

CONVERSATIONS WITH ALAN THOMSETT

STEEPLE ASHTON 17 NOVEMBER 2008 & DECEMBER 2008



Key: AT – Flying Officer Alan Henry “Tommy” Thomsett. Born 1924. Enlisted 1942, pilot on 1473 Flight and 192 Squadron (100 Group), Wellington, Foulsham. Flew 40.5 operations. Later instructed and carried out trials work, also on Wellingtons. Worked for BAC at Filton post-war.

SB – Steve Bond

DF – Dick Forder

AT – ““It was different...some others you know.”

SB - “192 wasn’t it? Was that Foulham?”

AT - “Yeah. Well, yes. Actually I started on with 3 Group...was it 3 Group? ...1473 Flight. Have you heard of that? (“I haven’t come across that, no”) Well 1473 and 1474 were signals flights and they eventually merged to become 192 Squadron after a bit and bits of 109 came into it somewhere, never understood quite where.”

SB - “But they were Wellington flights as well were they?”

AT - “We had a mixture ?? which used to go to Cambridge quite often down at ? We had Wellingtons ICs, S3s? and Anson’s ?? and this was 80 ? wing. Does that mean anything at all? (“It does, yes”) Well it would do, yes, bound to. We were the sort of airborne ? if you like and I didn’t realise until about two years ago just how huge ? wing was.”

“The main job there was to locate the beams coming out of Holland and France in particular and track them and ring up Bradley? and say: We won! And then report that back and then ? a plot could give an indication of what it was like as it happened that night. How much of a use that really worked out to be I don’t know but I think some and it was quite tricky actually locating it. And then the other part of the job which I ? was to come in with the German bomber stream and check the efficiency of the ground Jerry ?” <0.53>

SB - "Oh that sounds rather tricky."

AT - "It sounds terribly dangerous. ("Well yeah!") Guarding the Channel and we tracked them in from their base at Ford ? and they just rush in the skies at you know enormous rate of knots and ?? and clambered up there and then followed the beam. And I remember it was unreadable at Crawley but of course from Crawley you could see London so it would only require one incendiary or one flare you know and then of course they had the target illuminated. I don't know how much more efficient they got." <0.67>

"Then we did a detachment, three aircraft went up to Turnhouse for the winter and we did the trials of 'jamming' and it meant going out and gradually climbing up to maximum altitude way out beyond ? to check the efficiency of the jamming transmitter which was based in the aircraft. That was quite interesting actually. And while we there it merged into 192, that was the beginning of it." <0.78>

SB - "So when you were doing the, getting into the German bomber stream, was that still pre-192?"

AT - "Yes it was. It was based at Radlett the 80 wing HQ was at Radlett and that was of course Anson again you know that's where he came from, ANC ? 100 Group. And on one or two cases we landed at Radlett and then reported direct to him ??? quite interesting..." <0.89>

SB - "On that occasion when you were checking the efficiency of the jamming...where were you positioned relative to where the German bomber stream was? Ahead, behind?"

AT - "Behind. I imagine...I don't...'cause I'd no way of knowing. And all you could get was a radar telephone call and saying there's a radar image of a gang approaching from France and you know, get up there quickly with an approximate location and just ? the sky until you hit the beam. Since you knew where the beam was coming from because they tracked it, it wasn't too difficult." <101>

SB - "So what year are we talking about here?"

AT - "1943. And then it merged into 192 that winter and went ? Little ? ; unhappy memory! Well a sea of mud, you know! I was only there one day thank God! And we went on detachment to Edinburgh, came back into Foulsham...and then somehow we merged in and then we lost some and kept others, I don't know...mysteries of the Air Force you know! And then of course there we had three flights of Mosquitos, Halifax ? and then we had the ? 10s and we went from there." <116>

SB - "So what was a regular op then, what would have been involved in that?"

AT - "It was all coastal. As far as Wellingtons were concerned, all coastal. Mosquitos, you know they were deep penetration and not only that but they were equipped so they were night fighters really with all the gubbins on trial and the Halifaxes, well they did a variety of operations but the Wellingtons, we were purely coastal. We

covered the coast from half way up Norway, down Denmark, Germany then Holland, Belgium and France right round to about almost seventy miles North of St Sebastian in Spain. And up the coast, we did quite a bit of Western approaches but of course it's like, almost cloak and dagger set up to a large extent; it was a question of ..."

SB - "We were talking about coastal operations."

AT - "That's right. The problem with all this of course from your point of view, is that I don't know what I'm talking about! Well it's true isn't it? You understand! The briefing we got was minimal from ? and the special...we carried a special operator always and they were given a minimum briefing as well but obviously had more than anybody else. But they were told really you know searches a circle frequency band or something like that and note everything that happens and of course they had kit; they had receivers and they had ?scope and they had a camera ?? to photograph the trace of the tube you know, and in many cases they had a wire recorder so they could record the signals. And their job really was to note it all down and report back you know in due time. The only time the pilot came into it (apart from having to put the thing in the right place) was you had a switch which he could bring a signal through to me at the front and for example, if he was picking up a beam...he might switch me through and then I could follow it if necessary or try shooting. That's the only contact one had."

"I mean for example, the trip we all ? was the one down...in sight of the St Sebastian lighthouse because there we carried out at about 2,000 feet and the understanding was that we were looking for the V-3 which was under trial there. But of course I don't think it was anything to do with it; it seems to have turned out to have been homing beacons for U-boats coming into St Sebastian. But it was really, a lot of it was just searching to see what was in ? and then we got ? mixed up with the V-2 which was a bore because the Air Ministry wanted to prove that the V-2 was or was not a radio controlled ? and the only way we could do that was to go and sit on ? pilots and when something went up to see if it produced any signal. And of course it never did. So it was a sort of negative thing altogether. We did that by sitting out there for six hours at a time going up and down, back and forth and then we kept that going for twenty four hours, day and night." <183>

SB - "Was that low altitude as well?"

AT - "No, that was about 15,000 feet something like that. Low altitude by whose standard?!"

SB - "Well yeah compared with your 2,000 feet or so. ("yeah, sure") I mean would that have been, with the 2,000 feet supposedly V-3, probably U-boat, was that day, night, both?"

AT - "I mean from what I understand now, I think it was U-boat which were homing ? beacons or whatever, I don't know."

SB - "Was that at night or day or both?"

AT - "At night. It was a long old flight. Of course we carried no bombs or anything like that so we had these ? tanks in the bomb bay." <193>

SB - "So what was the crew then? You had the special operator...?"

AT - "Yes, we had nav, wireless op, special operator and we had carried two gunners. Some of the aircraft had a nose turret faired in but no gun and so in effect you were carrying a spare body some of the time, which I thought rather silly. And his main function really was to play with the fuel cogs you know! I always felt sorry for that chap. In fact in our case, our rear gunner was on his second tour so he did twenty five compared with our standard forty."

SB - "Forty, right."

AT - "Well yes, it was because the thing was not lethal."

SB - "So you had to do an extra ten then to get...tour?"

AT - "Yes that's right. And in some cases particularly on the V-1 and down the English Channel and that sort of stuff, and North of the Channel, (which apparently was where we lost aircraft), they were classed as half ops some of them.?? Forty and a half! I ? come home on the last one!" <210>

SB - "What we you doing with the V-1s then? Was that the same thing, see if there was any sort of...."

AT - "Well I've no idea quite frankly. We were asked to plot them if we saw them coming over but the thing was really rather absurd because you couldn't plot with any accuracy when you saw a flame going across underneath you could you? It was so grossly inaccurate that ??? But I think the truth of it really was it was nothing to do with the V-1 at all, it was just a general search and if we saw something like a V-1 coming over, to say so. I don't think it was anything of very significance, it was so grossly inaccurate."

SB - "You mentioned you lost an aircraft. What was the circumstance of that?"

AT - "I don't know."

SB - "That was...the Channel type...?"

AT - "No, Ireland somewhere..."

SB - "Did the German Air Force come and show any interest in you at any time?"

AT - "Well that's the astonishing thing. Only once did we knowingly. I mean a lot of the time we were the only aircraft out in bulk alarm so we were a rather sitting target if anybody could be bothered to ? North Sea or something. But I've no idea why they left us alone because I mean sitting on the coast, everybody knew we were there!"

SB - "You assume they probably had a fair idea of what you were doing?"

AT - "Oh gosh yes because we had...I mean I know somewhere off such coast somewhere, ?? there was a white light flying you know sort of this formation business, that was a ?? you could see it silhouetted and we knew it was a German night fighter because we knew what their colours ?? where of course ?? cat and mouse immediately. And he stayed with us and paid no attention whatsoever and after a moment or two I decided it was about time we went somewhere else but he never followed and I don't know to this day why not. But the astonishing thing was that some time later when I was instructing at Market Harborough...the signal came round: 'All Bomber Command stations ??? and it was to say 'Be careful! Keep your eyes open. Don't talk.' It was that sort of message you know and here's an example of somebody else knowing what's going on. And they reported an incident how an aircraft was identified and it quoted the registration letters of the aircraft and it was said to be believed to be based at Foulsham, 192 Squadron; this was a German signal! ??? Funny game ?? It was rather interesting to read the (I've got it) a book on the German Air Force on their 100 Group and the ??? it was almost a sexual thing! But like I said because of the secrecy attached to that squadron nobody really knew what the hell was going on and well you know, that was it...it would have been nice to have known before..." <269>

SB - "So it started off in winter '43 into '44, is that right? ("That's right") So then you'd finished your...."

AT - "I'd finished...thing here...I started at 1473 Flight in October 1943, we merged...to Turnhouse then back into Foulham in March '44 and stayed with them...finished in October 1944. Forty and a half!"

SB - "What did you think of the Wellington?"

AT - "I loved the damn thing because it was so utterly reliable you know. And I stayed on Wellingtons after that, I stayed and instructed on Wellingtons and then I got a bit fed up with it having had two pupils go adrift unnecessarily. I thought 'Oh dear!' nothing to do with me but hey, why bother ??? second tour ??? doesn't help. I quite enjoyed it going there but then I knew a chap in the Air Ministry who had been the boss ??? and I rang him up one day and said 'Have you got any jobs going?' you know and he said 'Yes, there's a vacancy I know of...a pilot and it's the Air Ministry Secret Flying Unit' and that was our Mark 14s, ex coastal command, white things with a ? ..." <306>

SB - "Where was that?"

AT - "That was at Honiley. ("oh yes") There's a VOR there...and we used to do the airborne checking of BABC. Does that mean anything to you? ("No") BABC was 'Be Approached, Be Consistent' It was quite interesting because it meant you got around the country and so on and there was always a fight to get to transport command stations because all your food and ? were better because they brought it from abroad and more expensive! Lyneham was a favourite."

"Yeah it's amazing how accurate that thing was; you could get within...I don't know....certainly you know still looking where you were going (in my case

obviously because they were doing it in broad daylight so you could check the accuracy). But in my one was spot on and very, very narrow reading and in theory you get within 30 feet of the ground which is incredibly low; over 30 feet ?? threshold of the runway. I wouldn't like to prove that in the dark." <321>

SB - "That's amazing! That's about as good as it gets now."

AT - "Well it must be. Must be, yeah...it was good."

SB - "So we're into '45 presumably when you were doing that?"

AT - "Yes, '45 and '46. Then I came out just in time. Why I joined the VR later when it reformed in 1948 at Filton. That was Tiger Moths..."

SB - "I spotted the Tiger Moth (*model*) in the ? "

AT - "That was given to me, yes it was a wonderful gesture that it really was, the chap was so kind. Up at Horsham St.Faith we've got the Norwich Aviation Museum. Have you ever been there? ("I have") Well we've got a ...100 Group have got a..."

SB - "I haven't been up there since the 100 Group bit has been there, no."

AT - "Well we've got a ? and lots of ? in it and ??? and there's a model of every aircraft in the group. I think they've all been made by the same chap I'm not sure, he'd made most of them anyhow, this fellow who lives not very far away. One aeroplane missing and each time I saw him I ribbed him about it: 'When are you going to put a real aeroplane in there?!' and he went to enormous trouble to get a...(he used two different kits to produce a Mark 10 Wellington and also to get some nose art for it). And I gave him a picture, a photograph of our crew ?? the cockpit of DGG which was ??? you see which we flew quite a bit and he reproduced...he made this model and he reproduced this because he had to do it. But the actual nose arch was probably half as big again as it was in real life because he couldn't get it smaller. Anyhow, I was really pleased to see this at long last...I go every year if I can to that reunion, a weekend they have which is quite an event actually, when I got there this time he said 'I've got something for you.' And he'd made that specially for me and you know which was very kind of him and he got an enormous ?? beautiful painting and this is the first or second Tiger Moth ever built and it's ? G-ACDC." <356>

SB - "Oh yes, Well known one which is still around."

AT - "I think it's still at Redhill."

SB - "Headcorn ? they moved it to."

AT - "Headcorn is it? In fact I went to the helicopter museum at Weston Super Mare with a chap who used to live in this area, (ex Air Force helicopter pilot at Bristow) and I'll tell you about that and he said 'Oh I've flown that.' ??? But he went to so much trouble that chap." <364>

SB - "So the VR at Filton then? What were you doing there?"

AT - "Well that started, the VR started in 1948 and thirteen of us went to ? Bristol. I was at Bristol ? I ? on the first day and signed up you know. And we went out to Filton and there were thirteen Tiger Moths. Well it couldn't be better could it?! And there were two ex Wing Commander instructors there ?? they'd retired and we actually went through the basic EFTS course again at weekends. And then we had ? lectures once a week at Puckle Church ? (which is now a prison of course, like other places the Air Force handed over). I stayed there for about two and a half years and then I found I couldn't cope with working in Trowbridge trying to do something else...it just didn't work out. In the end, I resigned after much difficulty...

"...and that was the end of it really. I found I got bored to tears with it and you can't do a great deal with Tiger Moths, you'll make yourself sick! It was all right but also I felt the purpose was low and rather wait...it was a bit of a waste because although the idea was to keep your hand in, it's really not quite the same thing as flying some sort of operational...and flights like that, it's like riding a bike a bit isn't it? I thought it rather a waste of time."

"I actually invested in going over to the other side of the aerodrome and I was interviewed by the whole squadron and they were real Dame ? chaps these were, they were all terribly grand to start with and they had maps sticking out of flying boots and top button undone and all this rubbish! And the CO was Stafford Cripps' son, (Chancellor of the Exchequer and I think he was, he was a funny chap). His first question was; 'What car did you come in?' So I thought 'I rode a bike!' so I was condemned before I started you know!" <0.29> 'Golf?' 'Yeah. Handicap?' 'Squash?' Yes I played squash. And this is how it went. And at the end I mean, he turned me down and I turned them down! Feeling was mutual...not the way to go about it though. I know we've all got to fit in but...rather a superior lot; they enjoyed going under the suspension bridge, that sort of thing...but that's the sort of rubbish you have."

SB - "Let's go back just to the other end of the career for a minute. You joined up '42? ("October '41") October '41 so ACRC I suppose?"

AT - "ACRC, Arsey Darcy ? "

SB - "ITW somewhere?"

AT - "Yes I went from there to Scarborough college....ITW. I bet you though that's the coldest place in the World! Taking orders from the top of a cliff from a ? sitting in the harbour you know in the snow!"

SB - "Then Arnold Scheme I expect?"

AT - "Yep. ? near Brunswick you know where we all went. ? single engine route there ???"

SB - "What course was it again? You did say earlier?"

AT - "43A. Last one was 43B. The ? scheme reunion still takes place – just. It's really failed the up this year. There you go. We used to have an annual meet up and a ? which was ideal and then we'd meet up with the Spitfire Society to share the area but ?? done an immense amount of work in keeping people together you know. I kept in touch with about four of them I suppose." <0.75>

SB - "Back to the UK after the ?"

AT - "UK, yeah came back here, then the usual messing about you know. And then I went to..."

SB - "The AFU somewhere?"

AT - "AFU at ? Cross, Oxford. I thought it was the best posting in the World there."

SB - "Really? How so? In what way?"

AT - "Well I loved flying that aeroplane to start with. I don't know why, I just took to it and of course, you could go away and dip down behind a mountain and you know, you could enjoy your low flying until your heart's content. That was great, I thoroughly enjoyed that. And from there to a place called Ossington ? at Sutton-on-Trent, near Newark for OTU. Then Burcoates?...you know Burcoates...("I know the name")...just south of Doncaster ??? Group HQ ("That's right, yes it was") well it was only about a mile up the hill from there; the airfield's still there...and two other places..." <0.99>

SB - "And Burcoates, what were you doing there?"

AT - "OTU yeah, same thing. We did a raid from there you know. ??? After OTU 'cause we'd left the crew by then you know we'd crewed up and I was very very fortunate with the crew I really was and there was a great deal of mutual respect amongst that lot. We had a mixture; we had a Canadian navigator who died last year, a Welsh wireless operator, a Norfolk gunner, a Newfoundland gunner and special operators, they varied but mainly a chap from Bosworth ? Hill you know." <117>

SB - "And was it predominantly NCO crew or predominantly...?"

AT - "Yes. In fact what happened was, apparently, when they crewed up, we were all NCOs right? And the...when we finished there and we had some leave, and I had a telegram ?? Oakington? ??? and that was cancelled and another one came through. I know one was ??? and the other one was Pathfinder which was unusual straight from there which I think was Stirling from memory. And they were both cancelled...and we were posted to...we ? Portsmouth ? 1473 Flight and ? and no idea what that ? And then we found it was...they wanted two NCO crew there because it fitted in with what they had you see. Anyway both these crews had above average ratings for some reason or another, I've no idea why...and so we went there. And CO, he was ???...it was quite a small unit we had there. Of course we had two Halifax's which ??? and we had the ???" <150>

SB - "Did you get commissioned while you were at...?"

AT - "By the squadron. ("You did.") Yeah. ??? ridiculous wasn't it then because our ? was to have lunch at one mess and supper in the next! Mind you, you see the ? scheme was geared to a small extent to Officer Crayleigh ? I mean there was the American scheme, for Americans and they were all commissioned anyhow weren't they? So there was a slight element of that, not much but I ??? But the jobs change. I remember the first day when we were rolled off that dyke ? and then it begged the question of starting up you know, it was ??? 'SIR!' came from down there. <167>

"They were superb crew that and we kept in touch like so many crews did and I eventually found the navigator, the wireless operator and one of the gunners and the nav came over from Canada and his son's been a couple of times, then we had his granddaughter here only this year. The radio, the wireless operator, he was at Chepstow so I used to see him quite frequently. I found him by sending postcards to every ? I could find and he responded. I came on the phone ??? 'Tommy? I'm shattered' he said 'Shattered!' and the gunner, old Cliff Leigh, he's still (he and I are the only two survivors as far as I know) and he lives up just outside Norwich so I see him every year. ("For the reunion") Yeah, it's great." <184>

SB - "You mentioned that you liked the Wellingtons so much, very reliable, did you have any particularly hairy moments...?"

AT - "No, none, not at all. Oh no, no, no. I mean, the thing was so damn reliable...no. I think the only time anything went wrong in the air was when we lost ?? and one engine...doesn't matter a damn does it? No. And of course once when the...I pulled this leg...I pulled this leg about...I've suffered from the memory of pulling that leg ever since. This was only about three years ago, (I ? about this) we came ? over the North Sea and I told him to switch off the ???... and ??? and he did it but he did it backwards and it stopped, that's when you've got to think quickly, haven't you? And I ? about this and oh gosh, he was so upset to be reminded about it, I've kicked myself ever since. No, the love was just ? incredibly high." <205>

SB - "Yes I've heard other Wellington chaps say the same thing."

AT - "Have you? ("yes") Never had any trouble. The thing worked to start with, stayed going you know. Frequently you had to have a mag change before you actually left the deck but I mean that happened so often...not a mag change, a plug change but that didn't have to be it did it?"

SB - "I suppose some of these ops were quite long, weren't they? You were cruising around for some time?"

AT - "Yeah we went up to maximum really. I mean we finished...on more than one occasion we were running on the cell tanks you know. I never liked that very much. Then we had FIDO at Foulsham; we came back in the early morning and...below, you know I was out on deck and we asked him whether we could have a go at FIDO because it had never been tried in fog in daylight before and you could see for miles away. I couldn't cope with it at all although we all saw a beam flying you know, the blasted thing cut out on the approach every time and in the end I had to divert and we landed. Chedburgh that's right, Chedburgh, five gallons left in each ??? we'd never

have been able to overshoot ??? But no, I hated that FIDO was a brute! It was all right in daylight...in night, I suppose you couldn't even see it coming up but in daylight, if you didn't see it, you were on top of it. So there was no chance of re-alignment if you couldn't..." <231>

SB - "So you thought it was pretty effective at night?"

AT - "Oh I think so because it was used a lot. I think it was seven stations with FIDO and we were one of those ???

"Davidstowe Moor. ("oh yes.") Re-fuel ? ourselves there and the aeroplane and then go from there and come straight back...??? We had Gee you know but of course you were well out of ? and we went down there on some ? regiment ? and using ? floats for navigation and ? and came back and as we were approaching the coast, I remember the nav saying 'We're four miles off course' which was pretty damn good! Except we hit the balloon barrage over Foyes. ("Not literally, I hope!") And apparently we came over...at 3,000...I knew they were meant to fly at no more than 3,000 feet I think it was, sounds terribly high that, doesn't it? ("yes, does actually") And I know we went over at 4,000 but they were above us. So we went out vertically! And there were eight, on the same ? back, I saw balloons in the sky everywhere, all ? ...when we got ? Cambridge on the way back, the blasted anti-aircraft battery let loose at us you know. It's not funny being fired at by your own people! I took off actually and took a photo! Because I told the bloke to fall out ?? fire off the ?? of the day ??? in the roof of the fuselage and he did that ??? 'not doing this' and we raised hell when we got back obviously. We had a phone call of apology from the front line...I think we got a bit more than that!" <263> Flak happy!"

DF - "Am I correct in saying that Gertie's identity was LP345? The aircraft only served with 192 Squadron and was damaged by fire after a tyre burst in a heavy landing at Foulsham on 16 August 1944. I guess this was Gertie's demise and presumably she was struck off charge."

AT - "Yes, LP345 was DT-G. I remember now that the photo of the gallant crew was taken by the Photo Section, and we probably stood like dummies against the first crate we came to going round the peri track. I only flew DT-G twice I see - once to the Danish and Dutch coasts in April '44, a six-hour trip, and once back from Ford in May '44, i.e. one op only. HE857 and LH879 seem to have been 'our' heavier-than-air machines. One of those must have been DT-F."

"I have dug out the Operations Record Sheet for the 15th and 16th August '44. This is the story of Gertie which I remember well but didn't know it was that particular aircraft. Don Earl and crew only just got away with their lives as I recall him telling me the story later - it was more than a burst tyre!"

"The Bay of Biscay trips were investigations into U-boat radar. The return leg - Davidstow Moor to Foulsham via Brest Peninsula and a point 70 miles north of San Sebastian - take-off 22.43 landed 06.58. That was a long tiring flight with only one pilot! I'm surprised we had enough juice on board, and we must have been well into the nacelle tanks when I switched the machinery off."

“I see I flew the 1473 Flight Leopard Moth both at Feltwell and Foulsham when it was briefly with 192. It was an ex.London Flying Club, Elstree aeroplane and I have often wondered what became of it. It was a beautiful aeroplane to fly and had blue upholstery and the name London Flying Club, Elstree on the doorstep, if I remember correctly. I hope it is a survivor.”

DF – “Leopard Moth G-ACGS was first registered on 14 June 1933. After being impressed into the RAF as AX858 it served with 6 AACU, Specialist Signals Unit (?), and 109 Squadron before joining 1473 Flight. It was struck off RAF charge on 18 March 1945 and was broken up and registration cancelled in August 1947. Parts from G-ACGS and G-ACLZ were used to build a ‘new’ Leopard Moth G-APKH at White Waltham, which was registered on 23 January 1958. She currently lives in Switzerland but shortly is expected to move to New Zealand.”

“As for your two 192 Sqn Wellingtons, both were built at the Vickers-Armstrong factory at Hawarden:

HE857 (F) Delivered to 192 Sqn 14 Sep 43
 22 OTU 14 Feb 45
 48 MU 2 Jul 45
 Sold for scrap 9 Dec 46

LN879 (U) Delivered to 23 MU 26 Nov 43
 192 Sqn 5 Jan 44
 21 OTU 3 Feb 45
 18 MU 17 Oct 46
 Struck off charge 31 May 47

“I bet you wish that you had not asked!”

END

Sadly, Alan died 27 May 2011.



*Tommy and his crew with the Wellington they most often flew on operations, LP345/DT-G "Gertie The Land Girl", 192 Squadron Foulsham 1943/44.
Left to right: Jerry McEachern RCAF (navigator) from Saskatchewan, Bill Mitchell (Air Gunner) from Newfoundland, Reg Wilson (Special Operator) from London, Alan Thomsett (Pilot) from Exeter, Ken Mainwaring (WOp/AG) from Neath, Cliff Lee (Air Gunner) from Norwich. All except Jerry McEachern were RAFVR.*