



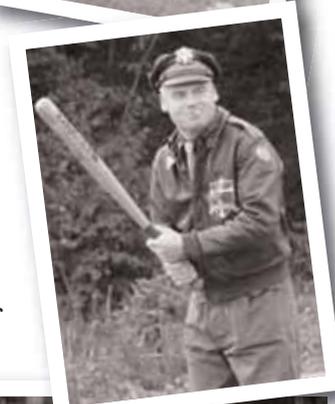
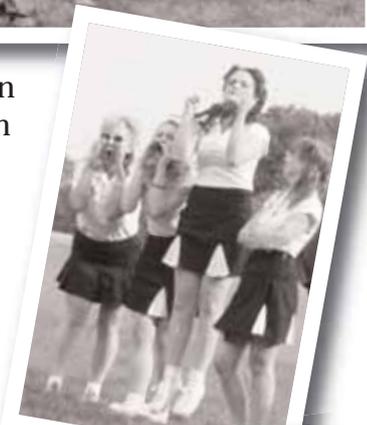
95TH BOMB GROUP HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

Charity Registration 1119769

Newsletter Winter 2011-2012



SOFTBALL & GLENN MILLER DANCE: The Red Feather Club at Horham has been recreating some slices of World War Two history – staging a softball game in period uniform and commemorating Glenn Miller’s concert on the base. Following the discovery of a programme for the softball match in the 95th BGHA’s extensive archives a softball match was held during the group’s September open day at the weekend. The 95th Bomb Group team was called the ‘Wallopers’, as it was during the war, and the 1285th Military Police Company team ‘Snowdrops’, as in the ‘40s. The MPs, who have made the Red Feather Club their home, were nicknamed snowdrops because of their white helmets. A shield was presented to the 95th, who won 22-17, by Vanna Walker a 95th Bomb Group pilot’s daughter visiting the RFC for the weekend from Texas. All players were in WW2 army air force dress and it was the first time a softball match has been played at Horham since 1945. It is planned to make the softball match an annual event. Earlier in the month a sell-out crowd – most in 1940s dress – enjoyed an event commemorating the 95th Bomb Group’s 200th mission dance at which Glenn Miller performed on the base. A band in full USAAF uniform – Skyliner – using bandstands recreating those used by the original Red Feather Club band in WW2 played ‘40s classics including Glenn Miller numbers. ■



Pictured, clockwise from top left, are: the Skyliner band; the Wallopers celebrating their win with Vanna Walker; the Snowdrops’ cheerleaders; 95th BGHA chairman James Mutton ready to bat; Quentin Brundle at bat; and the original Red Feather Club band.



We wish all our members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

President: Ian L. Hawkins

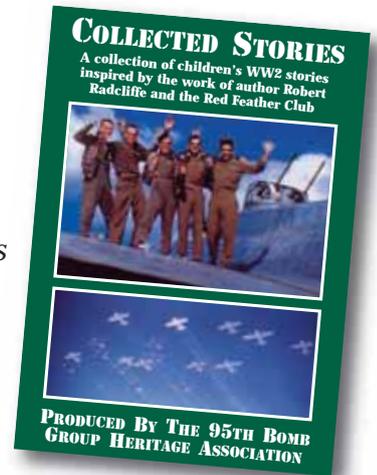
**Chairman: James Mutton
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A BUSY YEAR: The Red Feather Club had a busy year hosting and attending 65 events. This broke down into: 18 talks and visits by groups; five 95th Bomb Group commemorative dances; nine away events to other groups and fetes; five school visits totalling more than 400 children; two quiz nights; three visiting tours – including veterans on route to a D-Day reunion; 18 private visits/visitors from America, France, Japan, Germany, Australia and Holland as well as the UK; two council meetings; and two paranormal groups. These pre-arranged visits and events will continue to be an important part of the 2012 programme. ■

YOUNGSTERS' STORIES: A new booklet is available at the Red Feather Club PX stall or by mail order. It collects imaginative stories, and a poem, written by Suffolk schoolchildren and inspired by the Red Feather Club and the men of the 95th. Local author Robert Mawson, who – under the pen name Robert Radcliffe – is the author of *Under an English Heaven*, chose the Red Feather Club to inspire nine pupils from Wilby, Stradbroke and Laxfield schools in a writing project. The stories written after workshops with the author and visits to the Red Feather Club have been compiled into a booklet with pictures from the association's extensive archive. There are also a few of the short illustrated history of the 95th booklets left, so don't miss out on your chance to get one of them. The booklets each cost £2.50 plus £1 UK postage (cheques payable to the 95th Bomb Group Heritage Association). They are available by post from Mike Ager, Hidcote Lodge, Mill Road, Redlingfield, IP23 7QU. ■



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: On Wednesday 26th October 2011 the 95th BGHA AGM was held at the Red Feather Club. Chairman James Mutton thanked the many association members who had helped throughout the year especially archivist Ray Howlett who had undertaken and supervised a major revamp of the museum. Membership has increased again, with many joining after a visit to the Red Feather Club. This year has also seen more volunteers coming forward to help the volunteers the association is proud to have already. The now resident 1285th Military Police Re-enactment Group – Scott & Reg Bradley, James Bailey, Simon Frost and Carmel Hannant – have re-created a guard room, complete with a cell. We now have a resident 95th band – Skyliner – lead by Alan and Rebecca Collier, who made the 200th mission Glenn Miller dance so memorable, all dressed in uniform. Vice chairman Alan Roper has temporarily stepped down from the committee but will remain a trustee. The committee were re-elected unanimously. Ray Howlett is the new vice chairman and DJ Andy Garner is the new events' organiser while Scott Bradley joins the committee to oversee the

maintenance of the buildings. James Mutton said: "Our Association has again worked very closely with our sister group the 95th Bomb Group Memorials Foundation in the US, planning, working on future projects and objectives as well as sharing archive information and photographs. As the official museum of the 95th, the veterans and their families all showed their appreciation at the recent reunion in Seattle

"I would like to thank all of you who have given support over the past year, I am proud to have been involved with a dedicated and hard working group of friends," James Mutton speaking at the AGM.

with a standing ovation for our efforts." James added: "This year has been more successful than any of us could have predicted. We have seen increased support at all our events, increased interest from local schools wanting their pupils to learn about the airfield and the 95th and our museum has expanded to an award-winning facility. You only have to read the comments

in our visitors' book to see this. Our support within the local community has grown, everyone involved has had a part in this success, it has also been a part of them. I have been proud to have been involved with such a dedicated committee, our members and our team of volunteers and helpers, this association is truly a community project, we have so many diverse skills within our ranks." ■

SCHOOL GROUP: Mary Shipman of Fressingfield First School along with 65 children visited the Red Feather Club on Thursday 3rd November, the children were introduced to the 95th Bomb Group Museum by Ray Howlett who spoke about how the airfield operated during the war, they went on to be given a talk by Brian Chapman and Toby Garner displayed a staff sergeant's uniform. The children then split into two groups one watching a film of Horham and London during 1943 whilst the others toured the museum with Mike Ager, Roy Munro and Alan Johnson. The groups then changed places so everyone got to complete their visit and had a memorable afternoon. ■



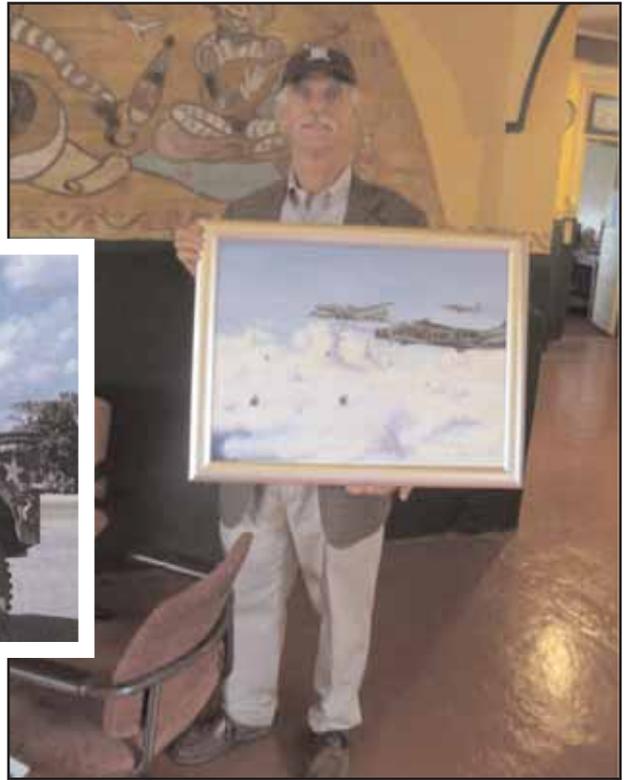
COSTUMED VISITORS: *On the Wednesday 5th October 24 children and three teachers from Mendham Primary School visited the Red Feather Club. James Mutton welcomed the children who were all dressed in evacuee costume, complete with gas mask cases and name labels. The youngsters took great interest in listening to Brian Chapman's talk about when he was a young boy and his life living next to the airbase during the time the 95th Bomb Group were stationed at Horham. Volunteers attended in uniforms of the time – military police, staff sergeant plus an officer. In the afternoon the children took part in a role-playing game playing the roles of a B-17 Flying Fortress crew on a mission to St Nazaire. To round off the visit there was a quiz relating to the museum which produced a very high rate of correct answers, well done. The visit was organised by Christine Cooper.*



Youngsters get to grip with a decommissioned rifle, get a taste of the MP's jail thanks to Scott Bradley and gather round to hear Brian Chapman's recollections of WW2.

SEATTLE REUNION: In early October James Mutton was proud to attend the 95th Bomb Group Memorial Foundation Reunion in Seattle, Washington. Sixteen veterans were present with their families. James said: "It is always so good to meet up with so many friends and make new ones. The atmosphere of a 95th reunion is something you cannot explain, you have to be there to feel the warmth and affection the '95th family' has. Many names were put down on the list to attend the reunion at Horham so hopefully many of you will see the '95th boys' and their families back at Horham next May." Whilst in Seattle, the home of Boeing, the reunion group visited the vast Boeing factory where the B767, B777, B787 and B747 airliners are built in the largest building on the planet. The group also visited the Boeing museum where a group photo was taken besides the B-17, and many veterans showed James their positions on the plane. He said: "To hear their stories near the B-17 and during the fireside chats in the evenings are events that will stay with me forever. We all must honour and treasure the fact that we have met these gentlemen, they are truly the Greatest Generation." ■

TOBY AND SUSAN MUMFORD VISIT: Friday 9th September saw a visit from Toby Mumford and his wife Susan to the Red Feather Club. They were met by Alan Johnson at Diss and greeted at the museum by James Mutton and Ray Howlett. Toby is the son of Lt Col Harry “Grif” Mumford, 412th Squadron Commander. “Grif” served as lead pilot on the first daylight bombing raid over Berlin on 4th March 1944 in “I’ll be Around” (42-31320 BG-M). Toby had not visited Horham before and spent time in the museum reflecting on his



Toby Mumford with the painting by Darren Howlett and Capt Harry “Grif” Mumford during his time at Horham.

father’s service time at Station 119. Toby and Susan watched cine footage of his father after the Berlin mission plus exclusive footage from Cliff E. Cole of “Grif” and other officers on the base in 1943. Capt Harry “Grif” Mumford later became Group Air Executive Officer until his return to the USA after the war, retiring from the Air Force in 1970. At the end of their visit Toby and Susan were presented with an original painting by artist Darren Howlett which depicts the “bombs away” moment on the 4th March 1944 raid over Berlin. Toby and Susan were overwhelmed by Darren’s painting and the hospitality shown by members of the 95th BG Heritage Association during their visit. ■



Dick and Chris Foster with Alan Johnson outside the Red Feather Club.

VISITORS FROM WYOMING, MICHIGAN: On 25th August husband and wife Dick and Chris Foster visited the Red Feather Club whilst on holiday from America. The couple are friends of Guy Greene, the radio operator with J. W. Gross Jr’s crew in the 336th Bomb Squadron during their tour from November 1944 until April 1945. Norman Feltwell and Alan Johnson greeted Dick and Chris giving them a tour of the buildings including the 95th BG Museum and Blue Lounge. ■



Jacob Bell, wife Annika, Lauren Johnston and Iain Critien from Dragon House.

AUSTRALIAN VISITORS: The August open day saw the visit of Jacob and Annika Bell, on honeymoon from Darwin in Australia. Also in the group was Lauren Johnston from Darwin. The group were guests of Iain Critien whose family now own “Dragon House” in Horham, which in WWII was the local pub for men of the 95th Bomb Group. ■



CUBS AND BEAVERS: On Monday 18th July the RFC played host to a group of 30 Cubs and Beavers who were working towards their Air Activities Badge. After a talk and a film by James Mutton, the children viewed the museum, split into groups of four and undertook a 15 question competition alongside a number of RFC volunteers who attended in USAAF uniforms. Four teams drew in first place and a winner had to be decided by a tie breaker. Air Activities Badges were presented to all the Beavers by James Mutton. 95th BGHA member Andy Garner (also a Cub pack leader), got the Cubs and Beavers to thank RFC members for an interesting afternoon, by giving a traditional Scouting yell of “B.R.A.V.O.” ■



Cubs and Beavers at the Red Feather Club.



Brent, Diana and Viktoria Vosseller with James Mutton.

LT COL BRENT VOSELLER: On Saturday 16th July, USAF Lt Col Brent Vosseller, an F15 Strike Eagle pilot, together with his wife Diana and daughter Viktoria, toured the museum. Brent was amused by the addition of a model F15 Strike Eagle doing a fly-by of the RFC over the diorama of the airfield. After visiting Brent and his family went on to a Hog Roast at Redlingfield. Lt Col Vosseller, and his family are on the way back to the states for a tour in Alabama after being based at RAF Lakenheath, from where he served in Afghanistan. He first came to the Red Feather last year when he spoke at the unveiling of the Redlingfield memorial and was a guest of honour at this year’s Grand Open Day, where he again spoke with great feeling as the 95th Bomb Group Heritage Association’s own memorial was unveiled and the colours paraded. ■

D-DAY VETERANS: Wednesday 1st June saw a visit by 12 veterans and six US Air Force Academy Cadets together with officers from the Colorado Springs Air Force Academy USA. The veterans, from all branches of the American armed forces in WWII, took time out to visit the 95th Bomb Group Museum at Horham on their way to the D-Day reunion at the invasion beaches of Normandy in France finishing with a remembrance service on Omaha beach on 6th June. Richard Lacey of the 30th Infantry Division an 18-year-old at the time told how after his unit got off the beach they advanced through France and Belgium finally liberating Holland walking 20 miles a day. He carried a heavy machine gun on his shoulder all the way, aircrew from the 15th Air Force in Italy were also present one member of the party aged 92 years told us “I’ll be back again”. ■



Veterans from the past chat to vets of the future in “Brad’s Bar”.

YOUTUBE CHANNEL: 95th BGHA treasurer, John Kirkum, has launched a YouTube channel for the association loading the first four-minute video “Red Feather Club Horham” which charts the rebuilding of the RFC. Loaded under the username 95thBGHA once you have tracked it down on YouTube among the host of other 95th videos you can subscribe so you are alerted when any further films are put online.

REDLINGFIELD CRASH: A further relative of one of the young US airmen who lost their lives when their B-17 crashed on take-off at Green Farm in Redlingfield near Horham has been in touch. 95th Bomb Group Heritage Association chairman James Mutton returned from the recent 95th Bomb Group reunion in the US with pictures of Kenneth Cosby, who was flying as a tail gunner on that fateful day. Robert Czarnecki, whose wife is Kenneth Cosby’s niece, had passed the pictures and information on to author Rob Morris, whose website – untoldvalor.blogspot.com – had featured the Redlingfield crash. He then passed them on to James. This means



villagers and the 95th BGHA now have pictures of all ten crew who died in the crash. On Saturday November 19th at 8.30am villagers



and members of the 95th Bomb Group Heritage Association laid a wreath at the Redlingfield memorial to commemorate the anniversary of the crash. A poppy wreath had been laid on the monument by villagers on Remembrance Day – Friday November 11th. ■

Pictured, are: Staff Sgt Kenneth Cosby, fourth from left in the back row with the crew of “Pegasus”, with whom he previously flew as engineer; and Reg and Scott Bradley at the memorial on the anniversary of the crash.

2012 EVENTS: The regular monthly open days are on the last Sunday of the month from May till October (inclusive). Opening times are 10am to 4pm. American visitors from the 95th Bomb Group Memorials Foundation will be making their annual reunion visit to Horham from Thursday 10th May to Wednesday 16th May.

Saturday March 17th: Strictly 1940s Dance.

Sunday 13th May: Grand Open Day (10am-5pm). In addition to the normal attractions at the Red Feather Club there will be military vehicles, trade stands, exhibits from other aviation societies and a refreshment stand. Several overseas visitors should be attending (including veterans and their families).

Sunday 27th May: Open day.

Sunday June 24th: Open day.

Sunday July 29th: Open day.

Sunday August 26th: Open day.

Saturday 8th September: 200th Mission Dance featuring the Skyliner band.

Sunday September 30th: Open day with vintage softball game. The 95th BGHA ‘Wallopers’ versus the 1285th Military Police Re-enactment Group ‘Snowdrops’.

Sunday October 28th: Open day.