



THE KRIEGIE

NEWS SHEET OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE EX-P.O.W. ASSOCIATION

Voluntarism

Vociferance

Vivacious

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Editor: CAL YOUNGER

"But each one, man for man, has won imperishable praise, each has gained a glorious grave - not that sepulchre of earth wherein they lie, but the living tomb of everlasting remembrance wherein their glory is enshrined. For the whole earth is the sepulchre of heroes, monuments may rise and tablets be set up to them in their own land, that no pen or chisel has traced: it is graven, not on stone or brass, but on the living heart of humanity. Take these men as your example. Like them remember that posterity can be only for the free: that freedom is the sure possession of those alone who have courage to defend it."

Funeral Oration of Pericles



Photo: A Niner

Memorial to "The Fifty" at Sagan

THE GREAT ESCAPE MEMORIAL SERVICE

The service to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the "Great Escape" was held at St Clement Dunes on the afternoon of Friday, 25th March, 1994. There was a congregation of approximately 700, including senior Royal Air Force officers, representatives from the countries from which the "fifty" came, their relatives and many ex-prisoners of war with their wives. The Association's representation exceeded 350.

As many of us know, the RAF church is a superb setting for such events, this was a splendid occasion and the service was worthy of the fifty escapees who were murdered after recapture. The resident Chaplain, Rev'd G.B. McAvoy, conducted the service and the address was given by the Venerable B.H. Lucas, Chaplain in Chief of the Royal Air Force. During his sermon he reminded the congregation that his first task on taking up that appointment was to give the address at the Thanksgiving Service at our 1991 Reunion in Warwick.

Glorious music was provided by the organist and choir of the church, augmented by members of the band of the RAF Regiment – sadly, their last performance before disbandment.

The Committee had hoped to organise the service as they had the 40th anniversary service, but they were forestalled on this occasion. Nevertheless, your President kept in close touch with the Ministry of Defence who were monitoring the arrangements. The staff were most helpful and were able to provide seats for all members of the Association, and their wives, who wished to attend the service. The committee did their best for our members but the allocation of seats was not in their hands and unfortunately the seating arrangements were not as smooth as they should have been. The main thing is that it was a moving service which did justice to the memory of our comrades who died.

We shall visit St Clement Dunes during the international Reunion in July, and we are delighted to report that our good friend, Brian Lucas, will again preach at our service. Oddly, but very appropriately, it will be his last duty as Chaplain in Chief – as our service at Warwick four years ago was his first.

After the service, many members of the Association and their wives enjoyed an impromptu reunion over a cup of tea at King's College students' refectory. Organised by Charles Clarke, this was a nice conclusion to the day.

MEMORIAL TO MARSHAL OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE SIR ARTHUR HARRIS AND THE AIRCREWS OF BOMBER COMMAND

It was a bright spring day on Sunday, 31st May 1992 and the beautiful RAF Church in St Clement Dunes was full for a most moving celebration of gratitude for the 55,573 Bomber Command fliers who paid the supreme sacrifice in World War 2 and for the life of their former Commander (1942-1945) Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Sir Arthur Harris.

The superb choir and organ were accompanied by trumpets of the Royal Air Force who provided the added atmosphere for the great occasion in the presence of the Queen Mother. The content of the service and the sermon, preached by the Venerable Brian Lucas, Chaplain in Chief, was most relevant when the courage of the aircrews and the fortitude of their commander was boldly but humbly expressed. Whilst not perpetuating any anti-German feeling, it was recognised how essential the bombing offensive was throughout the war in defeating an enemy who had prepared thoroughly for our nation's downfall along with the rest of Europe. They set about Hitler's orders with all the terror at their command without regard to the losses they were perpetuating on our civilian people. How dare the burgo-masters of Cologne and Dresden complain when the German nation caused such ghastly damage to the lives and property in the British Isles and committed such terrible crimes to the people of Europe who were subjected to such tyranny from the 1930's until 1945.

It is indisputable that the actions of Bomber Command, with its personnel from the Commonwealth playing a vital role, accompanied from late 1942 by the American bomber forces, crippled enemy means of production and communications and ensured the success of the Normandy landings. The combined efforts of the Allied and Soviet forces then defeated a mighty and dreaded scourge in Europe. We are entitled to erect a monument to the Commander and the large number of our former comrades whose gallantry is now expressed in The Bomber Harris Memorial alongside Lord Dowding, who headed Fighter Command in their critical phase of the war.

After the service we followed the Queen Mother and the many wartime and serving Commanders to the unveiling and dedication ceremony in the shade of the soft green leaves of the trees in the church forecourt. During the unveiling, the Queen Mother expressed in very profound and moving terms her and the nation's gratitude to Sir Arthur and the men of Bomber Command, paying tribute to the large contingents from the British Commonwealth and the occupied countries who served alongside fliers from the home country.

It was a great speech by Queen Elizabeth, now over 90 years old, who with her family, had shared in the havoc London suffered at the hands of the enemy with their bombing and "V" weapon attacks. To the sound of the trumpeters the Last Post and Reveille brought tears to many eyes and thoughts of long-lost airmen, who, despite the vagaries of weather, icing and resolute enemy defences over Europe, pressed on to their targets with little regard for their own safety or the possible ill effects of incarceration in enemy prisoner of war camps, where more than 13,000 of our aircrews spent long years of deprivation.

During the dedication ceremony, watched by thousands encircling the church and forecourt, a small number of dissenters expressed their uninformed reaction to the Queen Mother's speech and there were ten arrests for breaking the peace. Their heckling was drowned by loud cheers of satisfaction and gratitude which followed the Queen Mother and the congregation as we walked slowly to the Law Courts for a reception.

Apart from the cheers, I recall innumerable expressions of thanks for what we, as former members of Bomber Command, had achieved. These thankful remarks continued until we emerged after the reception and aroused a feeling of achievement in our hearts for the parts we played in returning a war-torn Europe to peace again.

Bill Bloxham Ex 138 Squadron Bomber Command.

SAGAN, MARCH 1994 (By Ian Lawther)

When I was about ten years old, in the late 1960s, the BBC ran a four-part POW escape adventure called *The Long Way Home* on Children's television. This fired my imagination and I began looking for escape stories in the local library. By my mid-teens I had a reasonable collection of escape books, and my interest was beginning to focus on RAF POWs, and Stalag Luft 3 in particular. Perhaps this was because this camp featured in so many books, or because the RAF POWs seemed to be the most dedicated escapees.

I started to take a wider interest in how POWs lived, rather than reading escape books purely as adventure stories, and began trying to contact ex-POWs to learn more through first-hand accounts. I have to admit that in doing so I soon learned that, if one gave the impression one was doing historical research, one got better responses than stating you were a sixteen-year-old fascinated by the subject. I can take credit for one person joining the RAF Ex-POW Association who was previously unaware of its existence, and also, for putting two North Compound X workers in touch with each other. One thought his friend was on the other side of the globe, when in fact he was about 40 miles up the A1.

I was also very privileged to be invited, as a guest of Dan London, to attend the reunion on 22 November, 1975, at the RAF Club. I did not tell anyone at the time, but this was my 18th birthday and there could not have been a better way to celebrate my "coming of age" than to meet such personal heroes as "Wings" Day and "Dixie" Deans. I promised myself that I would, at some stage, visit Sagan and the site of the camp. I had no idea how or when I would do this, but set myself the deadline that, if I had not made the visit by the fiftieth anniversary of the Great Escape, I would go then. Thus, as March 1994 appeared on the horizon, I put the idea of going to Poland for a holiday to my wife. Luckily she agreed!

I booked a hotel in Zagan through a Polish travel agency and booked flights to Berlin, having checked rail routes down to Forst, on the German/Polish border, and on to Zagan. Having done this, I began to wonder if anyone else might be marking the anniversary in Zagan. So I contacted the RAF Ex-POW Association and found that there was to be a memorial service in London on the actual anniversary, and a trip to Zagan the following week. My offer to lay a wreath on behalf of the Association was accepted and I collected it at the March 1994 Reunion.

We left for Zagan on Monday 20 March. Our flight was an early one as we wanted ample time for the Berlin-Zagan leg of the journey in case of problems. We each had a rucksack as well as the wreath. A keen piper, I also took my set of bagpipes. The journey was uneventful and by 4 p.m. we were on the Polish border. Only two trains a day cross from Forst, and to kill time until the 7 p.m. train, we wandered into town looking for somewhere to eat. The only place open was a bar, so we settled on that. Compared to the drabness of most of Eastern Germany the interior was very modern, even boasting a huge mural of Piccadilly Circus. Green balloons advertising Guinness hung from walls and there was a large display on malt whiskies. It felt a little unreal. We lingered over the meal to pass the time then headed back to the station and caught the train to Zagan. There was little formality at the border and we were soon on our way again.

On arrival at Zagan we descended to the subway through which fugitive Kriegies had passed fifty years before, and took

a taxi to our hotel. This proved to be basic but comfortable. Next morning, after breakfast, I charged some money into Zlotys and set off on foot for the Museum of Martyrology to the south west of Zagan. My wife Debbie remained at the hotel to catch up on some sleep. It was a warm, sunny day and the walk to the Museum was a pleasant one. The Museum is on the site of Stalag 8c, to the west of Stalag Luft 3, and contains many artefacts recovered from the camp sites, ranging from identity tags to machine-guns. There is also a section of tunnel pipeline and a model of the North Compound. In the entrance hall a number of wreaths and memorials from ex-POWs are on display, including some from the RAF Ex-POW Association and the RAF Escaping Society. The entrance also houses a model of the planned development of the site of Stalag 8c as a larger memorial, with trees planted where the huts stood, but it remains unfinished for lack of funds.

From the Museum I walked across the site of 8c towards Stalag Luft 3. I came across a railway line running North/South and beyond which a large area of land was clear before the trees started again a few hundred yards to the east. It soon became evident that this was a training area for the Polish Army, so I decided to follow the railway north, then turn east along the line of trees at the edge of the clearing. This turned out to be the road that ran across the north boundary of the camp. I followed it and tried to identify the site itself, using an enlarged copy of a wartime aerial photograph of the camp, a map from a book, and a compass.

At first I was unable to get my bearings, so continued along the road until the woods on the north side gave way to a large lumber yard. At the opposite corner of the yard stood a substantial building which can be seen in the background of photographs looking north across the East Compound. Though it had nothing to do with the camp, it was a familiar link with what I was looking for. I headed south into the woods, and almost immediately came across rubble from a concrete and brick building. There was also evidence of digging close by. Continuing south and east, I discovered the first real landmark of the camp, the Centre Compound firepool. Whilst all the wooden buildings have been removed from the site, it is not so easy to deal with a brick-lined pit, and from then on I began to look for the firepools as the key reference point for each compound. For the rest of the morning I worked my way east to the East Camp, and then retraced my steps westward, noting the whereabouts of the Centre Compound, the Kommandantur and, finally, the North and South Compounds. The West Compound soon forms part of the cleared Polish Army training area I had seen earlier.

Over the following days I spent many hours at the site. The firepools were all there, but overgrown, with trees sprouting from their dried-up bases. In the East Camp parts of the bath-house walls remain, but there is evidence of the brick piles on which the huts stood. The cookhouse floor also remains, as do the septic tanks of the toilets. Obviously the Polish Army has exercises on the site and a recently dug hole gave a very fine illustration of the sand-disposal problem. The cleanly dug sides showed the grey-black topsoil going to about six inches, with very yellow sand beneath.

The Centre Compound was in a similar state to the East Compound, though here and in the South Compound, the concrete had been built across a woodland track, which resulted in a dip running through the compound. With the camp once more overgrown, the track is restored to its pre-war state.

The buildings of the North and South Camps are marked out by brick stacks with tiled tops, the remains of the stoves with which each room was furnished. The concrete floors of the wash-rooms are exant under layers of sand and rotted vegetation. I was able to identify all the hats of the North Compound, taking particular interest in the "escape hats" - 104, 122 and 123. The theatre was one of the best preserved relics on the site, with most of the foundation walls intact, and a gentle slope of sand running down towards the stage end. There were some trees within the walls.

Easily identifiable were the walls of the North Vorlager, and I discovered a series of cellars beneath the west end of the sick quarters. The cooler had been dismantled to floor level, with the brickwork taken out below the floor, resulting in the cell floors appearing as concrete plinths either side of the central corridor. Each plinth was covered in sand and moss and the overall effect was of a series of hummocks many of which now sported trees.

During my exploration I also located the Memorial to the Fifty, which is perhaps a quarter of a mile to the north-west of the camp itself. It is well maintained and the grounds in which it stands are kept tidy. As one enters the grounds one sees also a smaller memorial to all the Allied Air Force prisoners who died at Zagan. On the other side of the lane leading to the Memorial is a larger cemetery containing Russian war graves from both world wars. It includes a memorial to men who died in POW camps around Zagan in the 1914-18 war.

When I spoke to Air Commodore Clarke and "Batch" about laying the wreath on the Memorial, we decided it would be appropriate to time it to coincide with the London memorial service. Consequently, on 25 March, we checked the buses running down to the Museum, so that we should be in good time to lay the wreath at 4.30 p.m., Polish time. The bus we needed left at about 2.20 p.m. but we gave ourselves time to purchase tickets - which one has to do before boarding the bus. Our intention was to visit the Museum, which Debbie had not yet seen, and then to walk to the Memorial.

For the first time, our phrase book combined with a smattering of German and French let us down. We had great difficulty explaining where we wanted to go. Eventually we laid out the town map on the counter and pointed to the Museum. Without selling us tickets, the clerk left the ticket office and bade us follow her. First, she went to the drivers' rest room where a frantic conversation with the drivers resulted in a lot of pointing at a bus waiting at a stand outside. We were hustled on to this bus, while the woman rattled off some instructions to the driver, then gave us a smile and left. We did not know if we were on the right bus or whether she had decided to solve the language problem by putting us on a bus to Lodz or Warsaw.

The bus was packed and all eyes were on us, but we needn't have worried. The bus headed out along the road I had walked on the first day, and the chap next to me indicated when we approached the Museum that this was our stop. However, because we had not caught the bus we were expecting to, we were somewhat early and consequently had visited the Museum by 3 o'clock. It was also the first day that we had any rain to speak of, and at this point it was teeming. We decided to walk into the local suburb of Zagan to find a cup of tea or coffee. We failed, and were soaked, but we were determined to hang on until 4.30 as we had arranged.

About 4 o'clock we headed into the woods beyond the Memorial where I tuned my pipes. A local passed along the forest track, taking not a bit of notice, as if it were quite usual

to find someone playing bagpipes in the rain in a Polish pine forest. We then walked back to the Memorial where we unpacked the wreath from its now-sodden box.

As the Memorial Service began in London, I laid the Royal Air Force's Ex-POW Association wreath on the front of the Memorial after which I played the lament "Flowers of the Forest" on the pipes. We stood in silence for a while, whilst in the distance, somewhat ironically, gun fire sounded from the army ranges beyond Stalag Luft 3.

KIWIS CALL IT A DAY

by "Strudge" Coles

It was in 1948 that Jack Garrett made contact with a few ex-Kriegies in the Auckland area and the decision was made to have a meal together - at a cost of 7/6 per head to include table flowers. Later, according to legend, Jim Clarke ate the flowers. It was a successful evening!

In 1952 the next event, with numbers now increased to 48, was held at Auckland Aero Club, now Auckland's International Airport. Numbers continued to grow and reunions alternated between Auckland and Christchurch. Members were drawn from just three luftlagers and eventually the Stalag Luft NCO's Club boasted 140 members. At one reunion a large Nazi flag which had once flown over the Kommandantur at Fallingbommel, was draped over a hedge as a homing device to assist out-of-town Kriegies to locate the reunion venue. An irate lady, originally from Holland, telephoned the police, who arrived with the mayor to deal with a suspected Nazi meeting. When all had been explained, the flag was ceremoniously removed by a goose-stepping "colour party". This same flag had caused mayhem in 1945 when it was spread across the floor of an English pub; the resulting cascade of cash from locals led to a night that few can recall in detail.

With Jack's enthusiasm and huge support from his wife Cath, the unique assembly was extended to include wives. The second day of reunions always included events for the children and later the grandchildren. A genuine community spirit developed which encompassed family visits, shared holidays, even second marriages between bereaved members, and extraordinary support for those on hard times.

But times are changing. Falling membership and financial and health constrictions led to a decision to make the March reunion in Auckland, which I was privileged to attend, the last major get-together. Activities in both North and South Islands will continue independently. Eighty-five Kriegies and 65 ladies attended the final dinner which was chaired by Slim Mayall. It was a joyous occasion, though the long list of absent friends, with whom we had laughed over the years, was chilling as George Hedge and Dave Jackson called the names. In his speech Jack Garrett recalled the development of the Club through the years and remarked upon the many members who had left their mark on New Zealand life, including the judiciary, politics, farming, music, religion and aviation. He criticised bitterly the United Kingdom authorities for the shabby way that Dixie Dears was denied proper recognition as a leader among leaders.

A carved wooden hand with extended finger has been awarded at each reunion to the person caught out in the most embarrassing "black" of the previous year. It was fitting that the final resting place of "The Most Highly Derogatory Order of the Irremovable Finger" should be on the mantelpiece of its founder Jack Garrett had presented a supermarket receipt to a chemist, requesting that the prescription be made up for Cath. Not as heinous a boob as many in earlier years but one to which most of us can relate when the Christmas dinner of 1941 is clearer in ancient minds than that of last year.

Sally and I enjoyed ourselves. The Kiwis are a great crowd.

DON MORRISON DFC DFM



Don Morrison was born in Toronto in June 1921. Educated in Toronto, he graduated in June, 1940 and joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in the following October. After training in Canada, he was posted overseas as a sergeant pilot and joined Canadian 401 Fighter Squadron, flying Spitfires from Biggin Hill. On 19 August, 1942, Don took part in the air battle over the beaches at Dieppe. He shot down a FW190 from such close range that the debris disabled his Spitfire and he was plunged into the English Channel.

Rescued by an RAF launch, he watched German aircraft attack two Air Sea Rescue vessels and set them on fire. Survivors from the two burning launches, many of them badly wounded, were picked up by the RAF launch which had plucked Don from the sea. Don himself jumped overboard and saved a badly wounded Air Sea Rescue crew member, but did not bother to mention his action in his report.

On 8 November, 1942, in action over Dunkirk Don, by now commissioned, was wounded and his Spitfire shot down by cannon fire from an enemy aircraft. Leaving his leg behind, somehow he managed to get out of the plane and parachute into a field. A farmer rescued the badly wounded Morrison and took him to the Germans. After a month in hospital, he was moved by the Luftwaffe to Dulag Luft and thence to the POW hospital at Obermassfeld. From there he was sent to Stalag Luft 3 for a brief stay before repatriation in August, 1943.

Returning to England, Flight Lieutenant Don Morrison received both the DFC and the DFM from King George VI at a Buckingham Palace investiture. On his return to Canada, Don married his lifelong friend Jean Griffin. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary shortly before his death on 28 January 1994.

For long a member of Air Canada's public relations staff, Don was the airline's chief trouble-shooter at Pearson International Airport for fourteen years before his retirement in 1986.

Full of energy, good humour and good judgement, Don participated in the work of many organisations. We knew him best as President of the RCAF Ex-POW Association. He visited and encouraged the sick and lonely and fought hard for

pensions and benefits for veterans and their families. A frequent visitor to our reunions, Don Morrison contributed much to the good relationship we have with our Canadian friends.

(Adapted from Howie Cope's eulogy at Don's funeral service on 1 February, 1994)

OLIVER PHILPOT MC DFC

Although he took little part in Association activities, Oliver Philpot, who died at the age of 80 in May 1993, deserves our homage. The third member of the Wooden Horse team, all of whom reached Sweden safely, Philpot did not receive his due in the film of the escape, but his book *Stolen Journey* gave a splendid account of the whole enterprise. Negotiations to re-issue the book came to nothing shortly before his death, which is a pity.

Oliver Philpot began his career as a management trainee with Unilever, and he used his experience to provide his cover story (he claimed to be a margarine executive) on his way to Danzig. He learned to fly with Oxford University Air Squadron and reported for full-time service in the RAF in August 1939. Flying Beaufighters with 42 Squadron, Coastal Command, Philpot was shot down in December 1941. He ditched and with his crew spent two nights in a dinghy before being picked up.

After the War, Philpot resumed his business career and retired finally in 1978 as Managing Director of Remploy. Chairman of the RAF Escaping Society, he was also involved in a number of other charitable activities.

AFP JAMES

AFP James died in August 1992 at the age of 74. A Spitfire pilot, James was shot down over France in 1942 - he claimed that another pilot on his squadron shot him down in exasperation. He was in the NCO's compound at Stalag Luft 3 for about a year, being repatriated in 1943. From 1969 to 1973 James was imprisoned, as a suspected spy, in China. Many at Stalag Luft 3 suspected, quite unjustly, that he was a German spy. Certainly he seemed to have access to the Kommandantur. He claimed friendship with German officers from Spanish Civil War days but, in fact, did not fight in that war. He did go to Hanoi during the Vietnam war, much to the annoyance of the Australian Government, to write for the Anglican, a church newspaper which he edited with tremendous flair.

The stories about Francis James are legion, but he was a Walter Mitty character and it is almost impossible to know where fact ends and fiction begins. He is best remembered by Kriegies for giving the debating society at Sagan a shot in the arm. Some years ago, when Dixie Deans was in Australia, James took him for a flight in a light aircraft. When they landed, it was almost dark and they had an argument with a petrol bowser which could have finished them both.

The Australian Broadcasting Commission made a documentary film on the life of James but his will or the wisp character proved too much for the actor who played him. The programme, shown in August 1994, included interviews with Michael Adams and Cal Younger. The film was entitled the *Gadfly*, as James, borrowing from Socrates, styled himself. The Daily Telegraph obituarist described him as "a gadfly with the capacity to disturb governments and officials. In his field he was an original, provocative, adventurous, with a sense of theatre and a somewhat affected eccentricity." A good summing-up.

CYRIL AYNLEY OBE

Cyril Aynley died in December, 1992, aged 79. As a member of Dicie Dean's staff, as a news-reader and as actor and debater, he was well known to many old Kriegies. Shot down in September 1941 (he was Richard Pape's wireless operator), Cyril was a quiet, courteous but tough man who began his newspaper career at the age of 16 on the *Carlisle Journal*. In 1935 he moved on to the *Daily Mirror* in Manchester and subsequently joined the *Daily Express* in Liverpool. In Carlisle he was an enthusiastic amateur actor and almost decided to make acting his career. Of the several roles he took in Kriegie theatre his sympathetically played Shylock – intended to provoke German officers in the audience – was memorable. On one occasion, which he often recollected with amusement, he auditioned Roy Dotrice for a part – and turned him down.

After the War, Cyril returned to the *Express* in Liverpool and his first assignment was to cover a pit explosion at Workington. So well did he do it that the legendary *Express* editor, Arthur Christiansen invited him to transfer to Fleet Street. For nearly thirty years Cyril tackled every kind of assignment. He was incredibly versatile, covering wars in Korea, the Congo and elsewhere, accompanying royalty on overseas tours and observing the political scene. His great achievement was his story of the Aberfan disaster for which he was acclaimed by colleagues and rivals alike. Later, he brilliantly analysed the Report of the Aberfan Inquiry.

For a while, hoping to spend more time with his wife Rosa and their four children, Cyril became a television critic, but soon he was in Northern Ireland reporting "the troubles". He retired as Chief Reporter in 1974 and was appointed OBE. On the day he retired he was celebrating in a Fleet Street pub when a messenger from the *Express* brought him a parcel of envelopes in each of which were his press cuttings for a quarter. Cyril held them up – "My life's work in my hands," he said. Tragically, soon after his retirement, Rosa, who had seen so little of him through the years, died.

For several years Cyril did freelance work, mostly on the political scene. He became more involved in Association activities and did a stint on the Committee. But the zest had gone and in his last years he became something of a recluse, seeing only a few friends one of whom I had the great good fortune to be.

C.Y.

NORMAN JACKSON VC

Norman Jackson died, aged 74, in March 1994. He was the first RAF flight engineer to receive the highest award for valour. As a baby he was adopted by a family who adopted, also, a boy named Geoffrey Hartley. The two boys were brought up together and both were a credit to their adoptive family, for Geoffrey won the George Cross as a police officer in Malaya. Later he was killed by bandits.

By trade a fitter and turner, Norman Jackson volunteered for the RAF, despite being in a reserved occupation, and was posted to 95 Sanderland Squadron at Freetown. He applied to train as a flight engineer and, in July 1943, joined 106 Squadron on Lancasters. Having finished his first tour, Jackson volunteered to go again with his crew, who had not completed theirs. Over Schweinfurt, on 26 April, 1944, Jackson's Lancaster was attacked by a FW 190 and the starboard wing was set alight. Although wounded, Jackson climbed out to tackle the fire. His parachute opened but fortunately the canopy was blown back through the

FLIGHT LIEUT. W.G.S. (BUNNY) AUSTIN

Bunny Austin died on 13 August, 1992, at the age of 75. A true Londoner, Bunny joined the Royal Air Force as a pay clerk in 1935. He served for four years in Mesopotamia (now Iraq) in the "First Gulf War", which was almost entirely a Royal Air Force campaign. Bunny saw action, mostly in RAF armoured cars, in the hills and desert. He also flew in Westland Wapitis as an occasional air gunner. He was awarded his first General Service Medal in 1938. His early World War 2 service kept him in India and the Middle East. Wounded in action, he was taken prisoner after the Battle of Crete, shunted through Greece via the "hell camp" at Salonica and cattle-trucked into Germany. From Stalag 8B he went to Stalag Luft 3 and then to Stalag Luft 4, Belaria, in 1944.

A keen sportsman – hockey was his favourite sport – he took part in tunnelling and security activities and worked in the camp theatre. Above all, his cheerful disposition made him a good companion under arduous conditions. The worse the situation the harder he tried to ameliorate it. After the long forced march through the snow in January and February 1945, he finished up in Stalag 3A, where he was captured by the Russians. He was repatriated several weeks after the war ended.

After the war, he was commissioned in the secretarial branch of the RAF (Accounts) and did some sterling work sorting out RAF ex-POW's pay problems. He was granted a permanent commission but was persuaded to resign, in 1963, after a difficult tour in Kenya during the Mau Mau period. Although sad to leave the RAF, which had been his life, he did not repine and gladly accepted an accountancy appointment with the Metropolitan Police. Twice married, he had two sons by his first wife Rose, who died, and a daughter, Catherine by Kitty his second wife.

David Bernard.

Norman Jackson was a very quiet, reserved and very much respected man. He was a very good friend and a very good colleague. He was a very good father and a very good grandfather. He was a very good friend and a very good colleague. He was a very good father and a very good grandfather.

hatch and grasped by other members of the crew. They paid out the lines as he edged along the wing, suffering burns as he went.

The Lanc. was attacked a second time; Jackson was hit again. He lost his grip and fell off the wing, though the fire, his comrades releasing the parachute. The canopy was two thirds burned, but Jackson survived the fall, suffering burns and a broken leg. He was ten months in hospital and in the last days of the war got through to the American lines near Munich. His hands were permanently scarred, but he never allowed his handicap to get the better of him. He travelled for Haig whisky and was a devoted family man. He was a member of the Association but shunned the limelight and we did not see him very often.

Norman Jackson was a very quiet, reserved and very much respected man. He was a very good friend and a very good colleague. He was a very good father and a very good grandfather.

VISIT TO RAF HONINGTON, OCTOBER 1992

As "Batch" Batchelder says, the visit to Honington is now history but, at the time, it caused some controversy. The visit replaced the annual dinner which was to have taken place at the RAF Club, an event which generally attracts 80 to 100 members and wives. Honington could have accommodated up to 104 guests, though a rather lower number was preferred. The prospect of dinner at an RAF station produced an avalanche of applications from members - 266 in all. The Committee had to decide whether to accept applications on a first-come, first-served basis, to include wives, or whether to make the visit a men-only affair. In view of the importance of the venue to members, the Committee took the latter option, upsetting some members who regularly attend the autumn function and disappointing many wives.

Restitution was made on Friday, 9th May 1993, when a very successful dinner was held at Nottingham Moat House, with many people staying overnight. The usual dinner at the RAF Club took place on Saturday 23rd October, 1993. Of the Honington occasion, Batch writes:

"The visit was undoubtedly enjoyed by those who were able to attend. During the afternoon we were transported to a hangar of XV Squadron and were able to climb in, on and under some of their Tornados aircraft while their crews patiently answered our naive questions and politely accepted comments on how we did it in our

day". Then it was back to the Officers' Mess for a 'happy hour' in the bar; drinks were free, thanks to the generosity of the PMC. There followed a most enjoyable dinner in splendid surroundings, supervised by the Mess Manager, who paid attention to every detail. After dinner, we adjourned to the bar where a pleasant evening was had by all. Perhaps 'evening' is a misnomer; I seem to recollect that the last of the revellers made a reluctant, rather unsteady way to their beds at about 0300 hours.

"I must record our thanks to the PMC and the Mess manager for their superb hospitality; to Squadron Leader Bob Ankersen without whose help the visit could not have taken place; and to Flight Lieutenant David Waddington for arranging the visit to XV Squadron and acting as Project Officer - despite difficulty in walking. He was recovering from a broken leg.

"It was good that five of our Gulf members were able to be there. A special mention is merited by Alan Mackay, who froze all the way from Kirkealdy, to attend his first Kriege gathering, because he was shot down in a Wellington flying from Honington. We were grateful to Alan for bringing the bound originals of the Daily Recco. Fifty years disappeared in a flash for those who managed to read against the 'news' from those memorable days."

VANCOUVER REUNION, 1992

Maurice Batt writes: The University of British Columbia at Vancouver normally accommodates about 5,000 students. It stacked way the six hundred kriegie participants in the Reunion in a single 18-storey block which had spectacular views westward and northward. Other groups included a sea of Chinese girls on an English language course and a gathering of the clan McLeod, in all their splendour.

First Brit on the campus was David Owen, who appeared, disappeared and reappeared, always full of information. Lorne and Emily Chambers and Dabby and Gloria Dabois turned up with predictable smiling faces, not one of them looking a day older since Warwick. They contributed to the relaxed cordiality which persisted from the salmon barbecue on the first evening throughout the reunion.

The day we crossed to Vancouver Island by ferry was threatening weatherwise and, indeed, it rained all morning en route. Miraculously, Dickie Bartlett, who organised the whole day, switched on the sun just as we reached Butchart's Gardens in a six-coach convoy (each 40 hommes, 8 chevas). These splendid gardens, acknowledged world-wide as "the tops", were created from abandoned gravel workings. Littering in Victoria, the island capital, was no problem, with the various activities of boats and sea-plates on the bay and the appeal of the shops and palatial buildings downtown.

The Abbotsford Air Show looked like being a washout, with rain falling unseasonably all morning. However, the 125th anniversary of the creation of Canada had to be marked, and that night well, and the rain stopped promptly at noon. It was 7 August. The air show was superb, with the formation flying of the Canadian Snowbirds and, later, the American Navy's Blue Angels, emulating the Red Arrows at their best. The noisy Harvards and MIGs, and the reconstruction of Tora, Tora, Tora contrasted markedly with the Manned Radius Sailplane which, released at 10,000 feet, hovered all over the sky to music by Mozart. Twin smoke trails streamed from the wing-tips.

Another breathtaking spectacle was the wing walker, who also hung from the undercarriage axle, with effortless aplomb and, apparently, without a parachute. Acrobatics galore filled the programme and the jewel was surely the vertical stall and slip backwards through its own smoke stream of a special aircraft built of high tech, composite material - it needed to be. All in all, the World's Premier Air Show lived up to its title.

Saturday was a free day until the banquet and dance in the evening. Further rain cleared by midday and those able to descend the 250 steps to the beach found themselves in a nudist area. This was a bit of a shock at first but there appeared to be nothing to brag about.

The Memorial Service on Sunday was held with due solemnity and an inspiring address was given by the Reverend Val Andersen MLA.

Canadian hospitality was generous as ever and the participants warmly thanked Chairman Art Descon and his wife OB, and all the Committee for the memorable programme devised for the assembly of ancient aviators and their wives, who numbered 594 in all.

THE CANADA MEMORIAL

In Green Park, a stone's throw from Buckingham Palace, is the inspiring memorial to Canadian Service men and women of the two world wars. It was unveiled by Her Majesty, the Queen on 3 June, 1994. Other royals present included the Princess of Wales, who made an apparently unexpected appearance. The Association, which contributed to the Memorial Appeal, was represented by six members.

RECCO REPORT

The United States Air Force Base at RAF Alconbury celebrated on 10 September 1993 National POW/MIA (Missing in Action) Recognition Day. American prisoners and men unaccounted for in the several conflicts in which American forces have participated, including and since World War 2 were honoured. At a luncheon at Stately Inn that day the guest speaker was none other than Wing Commander D H Bernard MBE, Vice Chairman of the Association's committee and one of the Association's most active members. Dave's son, also Dave and also a Wing Commander, is presently serving with UN forces in the Bosnia war zone. Previously he was stationed in Cyprus and before that at Stafford, where he took part in entertaining us during the Warwick reunion.

STAN PACKARD, of Marhamchurch, Bude, wrote to the editor following publication of Bill Bloxham's tribute to Colonel W E Tucker in *Kriegs* no 40. That was a long time ago, the editor admits, but like many items in this issue, it is worth mentioning that Stan, too, came into the sympathetic hands of the then Major Tucker. Stan was shot down in a Manchester off the island of Sylt in April 1942. In the Luftwaffe hospital on Sylt Stan and his wireless operator were visited by the pilot of the ME110 who shot them down. He wanted to make sure they were treated well and to inform them that his own gunner had been killed in the scrap. Transferred to Obermassfeld, Stan made little progress for some months and there was a real possibility of his lower leg having to be amputated. Major Tucker saved it and Stan went home with the first exchange of prisoners.

An Australian National Bomber Command Reunion dinner was held in Canberra on 13th November 1993 our guest of honour was an old *Kriegs* Air Marshal Sir James Rowland KBE, AO, DFC. After World War 2 he became, in turn, Chief Test Pilot, RAAF, Chief of Technical Services, Chief of the Air Staff and Governor of New South Wales. Later he became Chairman of the Aerospace Foundation of Australia Ltd.

In October 1992 Cal and Dee Younger attended the 50th anniversary reunion of 460 Squadron, Australia's best-known bomber squadron (believed to have dropped the greatest tonnage of bombs of any Bomber Command squadron - 24,000 tons) The reunion took place in a huge hotel - owned by Panthers Rugby Club - at Penrith near Sydney. Among those attending were several old *Kriegs*. Two, GORDON LUKE and KEVIN GROVES, signed up as members of the Association. Gordon was shot down in a 460 Squadron Wellington in early May, 1942. The target was Stuttgart. Gordon, the rear gunner, baled out near Mannheim. He was the only survivor. Picked up by local police, he soon found himself at Dalag Luft. From there he went on the Sagan to Fallingboml round. The eldest of nine sons, seven of whom are still living, Gordon worked on the family banana plantation before the war. Afterwards, he was by turn a printer, hand dresser and carpenter. He married in 1947 Irene, who recently was appointed into the Order of Australia for her work in the Girl Guide movement and other charitable activities. They have two sons and a daughter.

Kevin Groves went down on the Leipzig raid on 20 February, 1944, when 79 aircraft were lost. Brought down by a nightfighter, the 460 Squadron Lanc crashed-landed and ploughed through snow, finally smashing into a sugar beet mill. The two survivors were trapped until next morning. Kevin, the wireless operator, went to Heydekrug. Married six hours before embarkation, Kevin has one son. He retired after 45 years with New South Wales Railways.

An old *Kriegs* who has had a distinguished career is Canadian T B MILLER. Tom was shot down twice, the first time, in

GENEROUS LASHENDEN



Lashenden Air Warfare Museum at Headcorn in Kent has become something of a spiritual home for old *Kriegs*. Once again we were invited to an open day at Headcorn where aircraft of all kinds buzz in and out and parachutists tumble gently down like confetti. So on June 19, 1994 some sixty members and wives enjoyed a wonderful day, in splendid weather, with food and drink laid on in the big hangar. The museum is growing and is full of interest, more intimate than Hendon, and with lots of *Kriegs* artefacts. The reason d'être for our visit was, as usual, to receive a cheque for our Charitable Fund. On this occasion your editor, in his capacity as Welfare Officer, was honoured to receive a cheque for £1,000, adding to the many thousands we have been given by the Museum over the years. The Museum charges no admission but invites donations and it is from this source that we and other RAF charities benefit. We can only express our heart-felt gratitude to Trevor Matthews and his colleagues.

September, 1941, by a nightfighter (possibly our own) over England. The 78 Squadron bomber, returning from ops, crashed and burned Miller and two other members of the crew escaped but, realising that the pilot and wireless operator were still in the aircraft, Miller went back twice and got both men out. His hands were badly burned and he was six months in hospital before receiving an invitation to Buckingham Palace to collect a George Medal from the King's hands. In May, 1942, Miller went down again, this time into the North Sea. The catapult still eluded him. Partially, though temporarily paralysed, Miller was hauled into the dinghy by another member of the crew. Three had died. Miller went to Stalag Luft 3, then to Stalag Luft 1 where he and Peter Battigieg made several escape attempts. Heydekrug (K Lager) was the next stop. Then came the infamous "Insterberg" and the "run up the road". He was liberated by the Russians some weeks after the German surrender.

After the war Tom Miller took a history degree at Toronto, then a PhD at LSE - where Dixie was Premises Officer at this time. In 1945 Tom and his wife Daisy went to Thunder Bay (as Port Arthur and Fort William were to become) of which Daisy was one day to be mayor. Miller taught at Lakeshore Technical Institute, which eventually received university status. Tom Miller became Professor of History and later Head of Department. He retired in 1987. Recently a new university scholarship has been endowed in his honour. He does not enjoy good health these days and was unable to accompany his wife on a visit to England, which both love and where they have many friends.

BOOKS

BOOKS

RECCO

(cont'd)

A publisher
Postscript

LEW PARSONS was born in Varge, near Basildon in Essex, and lives there still. For thirty-six years Lew worked at the Shell Haven refinery, where he was Safety Officer. Regretting that he was not in a Luft camp but was held in Stalag 4B, which he says "housed around 25% of captured airmen", Lew has sent photographs taken at Mithlberg - some officially, some clandestinely. Depicted here is a march past of soldiers and airmen including "Snowshoes" Meyer RCAF, the British Man of Confidence. As Lew says, this was a very unusual occasion though there was a similar march past in the NCO's compound at Stalag Luft 3. The Stalag 4B Association meets annually in Edinburgh to celebrate liberation by Soviet troops.

Last Summer PAUL HILTON received an honorary Doctorate of Engineering from the University of Brighton, this in recognition of a brilliant career. P A Hilton Ltd, which Paul built up from a standing start, makes sophisticated education equipment which sells the world over. Some years ago we published a picture of Paul with one of his working scale-model jet engines, every detail of which is meticulously accurate. Paul and wife Gillian celebrated his honour by giving a party at Horsebridge Mill, the company's delightful headquarters in Hampshire. It was attended by friends made throughout his career but especially from early days with De Havillands'. Paul is a very modest man and he won't be drawing attention to his well-deserved honour any more than he does to the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal he was awarded after the war.

Ever energetic, MAURICE BUTT, sometime Chairman of the Committee, reports on activities in East Anglia. On March 9th twenty-two members and wives sat down to lunch at Darby's, the ancient inn at Swanton Morley. Among those present were Ken and Joan Murray from Kettering, Henry Wagner (Wisbech), David and Babs Densfield (March), Canon Geoffrey France (Holt) and the Don Grays (Waterbeach). In 1994 Deryk and Margaret Polley hosted a do at a pub in Ashwellthorpe. Deryk has been busy identifying Kriegis in five small albums of photographs discovered at a jumble sale in South Africa. These were official German photographs of Kriegis activities some familiar, others not.

In the past this column has recorded all deaths of members, but this unhappy duty has been performed regularly and meticulously in Vic's Newsletter. In this issue we are publishing several obituaries but otherwise not duplicating Vic's work. However, I should like to mention Captain Peter Fanshawe who was taken prisoner with Lt Cdr John Casson when their Skua was shot down during an attack on the Scharnhorst at Trondheim in June 1940. Fanshawe was one of the main organisers of the Great Escape but was transferred to



another camp a few days before "Harry" passed into history. After a splendid career in the Royal Navy, he retired in 1966. Two former members of the Committee have died, Dave Gamble and Johnny Smith, the latter in April of this year. Dave worked hard to establish and sustain the East Midlands branch of the Association. The Association motto was Johnny's suggestion. Also in April we lost Paddy Sheppard who will be remembered for his activities on the Stalag stage. Shaun Beavers, better known as Ginger, died in October 1992. A gifted artist, Beavers took art classes in the camp. As Shaun's son Laurie wrote, "Despite what must have been very tough times indeed while he was in POW camps during the war, he was always able to turn the hardship into just another event in life's rich pattern." He added, "It was this happy amende to life that will remain in my mind forever." Johnny Fender was not an Association member but his contribution to camp life is certainly worth recording. Another son-member, who died earlier this year, was Frank Dolling, a kriegis from 1943. After the war he was involved in tracing missing airmen in France and researching war crimes. He became eventually Deputy Chairman of Barclays Bank. Vic Gammon records the death of Air Marshal Sir Harry Burton and remembers the day in May 1941 when Burton escaped from Barth and made the first RAF home run.

As we go to press news has reached us of the death of Ivo Tonder on 4 May, at the age of eighty-two. He had an amazing life culminating in his promotion on his deathbed to Major-General (Retired). Having fled his native Czechoslovakia, Ivo joined the RAF and was posted in 1940 to 312 (Fighter) Squadron. Shot down over France in June 1942, he ended up at Stalag Luft 3 and was one of the 76 who got through away in the Great Escape. He managed to reach his home country but eventually was picked up by the Gestapo. In mid-January 1945 he was sentenced to death but in the confusion of that time the sentence was never carried out. On his return to Czechoslovakia he found himself non persona grata with the communist authorities and in 1948 was sentenced to eight years imprisonment for attempting to leave the country. A year later he escaped and made his way to Britain. It was not until 1989 that he was officially rehabilitated in his own country. Had he lived he would have received his General's decree from President Vaclav Havel in Prague.

THE KRIEGIE ROUND



Photo: RAF Stafford

After the Warwick reunion visit to RAF Stafford Group Captain Bob Dixon promised us a room of our own. Good as his word, he converted the ante-room of the Officers' Mess into "The Kriegie Room" (used, of course, for its proper purpose by the Mess). The room contains a changing exhibition of Kriegie art and memorabilia. Kriegie in this context includes Gulf War POW's. Group Captain Dixon wrote, "I think that the modern kriegie connection gives the room a sense of continuity." The Committee and their wives were invited to RAF Stafford for the opening of the Kriegie Room on 21 August 1992. They are pictured above with Bob and Sue Dixon (front row centre). Group Captain Dixon has now retired from the RAF in favour of ATC activities, but his successor and his fellow officers hold our room sacrosanct.

In the past three years there have been many functions, many activities. It has been possible to describe only a few. A particularly successful occasion was a dinner at Nottingham which was attended by 147 people including many from the area who normally do not appear at our functions. This was most heartening and it is likely that another out-of-London event will be arranged.

Attendance at AGMs has settled down at about ninety but about twenty of those do not stay for lunch - because it has become too expensive perhaps? The general feeling these days seems to favour Saturday mornings rather than evenings for the AGM. Remembrance Sunday attracts thirty or so stalwarts each year and, led by Dave Bernard and chivvied by Graham Hall somewhere in the middle, we often win plaques for our marching. We miss John Hands leading in his wheelchair but we have gained Gulf veteran Bob Ankersen who manages to keep up with us. Marching noticeably improves as we reach the corner where Chris Ankersen waits to cheer us on. Wives seem to enjoy the autumn dinner at the RAF Club. Ian Lawther, whose account of his visit to Sagan appears in this edition, attended the dinner in October last year and gave a talk which was much appreciated. We are always delighted when young people take an interest in our affairs.

INTERNATIONAL REUNION

Ever since Warwick, the Committee have been planning the 50th Anniversary Reunion. Nearly 550 people have signed up for the four-day celebration (July 16-19) based at London's Cumberland Hotel - which will be well remembered by many of our overseas visitors. It is envisaged that this will be the last international reunion here. A splendid programme has been arranged. It includes a visit to RAF Wittering, with the Red Arrows and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight scheduled to turn on an air spectacular; attendance at the Royal Tournament (it is the RAF's year), with a minority attending instead a Buckingham Palace garden party; a dinner in the magical environment of the Guildhall; Vic Gammron's concert and Blatch's big occasion at St Clement Dones' and, finally, the formal dinner at the Cumberland.

All the Committee have been involved in the organisation of the reunion, but it should be acknowledged that the driving force and the inspiration have come for Charles Clarke, who can have had little time for his own pursuits in the last couple of years.

An old Kriegie who has had a distinguished career in Canadian T.D. MILLER. This was shot down twice, the first time in

BOOKS

BOOKS

With a profusion of 50th Anniversaries this year, a spate of books can be expected, many from so-called vanity publishers who, in fact, often publish excellent books that cannot find a publisher willing to take a risk.

A publisher who is willing is Charles Rollings whose Sentinel Publishing, recently established, is producing several books which may be of interest to members - including his own *Boldly to the Fore*. Mr Rollings wishes to apologise to ex-krigies and other customers who have been disappointed by delays in the publication of his own and other books which have been advertised. He has had personal and financial difficulties which, he assures us, have now been overcome.

MOONLESS NIGHT by B A James

This is the first book produced by Sentinel Publishing. Originally published in 1983, *Moonless Night* has a new Introduction, a new Preface by the author and new illustrations. Some errors in the original edition have been corrected.

Reading this book, which I reviewed in *The Krigie* (No 35) was a chastening experience. I cannot reproduce the whole piece here but I will draw on a few paragraphs:

"He has written a superb, a humbling book. The first half matches in its excitement and suspense any second world war

escape book published, but I wondered why he had not told the story long ago. The second half contains the answer. A survivor of the Great Escape, Jimmy James found himself in Sachsenhausen concentration camp. From this point the book transcends anything that has yet appeared in the literature of the camps, for it epitomises the sublime courage and the dregs of depravity of which man is capable. It is sombre but inspiring, and the reason why James waited so long to tell his story, I would guess, is that he wished to allow his anger to diminish.

"Just occasionally there is a barb of irony or a hint of bitterness, but although one senses the anger beneath the surface, this is a cool recollection of nightmare days. The author recreates the atmosphere of prison camp and, especially, concentration camp with shrewdly telling words; his portraits of fellow prisoners are vivid and often funny. Much of the ground has been covered by Sydney Smith in his admirable biography of Wings Day, but *Moonless Night* is another man's story, told after years of reflection but having the immediacy of a rifle shot.

"In a remarkably economical 200 or so pages James not only tells his own story but follows the fortunes of fellow Krigies in his own and other camps.... The author is a modest man but, in spite of himself, his courage and his compassion - nobility is not too strong a word - pervade this remarkable book."

Moonless Night is available in hardback at £18.85 or paperback at £11.99 (postage included) from Sentinel Publishing, Carlton Lodge, 38 St Ann's Road, London N15 6DU.

NO FLIGHT FROM THE CAGE by Calton Younger

This, my own book, was first published in hardback in 1956. Paperback editions followed in 1957 and 1981. It has been reissued by Sentinel, with a new Introduction and Afterword and an index. Illustrations include photographs and some cartoons from *Get of Load of This* which I produced in 1947 and proceeds of which went to the Australian Red Cross as my way of saying thank you.

Cyril Aynsley reviewed *No Flight from the Cage* in *Kriegie* No 33. He wrote:

"The majority of best-sellers on the subject of prisoners of war are directed at the daring deeds of escape. Few, if any, capture a sense of the totality of the bitter-sweet existence endured and enjoyed by the many who experienced it...

"I read it years ago when it emerged in hardback. I have recently re-read it in paperback. Memories are blurred with the passage of time. The second reading rekindled the dying embers. Above all was admiration for the accurate detail of events, the multitude of microscopic moments, each with its own impact,

adding up to a total of many men's experience seen through the perceptive eyes of one man."

Cyril also quoted General Sir John Hackett who declared: "This book is worth reading, apart from all else, to get to know Sergeant Dixie Deans." He went on: "This is a book which deserves to be read and re-read as the impact of World War II fades from the memories of those who lived through it... This is the story of the development of a young man - sensitive, intelligent and courageous - under the pressure and deprivations of life in a POW camp. It is the story of the development of others around him and of the relationships that evolved between them... creating situations as unfamiliar as they were difficult and painful..."

Concluding, Cyril wrote: "No Flight from the Cage not only throws light on a curious and almost self-contained culture, the culture of the prison camp in wartime, it is also an adventure in the exploration of the human spirit whose total effect is both sobering and uplifting."

The book is available from Sentinel Publishing (address as above) at £18.95 (hardback) or £12.99 (paperback). Postage is included.

Both Jimmy James and Cal Younger will happily sign copies.

Two more books on Sentinel's list are *Flak and Ferrets* by Walter Morison and *Forced March to Freedom* by Robert Buckham.

Asked what he did during the war, Morison answered, "Not a lot. Taught some people to fly. Dropped some bombs. Taken prisoner. Escaped. Tried to borrow an aircraft from the Luftwaffe. Got caught. Sent to Colditz. That was all there was really. A very ordinary war." That is understatement with a vengeance.

Flak and Ferrets is based on unpublished material written immediately after the war and on letters written to the author's family. Morison was in Stalag Luft 3 and later in Colditz to which he was sent after escaping from Sagan and being caught in the cockpit of a Luftwaffe aircraft.

To be published shortly at £18.95 (hardback), £11.99 (paperback), the book may be ordered from Sentinel now.

Forced March to Freedom

A Canadian pilot, Robert Buckham began to record his experiences in words and sketches (he was a pre-war graphic artist) in his YMCA Wartime Log ten days before Stalag Luft 3 was evacuated in the face of the Russian advance. There followed two very tough forced marches which Buckham recorded in more than 100 drawings. Many more drawings and paintings he carried in a tube made from Klim tins. His diary and fifty sketches were later published in Canada under the above title. It is now being re-issued, much enlarged, by Sentinel at 18.95 (hardback) and 11.99 (paperback). The book now covers the whole of Buckham's RCAF career and contains no less than 61 line drawings in addition to maps and photographs.

Sentinel has also recently reissued *Inside Stalin's Gulag* by Kazimierz Zarod. Published first by the Book Guild Ltd in 1990, this book is now offered by Sentinel at £12. However, it should be ordered direct from the author at 17 Thirlmere, Kennington, Ashford, Kent TN24 9BD.

Born in Poland, the author grew up in Siberia where his father was serving a sentence. Returning to Poland, he became a civil servant but, on the outbreak of war, he was arrested as a spy

by the Russians and sent back to Siberia where he endured all manner of privations. He was released following Churchill's agreement with Molotov, then had a nightmare journey through Persia, was on a ship sunk by U boats as it sailed in convoy to Bombay and eventually reached Liverpool in 1942. At once he joined the RAF.

Scheduled for publication in June, is Charles Rollings' own book *Boldly to the Fox*. The title reminds one of *Boldness be my Friend* but it is, perhaps, more factual. It is a deeply researched 1000-page story of allied aircrew POWs in Germany from 1939 - 1942. The author relates their experiences in various camps up to and including the move to Stalag Luft 3 in the spring of 1942. Further volumes will cover the story of Stalag Luft 3 from its opening until its evacuation in January 1945. Charles Rollings established Sentinel Publishing after seven years as head of the Military History Department at Hatchards' Piccadilly. A former journalist, he has written for most national newspapers and has an encyclopaedic knowledge of both world wars. Copies of *Boldly to the Fox* may be ordered from Sentinel Publishing now. The book contains over 100 illustrations, some in colour and most never previously published. Price £35.

LAST OF THE GLADIATORS by Ray Silver

Canadian Ray Silver was for many years editor of *The Camp*, the Canadian newsletter - and a very lively editor he was too. He has been a professional writer for 58 years and it shows. His book, he hopes, "reflects the insight of a newspaperman who went to war as a combatant and has spent the last 40-odd years writing about the nuclear age. *Last of the Gladiators* is to be published by Airline Publishing Ltd at the end of June and copies will be available at the Reunion in July. Indeed, it is hoped to have a shop in the Cumberland where various Kriege books will be on sale. Members will be kept informed of where Ray's book and others may be obtained. I have read the proofs of several chapters and warmly commend *Last of the Gladiators*. It is the story not just of the author's Kriege career but of earlier RCAF days, with an occasional flashback to his experiences as a reporter. Silver writes with pace and verve and with an awareness of the history that surrounded us. He can be tender too, writing touchingly of his romance with a London girl.

CAN YOU HELP

Introduced to us by Betty Floody, Canadian Steve Martin describes himself as an avid researcher that really enjoys reuniting people who met during the war. His successes include bringing together Bill Legg, David Fraser and Alex Kerr and the German airman who shot them down in May 1941; and "reuniting" Reid (Red) Gordon, shortly before his death, with the German pilot who allowed him to fly his JU52 from Crete to Athens on route to POW camp. Steve is now in touch with Herr Weiner Roell, a former JUK7 (Stuka) pilot who, on 12 August 1940, flew an RAF airman, probably a fighter pilot, who had been shot down and captured, from Rosière near Amiens to Cologne. Roell, a fluent English speaker, jokingly "trained" the RAF passenger in the use of the Stuka's rear machine gun and suggested he dealt with any Spitfires or Hurricanes encountered during their flight. Arriving at Cologne, they shook hands and went their separate ways. Herr Roell would be delighted to hear from his temporary rear gunner or from anyone who can give him a clue to his identity.

GREAT FINISH TO A FLYING START

After ten gruelling years, during which he has produced his *Newsletters*, organised concerts and carried out all kinds of committee work, Vic Gammson has completed his magnum opus, a massive work with which scores of old Kriegeites have contributed. It is now, in a sense, YOUR book, entitled *Flying Start*, the book has now been submitted to publishers. WATCH FOR NEWS.

COMING SOON, as they say in the cinema, is *A Drop in the Ocean*, Jim Burt-Smith's second book. This one is about goldfish types and, if it is as good as his first book *One of the Many on the Move*, then it is a must for your bookshelf. Jim still has a few copies of his first effort the best part of which was, for me, the account of his childhood in London during and after the first world war. Jim's second World War experiences also enthrall.

THE KRIEGIE TROPHY

Cadet Warrant Officer C G Gough carried off the 1992 Kriege Trophy as the most outstanding ATC cadet of the year. He was then a member of 2420 Whittall and District ATC. In 1993 the trophy was presented by Lord Kingsdown to Cadet Sergeant I M Roberts of 358 Squadron, Welling, Kent. Last year's winner was Cadet Corporal A T C Smith of 1563 Buckingham Squadron who has been awarded a sixth form scholarship by the Royal Marines. Cadet WO Gough paid a tribute to the staff at Frintley Park who run the course for selected cadets from all over the country. He also wrote "I feel that although I won the Kriege Trophy, every air cadet I saw at Frintley Park did the Corps proud and are all worthy winners."

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