



11 July 2022

THE HENGRAVE LANCASTER PROJECT



The Hengrave Lancaster Project

June & July newsletter update

2022

Since the last newsletter, a lot of exciting information has been un-earthed and many visits have been undertaken. Below is a chronological timeline of our activities over the last couple of months.

Since our last newsletter, we have since managed to make contact with two more relatives of our aircrew which takes our total to 4 out of 8 which is a massive step closer to enabling us to conduct a site dig.

With the nature of the crash being a pancake landing with a full payload of explosives, there are still a vast amount of human remains in and around the crash site.

As a result of this, we must gain permission from living relatives to request and to gain consent to a site dig from the Ministry of Defence.



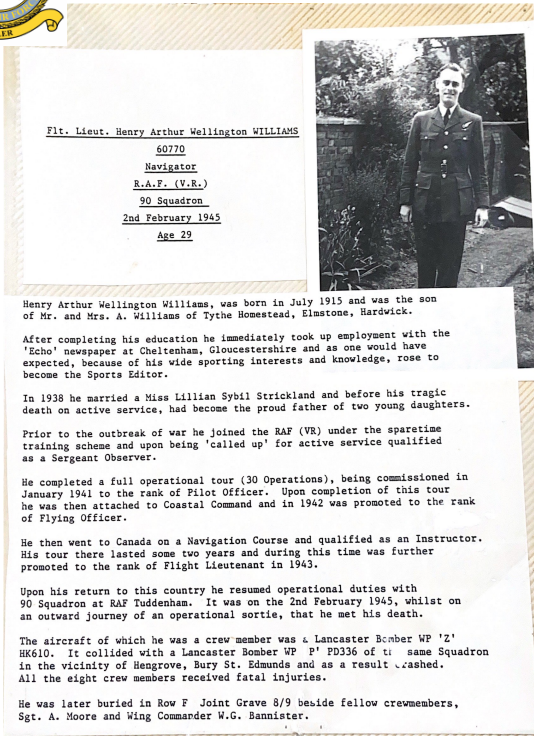


A visit to the Archives

On the 7 June we attended the small collection of 90 Sqn archived material held at West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village and Country Park. During the Afternoon, 3 of our volunteers carefully worked their way through the many files and boxes of photos, reports, flight logs and awards.

As we worked through the afternoon, we started to lose hope as we weren't revealing anything related to Lancaster HK610. As we started to carefully pack the archives away, one of our volunteers stumbled across this document relating to Fl/Lt Henry A.W Williams which lead us to tracing his relatives who now subsequently live in Canada, not too far from where WO2 John Train was born and enlisted into the Royal Canadian Airforce Volunteers.

A special thanks to Laura Parker and her team at west stow for allowing us to access the archives.



This Document Reads

"Henry Arthur Wellington Williams, was born in July 1915 and was the son of Mr. and Mrs. A. Williams of Tythe Homestead, Elmstone, Hardwick,

After completing his education he immediately took up employment with the 'Echo' newspaper at Cheltenham, Gloucestershire and as one would have expected, because of his wide sporting interests and knowledge, rose to become the Sports Editor,

In 1938 he married a Miss Lillian Sybil Strickland and before his tragic death on active service, had become the proud father of two young daughters. Prior to the outbreak of war he joined the RAF (VR) under the sparetime training scheme and upon being 'called up' for active service qualified as a Sergeant Observer.

He completed a full operational tour (30 Operations), being commissioned in January 1941 to the rank of Pilot Officer. Upon completion of this tour he was then attached to Coastal Command and in 1942 was promoted to the rank of Flying Officer

He then went to Canada on a Navigation Course and qualified as an Instructor. His tour there lasted some two years and during this time was further promoted to the rank of Flight Lieutenant in 1943.

Upon his return to this country he resumed operational duties with 90 Squadron at RAF Tuddenham. It was on the 2nd February 1945, whilst on an outward journey of an operational sortie, that he met his death.

The aircraft of which he was a crew member was a Lancaster Bomber WP 'Z' HK610. It collided with a Lancaster Bomber WP-P' PD336 of the same Squadron in the vicinity of Hengrove, Bury St. Edmunds and as a result crashed. All the eight crew members received fatal injuries.

He was later buried in Row F Joint Grave 8/9 beside fellow crew members Sgt. A. Moore and Wing Commander W.G. Bannister."



Lancaster WP-P PD336

With Special thanks going out to Mr M.W.Brown for sending in this picture, we are able to see the extent of the damage to Lancaster PD336, the plane that collided with HK610.

PD336 managed to Return to base with all crew alive, however the rear gunner was severely injured and had morphine administered whilst in flight.



What I believe to be ground collision damage to PD336 WP-P

Tuddenham Airfield visit

With permission from the land owner, one afternoon, some of our volunteers explored the remaining buildings that would have once been part of the WAAF site, the communal site and the remnants of mess site No.1.

Attached are some pictures from our visit.



Former WAAF site buildings now just an empty skeleton for the once bustling accommodation on RAF Tuddenham



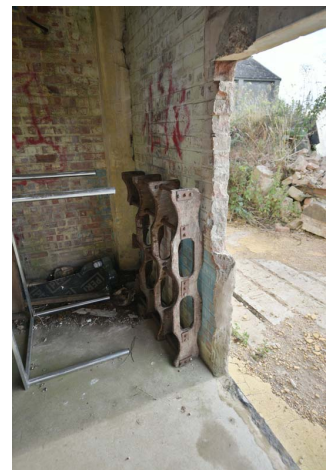
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As with many of the buildings, they are now mostly used for storage. Pictured is the former gymnasium on the communal site.



The former Educational block on the communal site, now just a mere shell and endless modern graffiti.





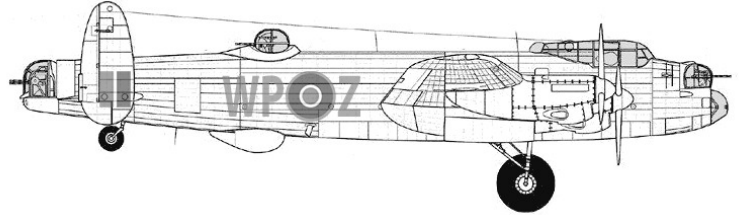
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The Memorial

In order to erect the memorial, we must first find the land owner. Although we believe we know who this is, we have no confirmed ownership at the present time. Secondly, we need to gain planning permission to erect the memorial.

It is our intention to hold a meeting with the Parish Councillors of Hengrave to discuss the building of the memorial, and to build a general consensus of the thoughts of those in the village regarding the building of a new memorial.

Thirdly we need to raise funds in order to source the materials and craftsmen and women to assist us in building the memorial. We would like to extend our gratitude to Jane Wilkie at Rees Pryer Architects for sponsoring this project and gifting us a plan of our memorial.



We have also put our heads together to create the draft design for the marble plaque that will be installed into the memorial. We felt it needed to be short but bold in order to maintain a minimal yet highly respectful memorial to the 8 brave airmen of HK610

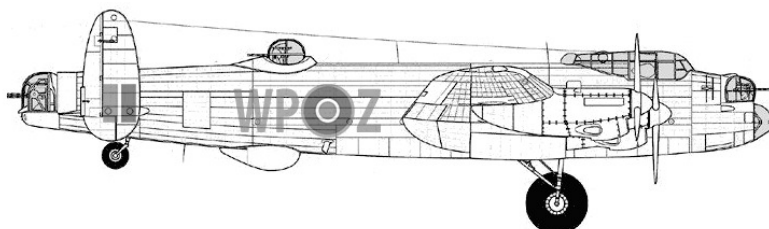


**IN MEMORY OF THE AIRCREW OF LANCASTER BOMBER HK610 90 SQUADRON
R.A.F TUDDENHAM, SUFFOLK WHICH CRASHED AND EXPLODED ON 2ND FEBRUARY 1945
NEAR HERE FOLLOWING A MIDAIR COLLISION WITH LANCASTER BOMBER PD336 KILLING
ALL EIGHT AIRCREW ONBOARD**

VICTIMS

**W/C WILLIAM GEOFFREY BANNISTER - Aged 33
F/Lt HENRY ARTHUR WELLINGTON WILLIAMS - Aged 29
WO2 JOHN TRAIN (R.C.A.F) - Aged 20
F/Sgt ALAN MOORE - Aged 22**

**Sgt JEFFREY JAMES CHIDWICK - Aged 19
Sgt GEORGE LEONARD WEBB - Aged 20
Sgt DONLD FREDERICK LUXFORD - Aged 19
Sgt ROBERT SWAN - Aged 19**





Contact us

Volunteer

We are always looking for volunteers to assist us along the way. If you would like to join the team please get in contact with us

Donate

If you would like to donate to support the project and the building of the memorial then please get in contact with us whilst we set up our Just Giving Page.

Share

If you or a family member were in 90Sqn passed at Tuddenham or at No.32 base RAF Mildenhall and have any information on our crew members or any stories of the crew, please do not hesitate to contact us.

