

Tim Barlow's research into the life, and untimely death in action, of his great uncle, Jack Osborne, led him into areas rarely covered in other books about World War 11.

He reveals the lives and background of those crew members of Lancaster LM 325 who lost their lives on the night of 22/23 June 1943, as well as the impact the incident had on the sole surviving crew member. He chronicles the impact that their deaths had on family and friends that highlighted the fact that the majority of Bomber Command aircrew were not only young but came from a variety of backgrounds.

His journey took him to Holland and the village of Benningen where the aircraft finally crashed in a nearby field. There he met eye witnesses to the crash and saw the Memorial subsequently erected in honour of the crew on that fateful night. This part of his story illustrates the gratitude of the Dutch people to those who fought for freedom and paid the ultimate sacrifice.

For the student of WW11 the chapters on what happened after a death is confirmed makes interesting reading. The number of authorities and welfare organisations involved are numerous. And, the reader will be mindful that in Bomber Command alone 55000 aircrew lost their lives.

I joined 101 Squadron two days after Lancaster LM325 was lost and can confirm that Tim's description of squadron life was very accurate. At the time of writing the future of 101 Squadron is in doubt, but whatever the outcome of the current review the Squadron Association will continue. Besides an Annual meeting and Memorial service at Ludford, members keep in touch via a quarterly newsletter. Whilst WW11 veterans can still be numbered in double figures, sadly numbers are reducing each year as they grow older

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