



# INGHAM WHITE EAGLE

*Za Waszą wolność i naszą*

Spring 2019

**To the Memory of all who served at RAF Ingham (Cammeringham)  
and in the Dywizjony bombowe Polskich Sił Powietrznych**



## Welcome

Hello once again, to the Spring Edition of our newsletter *Ingham White Eagle*. The title picture above, was taken at our Polish Heritage Day (see page 5), and shows our distinguished guests Jan (**Stangryciuk**) Black and Wanda **Szuwalska**, flanked by descendants of members of the Polish Air Force.

In this Edition we're still catching-up on one or two great events from 2018, that we couldn't cram into the last Edition; whilst also letting you know about some of our Projects for this year, including the launch of our Remembrance Garden and launching our on-line shop (available later in the summer).

Either side of Christmas saw both good and bad news. In November we found out that we had been unsuccessful with our Heritage Lottery bid, to fund the restoration of the Main Building. This was an extremely bitter body-blow for all our volunteers, but especially for Brendan and I, as we'd spent the

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previous 18 months putting the whole bid together. But we've dusted ourselves off and are now looking at other new opportunities to secure major funding. If you happen to know any millionaires or rich Polish businessmen or women, please let us know.

We're endeavouring to increase the circulation and visibility of **Ingham White Eagle** and indeed raise awareness of RAF Ingham as the 'Home of the Polish Bomber Squadrons' to descendants of PAF personnel not only around the UK, but also globally; so please forward or pass-on this Newsletter, to anyone you feel might enjoy the content or have Polish connections. We estimate, that despite their advancing years, there are still possibly 30-40 PAF Veterans around UK and Europe. Many like Richard Tyce (Ryszard Tyc), who'd blended into British society over 70+ years with his family, and who we only became aware of, after his passing last year.

This brings me to one of our enduring project, 'Oral Histories', or to you and I, identifying PAF Veterans, and recording both visually and orally, their thoughts, memories and reminiscences from the 30's in Poland, through their experiences, both serious and funny, during the war years, and after. This project is so vital and of global historical importance, that we need to record their stories, through their voices and pictures, for future generations to remember, learn and understand. This is their Heritage, and those who gave the ultimate sacrifice. Please help us.

And finally, we're planning that the Summer Edition will be available in both English and Polish. Enjoy your read.

*Geoff Burton*

Chairman / Founder

## Roll Call

### **Wanda Pietras**

It is with great sadness, that I have to report the passing earlier this year, of Wanda Pietras (aged 101) Polish WAAF.



I had the great privilege of meeting Wanda in 2017, in Hathersage. This was only possible following the chance meeting of her Daughter and Son-in-law at our stand at Scampton Air Show and them telling us about Wanda; who had until a few years previous, lived in Hackthorn, a small village a couple of miles from Ingham Airfield.



As a result, I spent a wonderful afternoon in her company, as she recounted her life at RAF Ingham, as a cook in the Sgt's Mess. She'd married Edward (Electrician, 300 Sqn) and they were given permission to live (off-camp) in Jubilee Terrace, Ingham village during her service, (very unusual in those days). They later moved to Cammeringham Polish Resettlement Camp. (Her hut is being replicated at our Site.)

I was fortunate enough to record her thoughts and memories, as part of our Oral Histories Project, so her story will hopefully become part of our living legacy programme.

Such an honour to have had met such a wonderful lady. Sleep well.

## Howard Kaye

Last month we've also said a sad farewell to one of our dedicated and most respected volunteers, Howard Kaye.

Howard had been with our Group since the early days, and could always be found on Site, with his trademark smile, recanting a story or two, about his time in the RAF.

A true gentleman, and respected by all who had the good fortune to meet him. He'll be sadly missed by everyone at RAF Ingham.



## Left - Over's

As our Winter Edition was bulging at the seams, some articles got squeezed out. So this is a quick safety net, and catch-up.

## Officer Cadets, Dęblin

Polish Air Force Officer Cadets from Polish Air Force Academy Dęblin, traditionally attend the Annual Polish Air Force Commemoration weekend at RAF Northolt in Sep, then they travel home. However, last year, as part of our joint heritage and to increase their awareness of the RAF, they spent a few extra days in Lincolnshire visiting RAF Cranwell. As part of this visit, we were asked to host them at RAF Ingham.

It was great honour for us to welcome them, and for them to visit and experience somewhere where their fellow countrymen had lived and flown

from, some 75 years before. The Cadets were deeply moved by their visit, and we are hopeful, this will become an annual event.



## Deployable Control and Reporting Centre (MJDOP)

During last Sep, we were also contacted by maj. Grzegorz BODAK, Chief Foreign Affairs Officer, Deployable Control and Reporting Centre, MJDOP, Polish Air Force, who explained that their Unit had been given the responsibility by Minister of National Defence, of cultivating the heritage and traditions of No 305 "Ziemia Wielkopolska" ("Land of Greater Poland") Sqn, Polish Air Force. As part of this role, they were visiting several locations within UK, connected with 305 Sqn, and wished to visit RAF Ingham. We were delighted to welcome Col pil Mirosław Nawrocki and his team from Mobilna Jednostka Dowodzenia Operacjami

Powietrzni and Jacek Zagodzón, Muzeum Sił Powietrznych w Dęblinie, (Polish Air Force Museum, Deblin).



## Volunteers Workshop

**Great News!** We've again been successful in securing funding from Armed Forces Community Covenant Fund. This time our goal was to fund and build a Volunteers Workshop on the base of the South Wing of Airmen's Mess. Groundwork's by our volunteers, began in the latter part of last year.



The building arrived in 'Kit-Form' like a huge Meccano set. Due to the size and complexities of construction, it was decided to employ a professional company to erect it for us. Many thanks to Phil Joyce and his team from Foundations & Building Ltd, of Skegness, who constructed what you can see in the pictures below, in 4 days straight!





We now have a fantastic new space, which once kitted-out, will become our new Volunteers Workshop.

### Kitting the Workshop

With an element of trepidation, we again approached AFCC in March this year, with a bid to kit-out the Workshop, with benches, tools, equipment etc. But unfortunately, we were unsuccessful; so we're now looking around for funding to equip the Workshop, or a generous Tool or Equipment company, to sponsor our project. If you are or know of anyone, please get in touch. Many thanks.

### Restoration Projects

Over the last few years we have started to acquire a variety of vehicles and trailers, including an AEC Matador 6x6 0845 Airfield Refueler, and a Brockhurst Bowser Trailer. They will be two of the long-term projects, for the Volunteers to get their teeth into. We're fortunate in having mechanical engineers, electricians, welders and a carpenter, so the Team cant wait to get stuck in, once the benching is in and the power is installed.



(AEC Matador 6x6 0845 Airfield Refueler)



(Brockhurst Bowser Trailer)

## Polish Heritage Day



After last year's incredibly successful Polish Heritage Day, we needed to double our efforts, to make this year's event even bigger and better. That was the challenge!





This year's Polish Heritage Day was held on Sun 5 May, and didn't disappoint, to either our honoured guests, descendants, visitors or our volunteers. Our event attracted in excess of 400 visitors on the day. Entrance was free, but donations were most welcome, and were suggested on leaving the event, rather than on arrival; then people could donate whatever they felt the event had been worth.

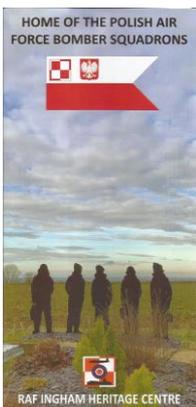
The new Workshop was pressed into action as a display area, with numerous stalls and stands covering a wide variety of RAF Ingham and Polish Bomber Sqn topics. We had a 1940s Singer, Re-enactors, a Ops Briefing, Military Vehicles, Talks, and our Wartime Cafe, serving teas coffees and a non-ration-book selection of the finest homemade cakes.

The highlight of the day, was welcoming our two honoured guests, Jan (Stangryciuk) Black (rear gunner with 300 Sqn), and Wanda Szuwalska, (Polish WAAF from RAF Faldingworth), and the descendants of Polish Air Force personnel (see title picture).



My personal thanks goes out to all our hardworking Volunteers, who put so much effort into making our Polish Heritage Day 2019, such a wonderful success. Roll-on 2020.

## Heritage Centre Leaflet 2019



Our 2019 Leaflet, was designed in collaboration with a students from Cygnet PR, Lincoln University. Although last year's leaflet was dual translated, this is the first year we've published separate leaflets in both English and Polish. Many thanks to Anna Belczynska, for the translation.

**Cygnet PR**



## Mission For Tonight

*In each edition, John Rennison, our historical Researcher, will focus on a particular mission flown by a crew from RAF Ingham.*

### **Operations from RAF Ingham - 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> June 1943**

Both having moved from nearby Hemswell in the latter part of June 1943, 305 Squadron shared the new location at RAF Ingham with 300 Squadron (the Sqn's second spell at the airfield). The first operation undertaken from the grass airfield by 305 Squadron took place on the night of the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of June 1943; the target was the Elberfeld area of Wuppertal. Eight Wellington bombers from 305 took part, together with eleven from 300 Squadron and it was to be an interesting night for the airmen; the attack route took the formation past Cologne and Dusseldorf, where the anti-aircraft fire was intense. Wellington HE464 BH-J, of 300 Squadron was damaged as were several others. Wellington HF463 SM-A of 305 Sqn, with Sgt Henryk Anglik at the controls was badly damaged in a night fighter attack but managed to return to base.



The crew of Wellington HF463 of 305 Sqn

Wellington HF490 SM-O, being piloted by Flight Lieutenant Zygmunt Poplawski, was also attacked by a night fighter (Ju88). The rear gunner, Flight Lieutenant Olgierd Luczkowski, later claimed to have shot the enemy down and was subsequently awarded the DFC. The shooting down was in effect confirmed by the award. Luftwaffe records unfortunately do not show the loss of Ju.88. However, a Messerschmitt Me.110 from 12/NJG1 was apparently shot down at 0259 hours by an unknown bomber (The crew of Uffz Pfeiffer and Uffz Knappe both bailed out of the stricken aircraft). Could this be a case of the gunner having got his aircraft recognition wrong? Two aircraft from 300 Squadron were brought down (HF606, which crashed at Kevelaer, near the Dutch border, with no survivors, as a result of anti-aircraft fire and HZ376, which was also brought down by anti-aircraft fire. The crew of the latter escaped but became PoWs).



Zymunt Poplawski of 305 Sqn (on the right)

Pathfinders marked the target and the Wellingtons bombed from heights of 13,000 feet and higher, at just after 0100 hours in the morning. Serious damage was done to the target, with 94% being destroyed. Over 170 Industrial premises and some 3,000 domestic premises were hit. Out of a total of 630 aircraft 100 Wellingtons were involved and six went missing.



Wellingtons being readied for a raid at RAF Ingham

305 Squadron moved on from Ingham to Swanton Morley in September 1943 and began to re-equip with the B.25 Mitchell II. 300 Squadron moved on to RAF Faldingworth in March 1944 and re-equipped with the Lancaster bomber the following month.

*John Rennison (Researcher)*

## Our Volunteers

*"Our Volunteers, are our most valuable asset"*

These are the men and women who turn-up every Sunday morning, regardless of the weather, week-in, week-out. Some have skills and trades, whilst others have pure enthusiasm. But one thing we all have, is a passion for what we're doing, and the goal of creating a world unique Heritage Centre.

Our Volunteers are made-up from many different ages, backgrounds, cultures. We are an organisation which fully embraces Equality & Diversity, and we welcome everyone. Currently, most of our tasks involve an element of either DIY or gardening, but this will change and expand, once the Heritage Centre is nearing completion, and will then include such roles as: Visitor Guide, Reception & Sales Staff, Catering Team, and many more. So if you're interested in Volunteering either now or next year, we'd be pleased to see you and welcome you into our great team.



Contact: [volunteering@rafingham.co.uk](mailto:volunteering@rafingham.co.uk)

Or write to:

**Volunteer Coordinator**  
**RAF Ingham Heritage Centre**  
**Middle Street**  
**Fillingham**  
**Gainsborough**  
**DN21 5BU**

## On Our Radar

These are topics which are current or will be starting in the near future.

### **In Remembrance**

Since opening our Memorials and Memorial Gardens in 2016, we've spoken to many of the families and descendants of the men and women who served with the Polish Air Force Bomber Squadrons, and those who served at RAF Ingham (Cammeringham).

As well as honouring and remembering the fallen, many families would like to remember their loved ones in a special, but very personal and loving way.

So we have decided to create a unique Garden of Remembrance, where families can remember their loved ones, with engraved granite plaques. More about this in our Summer Edition.

## **New Merchandise**

Through the summer we're hoping to launch a small selection of merchandise and clothing, through our new on-line shop. The items will tastefully remember and commemorate those who worked, lived and flew from RAF Ingham, and the Polish Bomber Squadrons. More about this in our Summer Edition.

## **Website**

As you may have realised, our Website has now been in existence almost since the begin of our organisation. It's been tweaked on many occasions by our Webmaster, Brendan. But the software and platform, no longer support our Website; so through the summer we'll be designing and launching a new website, which will deliver a more dynamic and versatile information platform, galleries, on-line shop, and many more interactive features.

In the meantime, we'll keep the old website up and running, although, as you may have already experienced, not all the whistles and bells still work. Please be patient through the summer, and a Phoenix will rise from the ashes.

## **New Exhibition Room**

If you've visited our Site, you couldn't have failed to miss the transformation of the broken-down shell of the old 'Food Preparation Building' into a watertight fit for purpose building, standing separate from main Mess building. Our Volunteers have been working for five or six years, to reclaim, reconstruct and transform the structure. Originally, the intention was for the building to become the volunteers workshop; however, with the arrival of the New Workshop (page 4), this building is being re-rolled, as the future Exhibition Room.

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## **North Wing Roof**

The North Wing roof is in a rapidly deteriorating condition, and is of very serious concern to us. It now resembles a huge piece of Swiss Cheese, and is beyond repair.

Most of the wooden purlins are rotten, and the original 1940s concrete covered mesh roof sheets are disintegrating at an ever alarming weekly rate. If we don't replace the roof during this summer, we'll lose it completely.

With no sight of HLF funding on the horizon, we are now focusing all our efforts, on raising our own funding to save the Roof and the Heritage Centre.

The North Wing will become the largest single display area within the planned Heritage Centre, so this is where we need to make a stand!

The North Wing consists of 8 bays, and each bay will cost approx £7,500 to replace.

**This is where we need your help!**  
**Would you or your organisation or company**  
**be interested in sponsoring a roof bay?**

## If so, please get in touch.

*'North Wing Fund'*

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# Thank You.

Registered Charity No 1142147

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