore for Ohakea and the RNZAF 75th Anniversary airshow. Flight sold out.

April 11 1200 – RNZAF 75th Anniversary Luncheon. Te Atatu RSA. Guest Chief of RNZAF. \$30. Contact Peter Mason 66 Neil Ave, Te Atatu 0610. Phone 834 5899

June 3 1030 – Commonwealth Bomber Command Day. Wreath laying. Sunday, 10.30 at the Armoury, 2nd floor Auckland War Memorial Museum. Medals please. The NZBCA, RSA and RNZAF will lay wreaths at the memorial bronze (outside the Spitfire gallery).

June 24 – Departure date for veterans to the RAF Bomber Command Memorial dedication in London.

RAF Bomber Command Memorial Unveiling - Thursday June 28 2012

Thanks to all NZBCA members who have signed up to travel (62 of you) and the publicity uncovered over thirty 'new' veterans.

Progress and news have been frustratingly slow but following a visit to RAF Bomber Command HQ, and visits from their VP Tony Iveson, and the NZDF attaché to the NZ High Commission in London we have some pukka gen.

Time / Date – 11am Thursday 28 June, Green Park, Piccadilly, London.

Dedication by HM The Queen

The space is extremely limited with seated spaces for 920 veterans.

The Park area will be set with screens etc for another 7000 – 9000.

All entry will be by ticket only.

RAF BCA will issue the tickets on a pro-rata basis.

THE DRAFT PROGRAMME FOR THE DAY IS AS FOLLOWS:

Thursday 28 June 2012

| | | |
|------|---|---|
| TBA | Depart Hotel for Green Park area or staging area All timings below are subject to change | Lancaster fly past Closing words Tornado fly past |
| 1100 | Arrive Green Park | |
| O/A | Security Checks Move to marquee area / tea / coffee / water / toilets | 1300 VIP departures |
| 1130 | Seated | O/C Opening of the primary and secondary areas to allow freedom of movement between the ticketed and VIP / Veterans area – view memorial and lay tributes |
| 1200 | Ceremony commences Unveiling of the Memorial Prayers / hymns and dedication | 1400 Depart Green Park for Hotel TBC PM Evening at leisure |

The Numbers

This event is truly huge and because of very limited space the numbers attending will be strictly enforced as the site beside Piccadilly (which will not be closed) could be overwhelmed.

Just consider that there were about 100,000 RAF survivors, all just a train ride away, Canada 24,000, Australia 10,000, and our own 4,000. Sure many have passed on, but every veteran will have left a family. The RAF Bomber Command Association estimated there could be 250,000 family members wanting to attend – and that's a lot!



The Association has been in close contact with Veterans Affairs and details of all those who have registered are now with them.

A planning meeting with Veterans Affairs and NZDF protocol organisers last week set out some guide lines:

1. Only servicemen with New Zealand numbers can be assisted.
2. The assistance will be business class travel with accommodation and catering.
3. The NZDF/VA will **provide** caregivers (minders) on a ratio of one per two veterans. Hence partners/family will **not** be included in the official party.

So firstly, my sincere apologies to all the RAF members who we thought would be included. Also to those partners we again thought would be the obvious caregivers. Wrong twice!

The NZVA/DF organizers have put the following together:

Saturday 23 June 2012

Gather at RNZAF Base Auckland 24 hours in advance of each flight departing Auckland International Airport.

Veterans / NZDF and VANZ caregivers across two flights

Sunday 24 June 2012

Rest day / arrival day

Monday 25 June 2012

Rest day / arrival day

Tuesday 26 June 2012

Rest day

PM Reception at the NZ High Commission TBC

Wednesday 27 June 2012

Programme to be determined

1800-

2000 Reception for veterans – Guild Hall London hosted by the City of London

Friday 29 June 2012

Rest day

Saturday 30 June 2012

Possible NZ service in Cambridge (Mepal / Feltwell)

Sunday 31 June / Monday 1 July 2012

Depart for New Zealand

After consultation the NZBCA put a proposal that allows for some freedom with return dates and includes a side trip to Newmarket / Mepal / Feltwell where the UK based Friends of 75 Squadron would put on a NZ Memorial service and get together. Both of these proposals are being considered.

What's Next?

If you have already registered:

1. NZVA will contact you within the month with forms and medicals to be completed.
2. If you wish to vary return dates or need more details, contact Aaron Hanley 0800 483 8372 now. If permitted, any extended stay will need to be covered by personally funded accommodation and medical insurance.
3. If you have partners/family who wish to attend, I suggest they book air fares and accommodation now. London in June will be a busy and expensive place. Judy Wolf 09 479 7589 is able to help you with bookings.
4. Tickets for outer area will be restricted and we will help with allocation. Priority will be one per family member who has a veteran on parade.

Things you should know:

- a) The NZ High Commission will not have an allocation of public tickets, only those for the official party.
- b) The veterans travel (Air New Zealand or RNZAF) and accommodation is not confirmed yet so we are unable to even suggest which area of London the veterans will stay.

If you haven't registered and wish to go:

Advise us but contact Aaron Hanley 0800 483 8372 at Veterans Affairs URGENTLY – email aaron.hanley@nzdf.mil.nz

If you are an ex RAF man and wish to go:

Contact RAF Bomber Command Association NOW by email. But if you have a good case to be part of the NZVA group contact Aaron Hanley ASAP.

Similarly if family of ex RAF people wish to go they must contact RAF BCA as there will be no general allocation of tickets from NZ services.

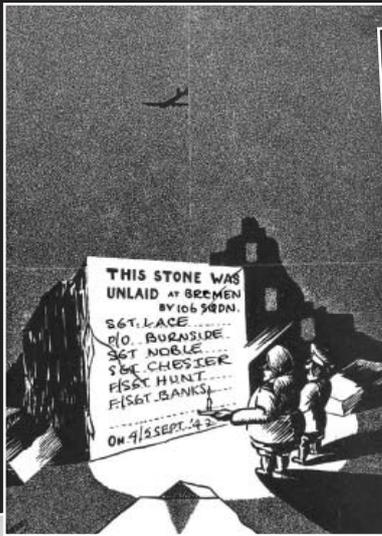
That said, that's the programme so far. Please allow for changes.



RAF Mepal photographed by Dick Broadbent, DFC (75 Sqn) in 1943

Photographs from Mel Banks and Ken Dalzell

No 75 (New Zealand) Squadron flying in formation over RAF Mepal on return from a daylight raid on Le Havre 11th September 1944



Extract from Christmas Arrangements, 1942.

CHRISTMAS EVE:

18.00—22.00 hours Airmen's Mess—Dance for all Ranks, including W.A.A.F. and relations or friends.

CHRISTMAS DAY:

- 07.30—08.30 hours Breakfast
- 07.30—08.00 hours Church of England Holy Communion in Station Chapel. *W. P. Keen*
- 08.15 hours Roman Catholic Service in the Station Church.
- 09.15 hours Carol Service conducted by the Station Chaplain—in the Station Church.
- 10.00 hours Comic Football: Officers v. Sergeants.
Sergeants v. Airmen.
W.A.A.F. v. Mixed.
- Netball:
All teams will assemble on the parade ground and be played to the Sports Field by the Station Band.
- 12.00 hours Station Commander visits Sick Quarters.
- 12.30 hours Christmas Dinner in Airmen's Mess. R.A.F. and W.A.A.F. Officers and Senior N.C.O.'s will wait on Airmen and Airwomen.
- 12.35 hours The Station Commander on behalf of the Officers gives Christmas Greetings to all in the Airmen's Mess.
- 16.00 hours Tea.
- 19.00—01.00 hours Station Ball in Airmen's Mess—for all ranks, including W.A.A.F. and relations or friends. *W. P. Keen*

BOXING DAY:

- 10.30 hours Normal Mealtimes.
- 14.00 hours Station Military Band to play on Parade Ground (weather permitting). Organised Games on the Sports Field.
- 19.00—22.00 hours Airmen's Mess Social for Airmen and Airwomen, and relations or friends.
- 19.00 hours Dinner for all Mess Staffs and Station Band in W.A.A.F. Mess. To be waited on by W.A.A.F.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM THE STATION COMMANDER:

W. P. Keen
I know you would all much rather be on leave so I will wish you the next best thing
at Happy Christmas
at Messes Heyford.

W. P. Keen
1942. *g/c*



Was **DIE WOCHE** zeigt — und was sie verschweigt



NZ Bomber Command Association (Inc)

Invitation

To Our Service of Re-dedication of the Bomber Command Memorial Room MOTAT

When / Where

1100 hrs – Sunday March 25

MOTAT Aviation Building – Meola Road, Western Springs, Auckland

Order

- Welcome by NZBCA President and MOTAT Director
- Re-dedication Service by Rev. Jack Ward

Friends and family welcome

We will then adjourn to the Pt. Chevalier RSA for lunch where a \$17 buffet style meal will be served.

Payment will be made at the time. *See overleaf for directions.* Contact Phil Furner 276 3321



RSVP NZBCA
Box 317111
Hobsonville 0664

By March 16

Name.....

Guests.....

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