



## 75 SQUADRON NZ ASSOCIATION

President: Graham Bethell  
Secretary/Treasurer: Glen Turner  
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### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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Happy New Year to you all.

I hope that you, your friends and family have had an enjoyable holiday season.

This newsletter is overdue and I apologise for that. We are all volunteers and are busy with other projects, so such delays will sometimes occur.

Many of you will be aware that our ex-secretary William (Red) Mc Cowatt lost his battle with cancer and passed away last June. After Red was diagnosed with the disease, he was able to pass the reins to Glen, which was a timely move.

Red had served as our secretary for 12 years. He was a delightful chap and will be greatly missed by us all.

Planning is already afoot for our next reunion in early 2010. Glen will brief you elsewhere in this newsletter, on what details he has at this early stage.

Also attached is an Association enrolment form. Feel free to make numerous copies, then roam far and wide recruiting all your mates who have served on 75 Squadron in any capacity, any rank, at any time but particularly in the Canberra and Skyhawk eras.

Ake Ake

Graham Bethell.

Presidents personal address:

*Aylesbury Park, 92 Station Road, R.D.1  
Christchurch 7671.*

*Email: chigwell@ihug.co.nz*

*Ph/Fax: 03-3181929*

#### *Spiritual path to heaven*

- Please note the new association postal and email address in the title block.

- A great read.....

"An Air-Gunners Story".

Some wartime 1940-1944 experiences of Flying Officer **J.H.C. (Wakey) WAKEFIELD**, 40929, RNZAF.

(Secretary has a copy if wanted)



### A4 SKYHAWK PATCHES

There is a cloth version of the A4 Skyhawk patches — circular, blue and white with the flying hawk—talons outstretched, with red script.

The much coveted patch given to those pilots who had gone solo in the A/TA-4K, Skyhawk.

Sold for approximately \$20 each, depends on numbers.

If you are interested, contact the President, Graham Bethell.





## NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATION 2008 REUNION, AUCKLAND

Over the weekend 14,15,16 March, 2008 association members, wives and family gathered for the NZ biennial reunion. The main venue was the Copthorne Hotel on the Auckland waterfront, with the Saturday evening dinner held at the NZ Yacht Squadron. The Sunday morning remembrance service was held at MOTAT2 under the Avro Lancaster bomber—a fitting and moving time for many there that had flown in the type. The members then moved by tram to MOTAT1 where the AGM and lunch was held in the Huge House before the members left for home—from all over New Zealand with several groups from England and Australia.

Special thanks must be given to the team from Auckland that created and made the Reunion such an excellent event.

Eleanor Benton-Mandeno, Melanie Benton, Alan & Phoebe John, Denise Farr, Ron Mayhill, and Eunice Heast.



The Air Crew Europe Star - obverse view



### The Air Crew Europe Star.

Awarded for flying operations from UK bases over Europe between 3rd September 1939 to 5th June 1944. The colours of the ribbon and layout symbolise the continuous service of the Air Force by night and day.

Two clasps, 'Atlantic' and 'France and Germany' were awarded with this medal. When ribbons only were worn on military uniform, a silver rose emblem on the ribbon denoted the award of a clasp. Aircrew who flew on operations from 6th June 1944 to 8th May 1945 were awarded The France and Germany Star.



### 75 SQN ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Graham Bethell joined the RNZAF in 1968 as a Pilot and trained on Harvards and Devons. Flew T11 Vampires on 14 Sqn and FB5 Vampires on 75 Sqn, converting to A4's in 1971. Graham left the RNZAF for AirNZ in 1974 at



a time when it was considered the military was generally rundown from the stigma of the Vietnam War. After flying DC8 & DC10 aircraft at AirNZ for a while, Graham moved to Cathay Pacific flying 707 & 747's for 20yrs. Then more recently flying Freedom Air 737's, and Air Chathams Conquairs. Graham owns and flies a P51 Mustang, and flies many other Warbird types inc Catalina.

### NZ REUNION 2010

Planning has begun for the 2010 Reunion, which will be in Palmerston North and Ohakea, to coincide with the Ohakea Airshow day in late March. Please advise the Secretary if you would like to attend and if you would like hotel accommodation. This will allow for cost planning and I will also discuss the proposed weekend program.

### INFORMATION WANTED

Relations of 75 Sqn personnel, and others have contacted us looking for information. If you can help, please email the secretary.....

**F/LT Richard French**, DFC, Berlin, 4 Sep 1943.

**F/Sgt Ken Hook**, DFM, Sep43 to Jun1944.

**SGT Devinder Singh Sidhu**, D.28April 1943.

**F/LT Ken Bettles**, DFC, WGTN # B-KA

•Those that served at New Market in 1943.

•Lancaster crash, #HK568; Jul44, Strasbourg.



### VILDEBEAST AIRSCREW IN OHAKEA OFFICERS MESS

In February 1991, Eleanor Benton-Mandeno loaned her Vildebeast Airscrew to the Ohakea Officers mess for display. It is a mighty large propeller unit and dominates the corner of the mess where it is mounted. It attracts much attention and discussion—and would undoubtedly take up the whole side wall should she ever have it back in her house! The inscription reads; **“To honour Arthur M. (Benny) Benton, No. 41461, 75 (NZ) Squadron, Royal Air Force, 1941-1945.”**



### 75 SQN ASSOCIATION SECRETARY/TREASURER

SGT Glen Turner joined the RNZAF in 1985 as an Armaments Fitter. Based at Ohakea, posted to 75 Sqn in 1999. Vanguards Kuantan & Singapore, Longlook 2000 including Kuwait. Signed off last ever weapons sorties of Skyhawks. 75 Sqn Standard party for Disbandment Parade Dec 2001. RNZAF Explosive Storage management, SAP Maintenance Project and Technical Support roles for Armament at Ohakea since 2002. Interests in warbird aircraft Egress Systems and a Football referee for the Manawatu Assn and RNZAF/NZDF.



### FRIENDS OF THE UK 75 SQN ASSOCIATION SUMMER 2009 REUNION

The Friends of 75 (NZ) Squadron UK summer reunion is being held at Gunton Hall Coastal Resort, Gunton Ave, at Lowestoft, between Suffolk and Norfolk from Friday 26<sup>th</sup> to Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

The prices are:

Standard Chalet £137.66 per person. Single chalets are £197.66 per person, this is for the 3 nights and includes a full English breakfast, three course evening meal and daytime entertainment, onsite facilities with a swimming pool and indoor bowls rink.

They are keeping our bookings until at least February 16<sup>th</sup>, but if you contact Margaret soonest she will check out rooms for you.

**Phone Margaret Still ,  
in England**

**0044 1621 843 935.**

Should be a lot of fun and with all that is happening on site we won't have to move out for any entertainment, mind you I am sure the ladies can go shopping in Lowestoft if they wish to.

### AUCK AREA PARTY

The next Auckland area party is at Eunice Heast's house in Avondale, at 57 Shoreham Street on Sunday 8th March, 1200 hrs.

Bring a bottle and plate.

### RETURNED MAIL

The last newsletter was returned to me as address unknown from the following members. Can anyone advise me of correct addresses or circumstances please?

**Mr J.G. Scott**, White Swan Rd, Mt Roskill, Auckland.

**Mr R.F. Lawry**, POBox 1180, Taupo.

**Mr W.T. Fouracre**, 61 Makere St, Taumararui.

**Mr J.W. Scarll**, 20 Regina Close, Half Moon Bay, AKL6.

**Mr K.N. Dumper**, 38 Challen Close, Takaniini.

Any information will be gratefully received.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Objectives for which the Association was, and is, established are:

**1.** To maintain the comradeship and associations that have been made through membership of 75 Squadron RAF, 75 (NZ) Squadron RAF, and 75 Squadron RNZAF.

**2.** To maintain a link with, and between, all former members of "75 Squadrons" and "75 Squadron Associations", both in NZ and overseas.

**3.** To arrange and stage national reunions at regular intervals.

**LAST POST**

The Last Post is one of a number of bugle calls in military tradition which mark the phases of the day, with origins in the 17th century. "Last Post" was incorporated into funeral and memorial services as a final farewell and symbolises that the duty of the dead is over and that they can rest in peace.

PLEASE ADVISE THE SECRETARY FOR LAST POST NOTICES.

**BEER, Cecil Thomas, 'Ces'**

L77175, W/O, 23 Sep 1974 deployments to 12 Sep 1976.

Ces served around NZ, Fiji, and Singapore. He was a drummer for the Base bands and retired from the RNZAF as 75 Sqn Warrant Officer. Cecil Beer suffered a heart attack and died 24 April 2008, at North Shore Hospital, Auckland.

**Mc COWATT, William Kennedy, 'Red'**

79599, LAC, S&SWKR, 24 Nov 1959 - 15 Mar 1962

FLT LT, ROTORUA AIR TRG CORP

75 SQN ASSN SECRETARY for 12 years.

Died 21st June 2008 from cancer, aged 68 years.

Red's contribution to the 75 Sqn Assn and Cadets was enormous.

**CARSWELL, Francis Campbell, 'Cam'**

NZ404457, FLT LT, DFC, Navigator

Jan-Sep 1943. Commissioned Jan 1943.

DFC on 16 Apr 1943. Wounded over Germany.

Completed 20 operations. Returned to NZ April 1944.

Died 19 Oct 2008, Christchurch Hospital, aged 92 years.

**SELWOOD, Betty Alice May, 'Bette'**

2147534, ACW1, WAAF, RAF, Waitress.

Feb 43 to Nov 1945. Wife of Fg Off Francis Selwood,

Navigator, now Archdeacon Selwood in Dunedin.

Died 14 Jul 2008 after a long illness, aged 83

**TAYLOR, William David Eric, 'Bill'**

C83584, CPL, AIRFRAME FITTER

1975-1976, 1981-1984

William Taylor died 12 Nov 2008 at 1200hrs after a brave fight with melanoma in Blenheim.

Bill was a dedicated 75 Sqn and Skyhawk historian creating some valuable reference material and books.

Bill worked at Woodbourne as an NMIT instructor for many years.

**CARROLL, Bernard Stephen**

NZ 4211926, W/O, AIR GUNNER

JUN - SEP 1945, TIGER FORCE

Bernard Carroll died suddenly at home in Avondale Road, Christchurch 29th Jan 2008, aged 85.

**LEA, Albert William**

NZ 41244, CPL, ARMAMENT FITTER

OCT 1942 - AUG 1944

Died 12th Jan 2008 in Christchurch.

**PARKHOUSE, Natalie Mary**

(formerly Lee, nee Nelson).

Natalie & George Parkhouse were friends of the Association and attended many 75 Association functions since 1978.

Died suddenly at home 22 Sep 2008, aged 89.

**CANDISH, Allan Alfred**

NZ436914, FLT SGT, Navigator

19 Jul - 28 Sep 1945. Promoted F/Sgt Jan 1945.

Posted to 75 Sqn for Tiger Force [Lincoln's in Japan].

Returned to NZ Jan 1946.

Died 14 Mar 2008, in Wanganui, aged 84 years.

## RNZAF CONSIDERS USING DISBANDED SQUADRON No's FOR NEW GROUND UNITS

In December 2007, the Central body of the Brevet Clubs of NZ, was approached by the RNZAF for comment on the proposal to use dormant Squadron numbers, and presumably crests, for two newly established ground support units.

The Wanganui Brevet Club discussed the matter at a meeting, as this proposal could have included the 'recently' disbanded air combat squadrons of 2, 14 and 75. The consensus of those present was that they were "strongly opposed" to any such measure. 75 Sqn Association committee member AirCdre Graeme Goldsmith (Rtd) replied to the RNZAF on behalf of the Wanganui Brevet Club's

President, in his capacity as a Brevet Club member, advising that, "The record of service of these Squadrons was established in active flying operations during WW2 and continued through longevity of peacetime service in New Zealand, and overseas, until recent disbandment. Such outstanding service cannot be simply transferred to newly formed, non-flying support units with neither recognised standing nor record of achievement. Additionally, the insignia and mottos, which form the crests of these squadrons, have, by intent, application only to a combat flying unit—

*certainly not a ground organisation. There would be the matter of the Squadrons' Standards and associated Battle Honours. Any suggestion of portability or association of these with a ground "support unit" would be, in the opinion of the Brevet Club members, inappropriate. The proposal appears to confuse need and purpose with sentimentality and emotion and therefore is not supported by the Wanganui Branch of the Brevet Clubs."*

75 SQN ASSN has not been approached for comment to this proposal. The ASSN thanks AirCdre Goldsmith for his reply.