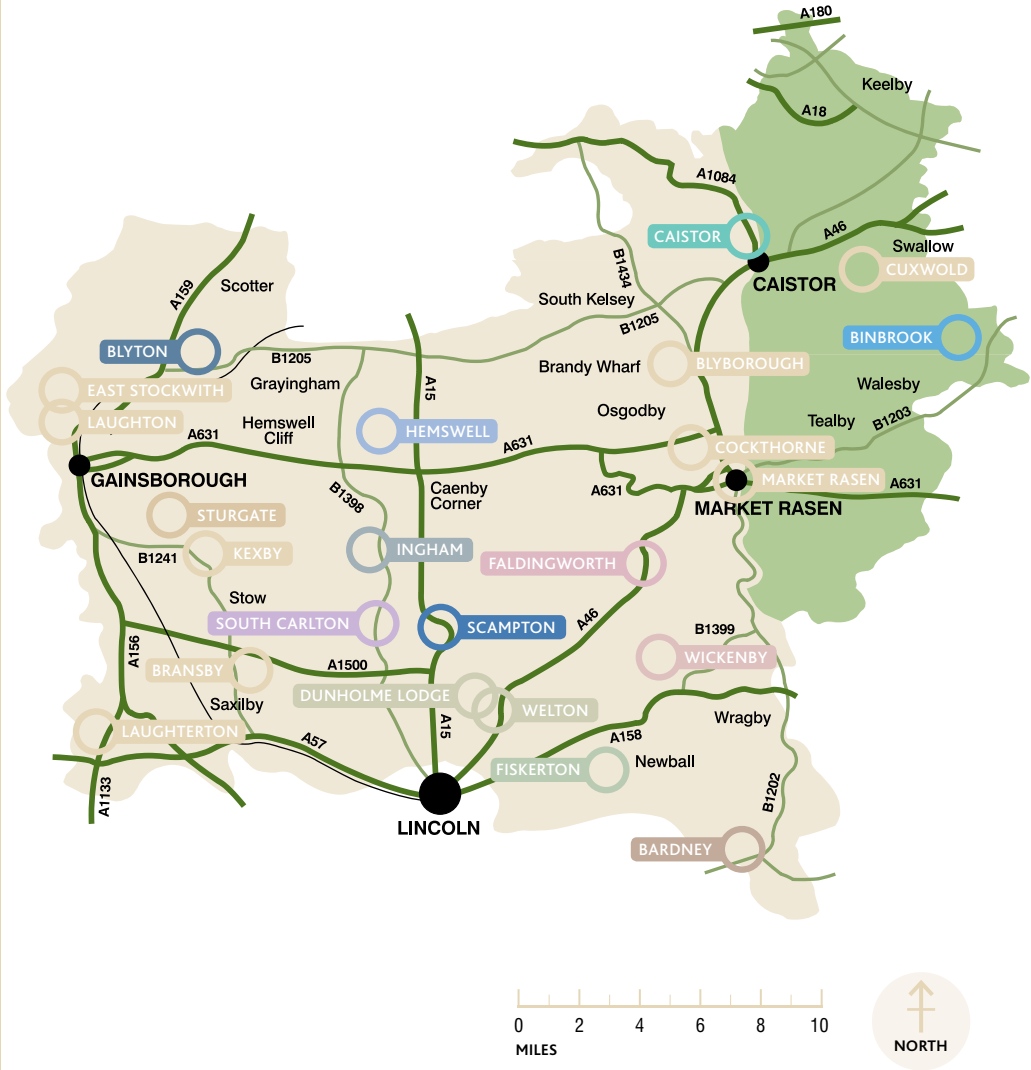


West Lindsey aviation heritage



An aviation guide through West Lindsey locating
active RAF stations and former airfield sites

Location map



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Acknowledgements: West Lindsey District Council gratefully acknowledges the following people and organisations for providing material for the booklet. Air Cdr Milligan CBE; Anne Law at the RAF Wickenby Memorial Collection; Colin-Mitchell Smith; Down To Earth Promotions; Geoff Burton at the RAF Ingham Heritage Centre; Lynn Bowering; Mark Thompson; Mike Chatterton; the N Franklin Collection – Newark Air Museum Archive; Richard Usher at the Blyton Park Driving Centre; Terry Senior Collection.



Abbreviations

ABG	Air Base Group	LCC	Lincolnshire County Council	RAF	Royal Air Force
ACHU	Aircrew Holding Unit	LFS	Lancaster Finishing School	RFC	Royal Flying Corps
ACS	Air Base Squadron	LTF	Lightning Training Flight	RFS	Refresher Flying School
AFC	Australian Flying Corps	IRBM	Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile	RNAS	Royal Naval Air Service
AFU	Advanced Flying Unit	MC	Maintenance Command	ROC	Royal Observer Corps
AHL	Aviation Heritage Lincolnshire	MU	Maintenance Unit	RU	Resettlement Unit
BAT	Beam Approach Training	NTS	Night Training Squadron	SAC	Strategic Air Command
BDTF	Bomber Defence Training Flight	PAF	Polish Air Force	SAM	Surface to Air Missile
BGF	Bomber Gunnery Flight	PAFACT	Polish Air Force Association Charitable Trust	Sgt	Sergeant
CFS	Central Flying School	PHU	Personnel Holding Unit	SORT	School of Recruit Training
FIDO	Fog Intense Dispersal Operation	POW	Prisoner of War	Sqn	Squadron
Flt Lt	Flight Lieutenant	PRC	Polish Resettlement Corp	TDS	Training Depot Station
FMT	Flare Marking Force	PRU	Polish Resettlement Unit	TW	Training Wing
F/O	Flying Officer	R	Reserve	US	United States
GS	Gliding School	RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force	USAF	United States Air Force
HCU	Heavy Conversion Unit			USEC	United States Engineering Corps
HD	Home Defence			VC	Victoria Cross
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund			Wg Cdr	Wing Commander
HQ	Headquarters			WWI	World War One
RLG	Relief Landing Ground			WWII	World War Two

Introduction

Airfields and memorials are an intrinsic part of Lincolnshire's history. It is not the intention of West Lindsey District Council to celebrate aspects of war and death, but to commemorate the bravery of those involved, and to recognise the losses endured by both sides during two World Wars.

Military flying began before World War I and back then the people of the District saw very few aeroplanes. This changed with the threat of Zeppelin attacks and 33 Squadron moved into the area in late 1916 and established its Headquarters at Gainsborough, a flight station at Brattleby and landing fields at Blyborough, Cockthorne Farm and Cuxwold. More local airfields evolved to make use of the up-currents generated by the Lincoln edge escarpment.

From the mid-1930s the RAF expanded and new airfields were constructed to accommodate the new aircraft that were being brought into service. The District soon had three new airfields under construction, two at the former WW1 sites at Harpswell (now called Hemswell) and Scampton; and also at Binbrook. Both Hemswell and Scampton were operational at the outbreak of WWII and Hampdens from Scampton took

part in Bomber Command's first offensive mission of the war.

During WWII a massive expansion programme saw airfields being built all over the District and as you drive around today you can see the remnants of many of these bases and their infrastructure. Some of these sites are featured in this booklet and they may be on private land; so please respect the privacy of those locations. The memorials featured are all publically accessible.

Post WWII three airfields in the district remained and they entered the Jet Age and Missile Era. Today only one base, RAF Scampton remains active in the District and visits can be made there by prior arrangement.

We hope that you enjoy visiting the District and learning about its diverse aviation history.



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1. IX(B) Squadron personnel with Lancaster W4964, WS-J

2. RAF Bardney memorial on the village green

3. Bardney village sign

4. Bardney Heritage Centre



4

Bardney

RAF Bardney's major wartime role was being the main base for IX(B) Squadron

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK135708; close to the B1202 Bardney to Wragby road

DATES OF OPERATION:

1943 to 1945 – bomber base
1945 to 1959 – storage & maintenance
1959 to 1963 – Thor missile base

SQUADRONS:

IX(B) Sqn; 227 Sqn; 189 Sqn; 106(SM) Sqn

RAF Bardney and the personnel of IX(B) Sqn are commemorated in an impressive memorial on the village green at the West Lindsey village of Bardney; map ref: Sheet 121 SK119693. The memorial features a Lancaster propeller and spinner, plus a stone from Kåfjord, Norway to mark the work of the Norwegian Resistance in the squadron's attack on the Tirpitz battleship.

The village is also home to the Bardney Heritage Centre, which features displays about the aviation history of the local base www.bardneyheritage.com

RAF Bardney's major wartime role was being the main base for IX(B) Sqn, which along with 617 Sqn was one of the RAF's main precision bombing squadrons. By a quirk of subsequent boundary changes the airfield is located in the East Lindsey District Council area.

The base opened in April 1943 when IX(B) Sqn moved from RAF Waddington to Bardney. Early IX(B) Sqn operations out of Bardney coincided with the 'Battle of the Ruhr'. IX(B) Sqn soon became established as a two Flt Main Force Squadron and during the 'Battle for Berlin' established a reputation for high accuracy bombing.

After WWII there was a period of use for storage and eventually Bardney returned to operations in a Cold War role as a Thor Missile Base with 106(SM) Sqn being based there between 1959 and 1963. The site was eventually used for gliding and by an aerial crop spraying company.



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1. How Binbrook's former hangars look today
2. Lightning undergoing servicing
3. A Lightning T5 takes off from RAF Binbrook
4. Wg Cdr R P Beamont
5. Lightning landing at RAF Binbrook
6. Inside a Lightning Servicing Hangar
7. Canberras of IX(B) Squadron
8. Early Canberra bomber



8

Binbrook

Following runway construction, the airfield re-opened in May 1943 and 460 Sqn, RAAF brought its Lancasters to Binbrook

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 113 SK195960; close to the Binbrook to Rothwell road

DATES OF OPERATION:

1940 to 1951 – bomber base,
1951 to 1959 – jet bomber base
1960 to 1989 – jet fighter base

SQUADRONS:

12 Sqn; 142 Sqn; 460 (RAAF); 1481 BGF;
101 Sqn; 617 Sqn; IX(B) Sqn; 50 Sqn; 64 Sqn;
85 Sqn; 5 Sqn; 11 Sqn; LTF

The first aircraft to arrive in June 1940 at the barely completed airfield within the No. 1 Group, Bomber Command were Battle light bombers of 12 and 142 Squadrons; survivors of the evacuation of France where they had been part of the Advanced Air Striking Force. In November 1940, both squadrons began to convert to Wellington bombers and operated the type until leaving in September 1942. 28 of the aircraft joined the 1,000 bomber raid on Cologne on 30 May 1942.

Following runway construction, the airfield re-opened in May 1943 and 460 Sqn, RAAF brought its Lancasters to Binbrook. The move from Brighton, Yorkshire was accomplished with the aid of Horsa gliders to transport the men and equipment. 1481 BGF was also resident on the airfield at this time, equipped with Wellington and Martinet aircraft to provide gunnery training for 1 Group air crew.

1481 BGF moved to Ingham in March 1944 and with the end of the war in Europe 460 Sqn, moved to East Kirkby to begin training for Tiger Force. Binbrook remained open as a bomber airfield with Lancasters including those of 101 and 617 Sqns, until they were replaced by Avro Lincolns in mid-1947.

The Lincoln remained in service until 1951, when on 25 May Wg Cdr R P Beaumont delivered the RAF's first jet bomber, the Canberra to Binbrook. 101 Squadron was the first to receive the type and had completed conversion by the end of the year. 617 and the other Binbrook squadrons, 12, IX(B) and 50 began to receive Canberras in 1952. The Canberra remained at Binbrook until December 1959 when the station closed for a short period before being transferred to Fighter Command on 1 April 1960.

64 Squadron, equipped with Javelins, was the first fighter unit to operate from the airfield. During its stay, which lasted until 1965 the squadron's aircraft were deployed to various trouble spots in the world. Javelins left the station in March 1965, and 5 Sqn re-formed on the airfield, becoming the first to be equipped with the Lightning F6, eventually joined by 11 Sqn in 1972. The LTF also operated with them until in 1989, when the Lightning was retired and Binbrook closed as a military airfield.

The airfield which shared the name of its neighbouring village is now known as Brookenby. It was used as the location for the film 'Memphis Belle', and is now a mixed private housing/business site.



1662		CON. UNIT.		BLYTON	
Date	Hours	Assignment Type and No.	Phase	Duty	
22 SEPT	04.30	HALIFAX 30			
		W 1187	FLY. NEWITT	NAV.	
23 SEPT	01.30	W 1187	Sgt. CORKILL	NAV.	
24 SEPT	09.30	N 7866	FLY. NEWITT	NAV.	
26 SEPT	10.30	N 7866	Sgt. CORKILL	NAV.	
28 SEPT	16.30	N 7866	S/LDR. DOUGLAS	NAV.	
28 SEPT	16.00	N 7866	Sgt. CORKILL	NAV.	
1 OCT	12.00	DG 39F	Sgt. CORKILL	NAV.	
SUMMARY for HALIFAX FLIGHT					
by C. Haggerman MBE					
13. OCT	04.20	LAMIASTER	S/LDR. BELL	NAV.	
13. OCT	12.10	ED. 610	Sgt. CORKILL	NAV.	



1. A crew training at 1662 HCU, RAF Blyton
2. RAF Blyton memorial
3. A wartime building alongside the current airfield entrance
4. Log Book entries for 1662 HCU, RAF Blyton
5. Blyton Park today
6. A crew training at 1662 HCU, RAF Blyton

Blyton

RAF Blyton witnessed only a brief period of operational flying, being changed to the role of bomber training in February 1943

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 112 SK 874952; to the east of the A158 Blyton to Scotter road

DATES OF OPERATION:

1942 to 1946 – bomber training base
1950 to 1954 – relief landing ground

SQUADRONS:

18 OTU; 199 Sqn; 1662 HCU; 7 ACHU

Although built as a heavy bomber airfield within No. 1 Group Bomber Command and opened in April 1942, RAF Blyton witnessed only a brief period of operational flying, being changed to the role of bomber training in February 1943.

The first unit to occupy the airfield when it opened was B Flight of 18 (Polish) OTU, which operated Wellingtons in the training role in conjunction with the Polish squadrons which were then based at nearby Hemswell.

In November 1942 199 Squadron began to form on the airfield taking Wellingtons from 12 Squadron at Wickenby, as that unit was converting to Lancasters and commencing bombing and mining operations in December.

In February 1943 the role of the station changed with the arrival of 1662 HCU equipped with Halifax, Lancaster and a few Manchester aircraft. Manchesters were soon phased out and in November 1943 the HCU became all Halifax, due to the shortage of Lancasters. It wasn't until the end of 1944 that Lancasters returned to this HCU.

1662 HCU disbanded on 6 April 1945 and training ceased at Blyton. For a short time the station became the home of No. 7 ACHU, with several thousand aircrew passing through the unit on their release from the service, or for further training and a peace-time career with the RAF. The station was closed on 6 June 1946.

For a brief period in the early 50s Blyton was reactivated when it became a relief landing ground for the aircraft of 101 RFS based at Finningley. From September 1951 until May 1954 Wellingtons and Meteors operated from the airfield.

In 1954 the airfield at Blyton was finally closed and between 1961 and 1963 the 700 acre site was sold off by the Ministry of Defence. The land is now in private ownership and is the home of the Blyton Park Driving Centre <http://www.blytonpark.co.uk/>

As you approach the driving centre you drive over former airfield taxiways and dispersal points; and some disused buildings / features can be seen around the local area, including lots of aircraft tie downs used as makeshift field entrance barriers. Outside the club house at the driving centre there is a memorial to the former airmen and women who served at Blyton; there is also a small photographic display inside. In March 2017, Blyton Park was sold to LNT Group the manufacturers of Ginetta cars.

Caistor

A Flight of 264 Sqn, equipped with Defiants in the night fighter role operated at the site

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 112 SK 084023; to the west of the A46 road out of Caistor

DATES OF OPERATION:

1940 to 1944 – fighter & training base
1958 to 1963 – Thor missile base

SQUADRONS:

264 Sqn; 85 Sqn; 15 AFU; 346 Co USEC;
269 Sqn

The all grass airfield at Caistor opened in September 1940 as a satellite to Kirton in Lindsey, a fighter airfield within 12 Group Fighter Command. A Flight of 264 Sqn, equipped with Defiants in the night fighter role operated at the site for a few weeks before being replaced by A Flight of 85 Sqn who spent some time undergoing further training from Caistor.

From May until December 1942 the airfield was used by 15 (Pilot) AFU, at that time based at Kirmington. Control of the airfield was then passed to RAF Manby who in turn loaned Caistor to Cranwell for night flying training. A flight of Harvards operated from the airfield from March to November 1944 after which time flying ceased.

For the last few months of the WWII several ground units occupied the airfield, including personnel of the 346 Company USEC. At the end of the war the station was transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture for allocation to local farmers.

Part of the airfield site was returned to Air Ministry control in 1958 for the construction of a site for Thor IRBMs. 269 Sqn reformed with 3 missiles as part of the Hemswell Wing and occupied the site until 1963 when the missiles were withdrawn. The airfield site was finally sold back for agricultural use in 1964. Some significant parts of the Thor missile launch areas remain intact at Caistor but these are on private land.



1. View across the remains of the Thor missile site at Caistor
2. Private tour of the Thor missile site at Caistor
3. Remains of the Fire Station at Caistor

WILLIAM FARR COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 013793; Located on the main road into Welton village from the A46 road

ADDRESS:

William Farr (Church of England)
Comprehensive School, Lincoln Road, Welton,
Lincoln LN2 3JB

Telephone No: 01673 866900

Email: wfarr@williamfarr.lincs.sch.uk

Website: www.williamfarr.lincs.sch.uk

William Farr Comprehensive School is a Church of England school for 11 - 18 year olds, located in the village of Welton, near Lincoln. It was opened in 1952 on one of the former domestic sites of RAF Dunholme Lodge, which had been bought for £600 in 1946 by William Farr, the vicar of Welton. The school was named after him when he died in 1955.

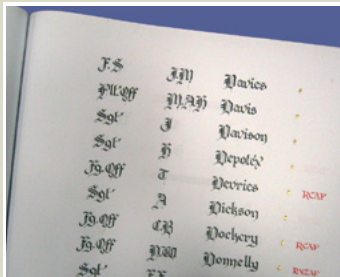
The school is proud of its aviation heritage and the school library has a range of material relating to RAF Dunholme Lodge, including photographs of Polish Air Force and Polish Resettlement Corps.

Also in the school is the Lawres Chapel, which was built as "a place of quiet reflection, contemplation and prayer" and was opened in 2004 by Rt. Rev. John Saxby Bishop of Lincoln. It is home to the Helen Alwyn memorial window and the RAF Book of Remembrance which honours those who served and died during World War II and were stationed at RAF Dunholme Lodge. A daily act of

remembrance sees members of Year 7 turning a page in the RAF Book of Remembrance. The chapel is available to all members of the school of any faith or none and also accommodates reunion visits from the Squadron Associations with connections to RAF Dunholme Lodge.

In St Mary's village church at Welton (Sheet 121 SK012798) there is a memorial window to the RNAS, RFC, and RAF, which was originally erected in 1921.

In the nearby village of Dunholme, St Chad's church (Sheet 121 SK025794) houses a memorial plaque, which is dedicated to 44 (Rhodesia) Sqn.

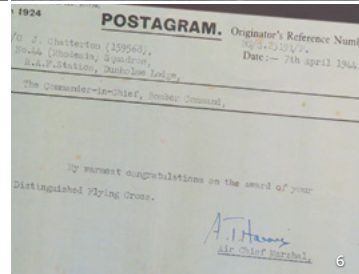




REMARKS (Including results of bombing, gunnery, exercise, etc.)	7.0.45 70.0	
	FLYING TIME	
	Day	Notes
<u>DUNHOLME LOOSE.</u>		
LOCAL N.F.T.		
BOMBING		.50
CIRCUITS & BOMBING.		1.15
LOCAL N.F.T.		
X COUNTRY - BOMBING		.50
OPS - BOURG LEOPOLD.		5.55
BOMBING		3.20
FIGHTER AFFL. HURRICANE		1.35
		.50
		3



1. 44 (Rhodesia) Squadron crew ready for an Op
2. Remains of one of RAF Dunholme Lodge's wartime runways
3. Log Book entries for a 619 Squadron rear gunner at RAF Dunholme Lodge
4. P/O J Chatterton and his rear gunner, 44 (Rhodesia) Squadron
5. 44 (Rhodesia) Squadron Lancaster at RAF Dunholme Lodge
6. Postagram awarding the DFC to P/O J Chatterton of 44 (Rhodesia) Squadron



Dunholme Lodge

The main runway was extended in February 1944, allowing aircraft with an all-up weight of 65,000lbs to take off in a westerly direction

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 002783; parts still visible from various points around the village of Welton just off the A46 road

DATES OF OPERATION:

1943 to 1947 – bomber base & glider modification

1958 to 1963 – Bloodhound missile base

SQUADRONS:

44 Sqn; 49 Sqn; 619 Sqn; 170 Sqn; 141 Sqn

Dunholme Lodge airfield was built as a satellite to Scampton, and the first unit based there was 44 Sqn, which arrived from Waddington in May 1943 whilst new runways were being constructed there. 49 Sqn also arrived in September 1943 and remained for a month while runway repairs were carried out at its home base at Fiskerton.

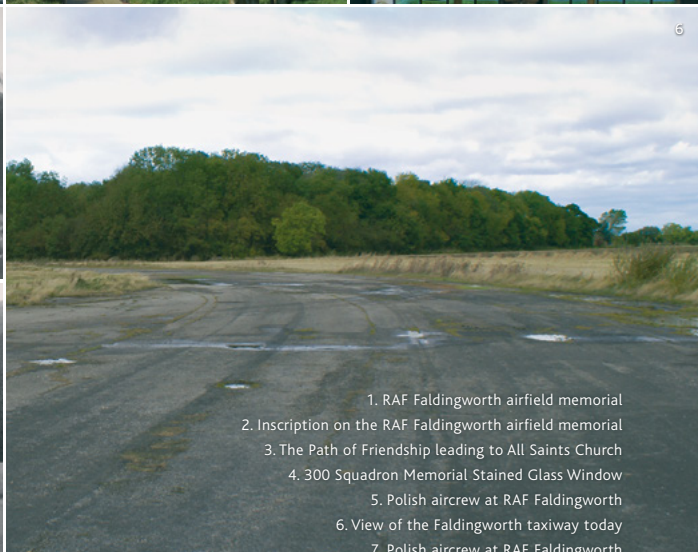
The main runway at Dunholme Lodge was extended in February 1944, allowing aircraft with an all-up weight of 65,000lbs to take off in a westerly direction, previously impossible because of the adverse gradient. This was completed in time for the arrival of 619 Sqn from Coningsby on 17 April. The squadron operated its Lancasters from the airfield until September 1944 when it moved to Strubby. 44 Sqn moved to Spilsby at the same time. 170 Sqn moved in from Kelstern in October but because of problems experienced with flight patterns at nearby Scampton it was decided to cease operations in November 1944.

Dunholme was then earmarked for non-operational units and the first of these to arrive was the Ministry of Aircraft Production Glider Modification Detachment. The unit was allocated two hangars and workshops and carried out modifications to Hamilcar gliders. One such modification tested at Dunholme was the Hamilcar Mk 10, a powered version of the glider. The Glider Unit left the airfield at the end of June 1945.

With the end of hostilities all flying ceased at Dunholme and for a short period the site was used by the Polish Resettlement Corps before being closed down in late 1947. In the late 1940s several motor racing meetings were held on the former runway.

In 1958 the Air Ministry reclaimed part of the airfield for use as a Bloodhound SAM site, to act as a defence for the nearby V Bomber bases and Thor IRBM sites. 141 Sqn was formed in April 1959 to operate the missiles at Dunholme which remained in use until early 1964 when the squadron was disbanded and the airfield closed. Over the next couple of years the base was sold off by the Ministry and some returned to farming use.

Buildings and parts of the former airfield are still in existence, but most are on private land. The base's history is commemorated at the William Farr (Church of England) Comprehensive School in Welton.



1. RAF Faldingworth airfield memorial
2. Inscription on the RAF Faldingworth airfield memorial
3. The Path of Friendship leading to All Saints Church
4. 300 Squadron Memorial Stained Glass Window
5. Polish aircrew at RAF Faldingworth
6. View of the Faldingworth taxiway today
7. Polish aircrew at RAF Faldingworth

Faldingworth

Faldingworth became an operational airfield, with the HCU moving to Sandtoft and 300 (Polish) Sqn, the only Polish unit to operate the Lancaster

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 035855; located close to the North side of the Faldingworth village to Spridlington village road. Faldingworth lies on the A46 road

DATES OF OPERATION:

1943 to 1947 – bomber & training base
1949 to 1972 – munitions storage

SQUADRONS:

1667 HCU, 300 (Polish) Sqn; 93 MU; 92 MU

Real aircraft replaced the dummies of the Toft Grange K Site Decoy Airfield when the site became an airfield within 1 Group Bomber Command in July 1943. The mixed strength of Lancasters and Halifaxes of 1667 HCU arrived from RAF Lindholme on 8 August.

With the decision to concentrate all Lancaster training in No 1 Group to a single unit, the Lancaster flight of 1667 HCU became the Lancaster Finishing School. The Conversion Unit became all Halifax with strength of 32 aircraft.

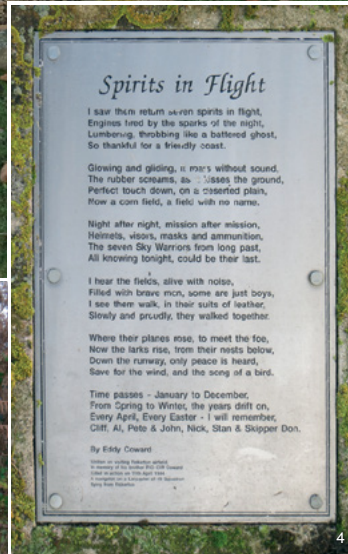
On 1 March 1944 Faldingworth became an operational airfield, with the HCU moving to Sandtoft and 300 (Polish) Sqn, the only Polish unit to operate the Lancaster, commencing operations from Faldingworth. By 1945 there were over 1000 Polish personnel on the base, these included some 200 Polish WAAFs. 300 Sqn played its part in the bomber offensive and at the end of the war participated in 'Operation Dodge', the repatriation of prisoners of war, and 'Operation Manna', the dropping of food supplied to the Dutch.

The Squadron was disbanded on 2 January 1947 from Germany, and disbanding totally on 6 January 1947. The station was then placed on Care and Maintenance and came under the control of RAF Hemswell.

In April 1949 Faldingworth became a sub-site for 93 MU within 42 Group Maintenance Command which controlled the airfield until October 1957 when it was transferred to 92 MU, tasked with supplying specialist munitions to other RAF Units. In November 1972 92 MU was disbanded and Faldingworth closed down.

Subsequently the munitions storage area was taken over and used for arms storage and manufacture; and this part of the site still operates today. The wartime role is commemorated by an impressive memorial on another part of the airfield, which features concrete blocks from the old runway and other airfield locations. This memorial can only be visited by prior arrangement. If you wish to make a visit please contact C Mitchell-Smith at Faldingworth. This should be done in advance of a proposed visit by telephoning 01673 885384. Further details can be found at the following website www.faldingworthmemorials.co.uk

In Faldingworth village is All Saints Church (Sheet 121 SK 066847) and this is the home to a number of memorials. You reach the church by walking along the Path of Friendship and as you enter you see the Memorial Porch Outer Gates, which were dedicated in October 2005. On the wall facing you is the beautiful 300 Squadron Memorial Stained Glass Window, which was dedicated in September 1999 and forms the carefully designed backdrop to many commemorative items, scrapbooks and displays.



1. RAF Fiskerton memorials
2. Memorial plaque to 49 & 576 Squadrons
3. Personnel memorial plaques at Fiskerton
4. 'Spirits in Flight' poem
5. The Cherry Willingham village sign

Fiskerton

RAF Fiskerton was a bomber airfield within 1 Group, Bomber Command, at the beginning of 1943

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 045730; the Reepham to Fiskerton road crosses significant parts of the former runway

DATES OF OPERATION:

1942 to 1946 – bomber base
1961 to 1992 – ROC Group HQ

SQUADRONS:

49 Sqn; 576 Sqn; 150 Sqn; 625 Sqn;
15 Group ROC

49 Sqn arrived at RAF Fiskerton, a bomber airfield within 1 Group, Bomber Command, at the beginning of 1943, the airfield having been constructed the previous year. The squadron remained at Fiskerton with its Lancasters until October 1944 when it was transferred to Fulbeck. At the end of that month 576 Sqn brought its Lancasters from Elsham Wolds and at the same time 150 Sqn was reformed as a Lancaster unit on the airfield. Once operational, 150 Sqn moved on to Hemswell.

Fiskerton became one of several Lincolnshire airfields to be equipped with FIDO equipment. C Flight of 625 Sqn, Kelstern, moved to Fiskerton on 5 April 1945 with C Flight of 576 Sqn and on 19 September 1945 the Sqn was disbanded.

With an end to flying the airfield was handed over to 40 Group Maintenance Command who used the airfield for storage purposes for a short while.

A famous story from the local area in WWII concerns a 207 Sqn Manchester, which made a miraculous crash-landing in a Fiskerton lake narrowly missing a fisherman on the water. Later one of the survivors jumped out of an ambulance and briefly ran naked through Lincoln.

The majority of the airfield's 630 acres were disposed of during the mid-1960s but in one corner of the former site stands the control bunker headquarters of 15 Group, ROC. This became operationally redundant as the Corps disbanded in 1992 and can still be seen on private land as you enter the village of Fiskerton.

A series of memorials can be found where the Reepham to Fiskerton road crosses some significant parts of the former runways / dispersals; a small off road parking area allows visits to be made to these memorials.

In the Lady Chapel of St Clement of Rome Church in Fiskerton village (Sheet 121 SK 047720) there is a memorial plaque commemorating the personnel of RAF Fiskerton from 1943 to 1945; it also houses a Roll of Honour for 49 Squadron personnel. This location is best visited during West Lindsey's Open Churches Festival held annually in May.

Nearby in Cherry Willingham the areas aviation connections are commemorated on the sign on the village green Sheet 121 SK 032727.



1. View over the former RAF Hemswell airfield
2. Wellington bomber overflies RAF Hemswell
3. Airmen at RAF Hemswell
4. A wartime hangar at Hemswell
5. Harpswell church
6. RAF Hemswell memorial located close to the Antiques Centre
7. 170 Squadron memorial at Hemswell Cliff
8. Hemswell Cliff village sign

Hemswell

RAF Hemswell opened in 1936; this expansion period airfield encompassed the whole of the area of the WWI Harpswell aerodrome. The new station had an establishment for two medium bomber squadrons.

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 112 SK 944908; close to the A631 Gainsborough to Market Rasen road

DATES OF OPERATION:

1916 to 1919 – WWI night landing ground and training base

1936 to 1952 – bomber base

1952 to 1957 – jet bomber base

1957 to 1963 – Thor missile base

1957 to 1963 – training & gliding

SQUADRONS:

33(HD) Sqn; 199 NTS; 200 NTS; 144 Sqn; 61 Sqn; 300 (Polish) Sqn; 301 (Polish) Sqn; 305 (Polish) Sqn; 1LFS; 150 Sqn; 170 Sqn; 109 Sqn; 139 Sqn; 83 Sqn; 100 Sqn; 50 Sqn; 61 Sqn; 12 Sqn; 97 Sqn; 109 Sqn; 76 Sqn; 542 Sqn; 2 SORT; 643 GS

This base started out as Harpswell, a WWI night Landing ground for 33(HD) Sqn. After expansion and the addition of hangars and other permanent features it became home to 199 and 200 NTS units, and eventually closed in 1919.

RAF Hemswell opened on 31 December 1936; this expansion period airfield encompassed the whole of the area of the WWI Harpswell aerodrome. The new station had an establishment for two medium bomber squadrons. The first to arrive was 144 Sqn in February 1937 followed almost immediately by 61 Sqn which formed on the airfield on 8 March, both units equipping with Anson and Audax aircraft.

In the autumn of that year Blenheims began to arrive to replace the ageing Audax, both squadrons being re-equipped by December. The Blenheims were replaced by Hampdens early in 1939; both squadrons receiving the type before war was declared in September, and they took part in some of the early raids of the war.

Hemswell itself saw action – it was the first airfield in Lincolnshire to receive the attention of the Luftwaffe. On 29 August 1940 several bombs were dropped on the airfield, one (which failed to explode) left a large crater on the Parade Square when it was detonated the following day.

144 and 61 Sqn left Hemswell in July 1941 to be replaced by 300 and 301 (Polish) Sqn who brought their Wellingtons from Swinderby. On 18 May 1942 300 Sqn moved to Ingham to be replaced on the airfield by 305 (Polish) Sqn. Due to reorganisation of the Polish Forces 300 Sqn returned to Hemswell on 31 January 1943, and with 301 Sqn being withdrawn from operations, its personnel and aircraft were used to bring 300 Sqn up to strength. Later that year both squadrons were moved to Ingham to allow runways to be constructed at Hemswell.

When runway construction was completed in January 1944, No 1 LFS moved to the airfield from Lindholme. The LFS was formed to give some Lancaster experience to aircrew from non-Lancaster conversion units prior to joining operational squadrons. However, as the Lancaster

became more plentiful in late 1944 it was possible to equip training units with the type and so the need for the LFS was gone and accordingly the unit was disbanded.

Hemswell saw a return to operational flying on 22 November 1944 with the arrival of 150 Sqn from Fiskerton and then 170 Sqn from Dunholme Lodge. These two Lancaster units operated from the airfield until the end of the war, both Squadrons disbanding in November 1945.

Like the other two expansion period airfields in West Lindsey, Hemswell was to be retained for the peace-time air force and the Lancasters were replaced by Mosquitos of 109 Sqn and 139 Sqn. These two units remained for about a year. It was at this time that four engine bombers returned to Hemswell; these were Lincolns from 83 Sqn and 100 Sqn, which arrived in late 1946 and were joined by 97 Sqn.

50 and 61 Sqs operated from Hemswell between July and December 1947 while Waddington's runways were being repaired, and due to severe winter weather 12 Sqn brought its Lincolns from Binbrook for 3 months in 1948. The Mosquitos of 109 and 139 Sqs returned from Coningsby in March 1950 and with 100 Sqn moved to Waddington. Hemswell's four Squadrons, 83 and 97 with Lincolns and 109 and 139 with Mosquitos formed the No 1 Group FMF.

During the latter half of 1952 both, 109 and 139 Sqs began to convert to Canberras. 83 and 97 Sqs relinquished their flare marking role and began to train navigators for the planned V Force.

In April 1957 Hemswell became the home of the Nuclear Weapons Task Force, comprising Canberras of 76 and 542 Squadrons modified for high altitude cloud sampling. Both Squadrons took part in 'Operation Grapple', the Christmas Island H Bomb Trials.

Hemswell was selected as a Thor missile site and work commenced in 1957 on the construction of the 3 missile launching pads. 97 Sqn reformed on 1 October 1958 to operate the missiles and the Hemswell Missile Wing controlled the Thor sites at Bardney, Caistor, Coleby Grange and Ludford Magna. Many of the missiles supplied by the Americans were flown directly into Hemswell from the United States but when Hemswell closed for flying in late 1959 further deliveries were made through Scampton. Likewise when the missiles were withdrawn in 1963 they were returned to America via a similar route.

Hemswell was closed in November 1963 but during 1965, with an increase in recruitment No 7 SORT at Swinderby became so overcrowded that Hemswell was reopened as No 2 Wing of 7 SORT. Intakes continued until March 1967 and the last entry passed out from Hemswell on 12 May that year. Hemswell saw very little more air force activity, apart from No 643 GS that operated on the airfield for a short time, as did the civilian Lincoln Aero Club.

During 1972 the accommodation was used to house displaced Ugandan Asians. The pre-war C type hangars are now used as grain stores and in 1985 the airfield was sold off and is now used for a variety of industry and commerce. The former H blocks surrounding the main parade ground (now a car park) have been converted and now form the largest antique centre in Europe attracting visitors from all over the world. Almost 300 dealers operate from the site which is open 7 days a week.

There are two memorials at RAF Hemswell. A memorial stone in the car park area of Antique Centre close to the Canberra Antique Centre (Sheet 112 SK 949 900) commemorates Royal Air Force Bomber Command Hemswell 1937 – 1967. While the second that commemorates 170 Squadron personnel is located on the northern side of the A631 road opposite a convenience store, (Sheet 112 SK 948 897).

HEMSWELL COURT

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 112 SK 946897; Located north of Lincoln on the A631 close to the junction with the A46

ADDRESS:

Hemswell Court Limited, Lancaster Green,
Hemswell Cliff, Lincolnshire DN21 5TQB

Telephone No: 01427 668508

Email: functions@hemswellcourt.com

Website: www.hemswellcourt.com

Hemswell Court is described by many as one of Lincolnshire's hidden treasures. The wedding, dinner dance and conference facility is located in the Officers Mess buildings at the former Hemswell RAF base.

The owners of Hemswell Court were active in establishing the AHL aviation partnership, and the site's aviation connections are highlighted by the inclusion of a detailed airfield history section on the venue's website.



Elsewhere on the Hemswell site is the Hemswell Antiques Centre, which brings together Europe's largest selection of dealers who can offer you the widest possible range of antiques, collectables and antique furniture. Within 3 separate buildings you will find around 300 display areas.

In one of the car parking areas near to the Canberra Antique Centre (Sheet 112 SK 949 900) there is a memorial to Royal Air Force Bomber Command Hemswell 1937 – 1967.

While nearby and close to the former main gate (Sheet 112 SK 947897) is a memorial stone in memory of 170 Sqn and one to all who served at RAF Hemswell from 1936 to 1967.

In St Chad's village church in nearby Harpswell (Sheet 112 SK 936899) a roll of honour in memory of personnel from RAF Hemswell is mounted in the church. Accompanying the roll of honour is a commemorative flower stand.



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1. Refuelling a Wellington bomber at RAF Ingham
2. Disused RAF Ingham Guard Post
3. View into the Trent Valley, with former RAF Ingham building in the foreground
4. 305 Squadron Wellington
5. Ground crew in front of a Wellington bomber
6. Disused Cinema buildings at Ingham

Ingham

In 1944, the Air Ministry, belatedly announced the re-naming of RAF Ingham to RAF Cammeringham

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 960840; accessed off the B1398 Middle Street (Ingham to Fillingham road)

DATES OF OPERATION:

1940 to 1946 – bomber & training base

SQUADRONS:

300 (Masovian) Polish Sqn; 199 Sqn;
305 (Wielpolska) Polish Sqn; 1687 BDTF;
1481 BGF; No 4 PHU; No 1 PRU

Construction of the airfield started in 1941. By the end of the year the airfield was in use as a RLG. In May 42, the airfield officially opened as RAF Ingham, with the arrival of No. 300 (Masovian) Polish Sqn, flying Wellingtons. They stayed until January 1943, when they departed for RAF Hemswell.

In February 43, No 199 Sqn arrived with Wellingtons; but theirs was a short stay, leaving in June 1943. The same month saw the return of 300 Sqn and their fellow countrymen of No 305 (Wielpolska) Polish Sqn, again flying Wellingtons. Once again, 305 Sqn's stay was short lived and they left for RAF Swanton Morley in September 43; this left 300 Sqn as the sole unit at RAF Ingham.

Towards the end of 1943, the Polish Air Force Command finally persuaded Bomber Command to equip a Polish squadron with the Avro Lancaster; with the obvious choice being 300 Sqn. However, with Ingham's grass runways in very poor condition, the airfield was considered unsuitable for new heavier bombers; and so, in March 44, 300 Sqn finally left Ingham for the last time and relocated to nearby RAF Faldingworth, with its new concrete runways.

Following the departure of this squadron the airfield became non-operational and was home to various small training units. After much confusion and numerous instances of essential aircraft spares being delivered to the village of Ingham, in Suffolk, on 24 November 1944, the Air Ministry, belatedly announced the re-naming of RAF Ingham to RAF Cammeringham.

At the end of hostilities, many Polish servicemen and women chose not to return to the now communist Poland and instead elected to remain in the UK and make it their new home. The PRC was formed and PRUs were built to accommodate them during their transition to British civilian life. Cammeringham PRU was built on land at the southern edge of Ingham Village, (Lincolnshire); and consisted of family style Nissen Hut accommodation. The site was occupied for many years.

In All Saints Church in Ingham village (Sheet 121 SK 950836) there are memorial plaques commemorating the personnel and Squadrons / units of RAF Ingham from 1940 to 1946.

This location is best visited during West Lindsey's Open Churches Festival held annually, during May.

A new RAF Ingham Heritage Centre has now been established on part of the former airfield site.

RAF INGHAM HERITAGE CENTRE

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 960840; accessed off the B1398 Middle Street (Ingham to Fillingham road)

ADDRESS:

RAF Ingham Heritage Centre, Middle Street, Fillingham, Gainsborough, Lincs DN21 5BU

Email: enquiries@rafingham.co.uk

Website: www.rafingham.co.uk

The Centre is due to open in 2015

Following an exhibition held in Fillingham in May 2010, a group of local volunteer enthusiasts formed the RAF Ingham Heritage Group, with the intention of creating a Heritage Centre to provide a permanent site to tell the story of RAF Ingham; and of the Polish, Canadian, Australian and British crews who worked and flew from there during the WWII.

With the kind permission of the land owner and tenant farmer, they were allowed onto the site to start to clear the land surrounding the buildings. This was prior to a formal lease being agreed. Work commenced on the site in February 2011 and saw the felling of over 40 self-seeded trees and the clearing of 70 years of mother-nature's attempts to reclaim the site. Despite the roof and windows needing to be replaced, the structure itself was fairly sound; although, many areas of the brickwork needed attention and renovation.

In spring 2012, a 25 year lease was secured for the buildings and land; and renovation work got under way. In April 2012, 12 (Air Support) Group, Royal Engineers, helped create an access road and car park for the site. In the spring of 2013, assisted by funding from Lincolnshire County Council and John Martin

Hoyes (building company) a new primary entrance to the Heritage Centre was created on the B1398. Their volunteers continue to work hard on the renovation plans.

The Polish Air Force Memorial at Northolt, London is the main focal point for the Polish Veterans who served

with the RAF during WWII. There is also a small heritage room within RAF Northolt dedicated to the memory of the PAF fighter squadrons who flew with the RAF in the Battle of Britain.

In late 2010, the PAFCT became aware of the RAF Ingham Heritage Group's project to create the Heritage Centre. They were greatly impressed by their vision and agreed to assist the renovation project. With RAF Ingham's intrinsic historical links with the Polish Bomber Squadrons, PAFCT asked the group to accept the honour to become the permanent 'Home of the Polish Bomber Squadrons' in the UK. As a consequence, part of the Heritage Centre will be dedicated to, and tell the story of the Polish bomber squadrons who served with the RAF during WWII.





COMMEMORATING OUR AVIATION HERITAGE...

With RAF Ingham's intrinsic historical links with the Polish Bomber Squadrons, PAFCT asked the Heritage Centre Group to accept the honour of becoming the permanent '*Home of the Polish Bomber Squadrons*' in the UK. As a consequence, part of the Heritage Centre, will be dedicated to, and tell the story of, the Polish bomber squadrons who served with the RAF during WWII.





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1. Aerial view of Scampton in 1918
2. A Lancaster overflies a Vulcan at RAF Scampton
3. A crashed Lancaster at RAF Scampton
4. V-Force era Vulcan from 27 Squadron
5. 617 Squadron Vulcan B2
6. Red Arrows Hawk jet
7. Vulcan on approach to RAF Scampton
8. V-Force Valiant overflies RAF Scampton

Scampton

During the early 1930s, as the threat of another European war loomed, it was announced that Scampton would be reopened and used as a bomber airfield

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 952811 & SK 964796; located alongside the A15 Lincoln to Brigg road

DATES OF OPERATION:

1916 to 1919 – WWI home defence and training base
1936 to 1953 – bomber base
1952 to 1982 – jet bomber base
1983 to current – training & home to the Red Arrows

SQUADRONS:

33(HD) Sqn; 11(R) Sqn; 60(R) Sqn; 81(R) Sqn;
34 TDS; 214 Sqn; 49 Sqn; 83 Sqn; 617 Sqn;
153 Sqn; 624 Sqn; 10 Sqn; 27 Sqn; 18 Sqn;
21 Sqn; 230 OCU; 35 Sqn; CFS; Red Arrows

In December 1916 as part of Britain's Home Defence System, a Searchlight Unit was established at Aisthorpe Farm, Brattleby. With it came A Flight of 33 (HD) Sqn with FE2 pusher aeroplanes for anti-Zeppelin duties. The flight remained on the landing ground until June 1918 when it was posted to Manton to join the remainder of the squadron.

At the same time as 33 Sqn was establishing itself at Aisthorpe Farm it was decided to enlarge the flight station to form a new training aerodrome. Very soon its name was standardised as Scampton. Various training squadrons began to arrive at the aerodrome so that when on 1 April 1918 the Royal Air Force was formed 11, 60 and 81 Reserve Squadrons amalgamated to form 34 TDS under the control of the 23rd Training Wing with its headquarters at South Carlton. As soon as WWI ended 34 TDS began to run down and by April 1919 the airfield had closed. Within a year all the buildings had been cleared and the site returned to agricultural use.

During the early 1930s, as the threat of another European war loomed, it was announced that Scampton would be reopened and used as a bomber airfield. The station was officially opened on 27 August 1936 and with construction work still going on the first flying units arrived, 9 Sqn from Aldergrove equipped with Heyfords and 214 Sqn flying Virginias coming from Andover.

In March 1938, 9 and 214 Sqns were replaced by 49 and 83 Sqns equipped with Hind biplane light bombers. In September, 49 Sqn became the first RAF unit to operate the new Hampden. 83 Sqn soon followed; both squadrons were operational with the type by the time war was declared in September 1939 and took part in the first bombing missions of the war.

Throughout the summer of 1940 the intensity of air attacks increased. On 1 July the first 2,000lb bomb was dropped by an 83 Sqn Hampden piloted by F/O Guy Gibson. Number 12 Group Bomber Command's first VC was awarded to Flt Lt Learoyd of 49 Sqn. He managed to fly his badly damaged aircraft back to Scampton after encountering severe enemy anti-aircraft fire of the Dortmund-Ems Canal. The second VC to be awarded to a Scampton airman went to Sgt John Hannah of 83 Sqn when on 19 September 1940 he successfully extinguished a fire in his badly damaged Hampden.

83 Sqn began to convert to the Manchester during December 1941 and 49 Sqn followed suit in

April 1942. Both squadrons operated this ill-fated type until converting to the Lancaster in the summer of that year.

One of the most famous units of the RAF – 617 Sqn – was formed at Scampton on 21 March 1943. Formed for a special mission, the breaching of the Ruhr Dams the new Squadron underwent a period of intensive training before setting out to attack the target on 16 May 1943. Two of the dams were breached with the loss of 8 of the force of 19 Lancasters dispatched. No less than 34 awards for bravery were awarded to the aircrew that took part in the mission, including the VC to the squadron's commander, Wg Cdr Guy Gibson.

Scampton had been a grass airfield until the summer of 1943 when operations ceased and the airfield closed for the construction of concrete runways. By October 1944 the airfield was operational again and on the 15th of that month 153 Sqn brought its Lancasters from Kirmington. On 5 April 1945, 625 Sqn arrived from Kelstern, the Lancasters of both units taking part in their last operation of WWII later that same month.

With 153 and 625 Sqns disbanding at the end of September 1945 the station was earmarked for the Lincoln and in the late 40s and early 50s various units operated the type from the airfield. With the start of the Berlin Airlift and the worsening of east west relationships in June 1948, Scampton was one of the RAF stations made available to the US government as a heavy bomber base. B29 Superfortresses arrived in July and remained until January 1949, by which time international tensions had eased.

By 1953, with the Lincolns being phased out, Scampton had become a jet station as 10 Sqn had reformed and were equipped with Canberras on the airfield. Various other squadrons operated Canberras from Scampton until 1955 when in June the airfield was closed down for modernisation.

The next three years saw the base undergo a massive remodelling programme in preparation for use as a V-Bomber base. The old war-time three runway system was scrapped in favour of the single, long, main runway. So long in fact that the main A15 Lincoln to Brigg Road – the old Roman Ermine Street – had to be diverted. This is remembered now by the bow and arrow symbol on the station badge. In addition to the extended runway, much new technical and domestic accommodation was erected at the same time, extending the area of the airfield to over 900 acres.

With the airfield once again declared operational, 617 Sqn, reformed at Scampton on the 1 May 1958 with the Vulcan B1; over the next three years they were joined by 83 and 27 Sqns, with Vulcan B2s, bringing the Scampton Wing to full strength.

Scampton continued to be a front line Vulcan base until the Vulcan was phased out of service in 1982. With the disbanding of 27 Sqn on 31 March of that year, the V bomber era at Scampton finally came to an end.

After a period of uncertainty, it was announced that Scampton would transfer from Strike to Support Command and become the home of the CFS the first part of the unit to move to Lincolnshire being the Red Arrows Aerobatic Team, which arrived with its famous all red Hawk aircraft on the 25 March 1983. Although the days of the bomber are long gone, Scampton still has an important role to play in the forefront of today's RAF.

Nearby the Scampton village church, St John Baptist (Sheet 121 SK 948795) displays various memorial plaques and the north aisle houses a RAF Chapel. Scampton churchyard contains 64 Commonwealth and 8 German war graves from the World War II, while a separate post-war section contains 35 graves of personnel who died on active service in the district.

RAF SCAMPTON HERITAGE CENTRE

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 952811 & SK 964796; located on base accessed via the Guard Room

ADDRESS:

RAF Scampton Heritage Centre,
RAF Scampton, Lincoln LN1 2ST

Telephone No: 01522 738361

Email: rafscamptonheritagecentre@gmail.com

Website: www.raf.mod.uk/rafscampton

Opening hours: Visits by appointment only, so call or email in advance to arrange to visit.

Admission fees: Visitor Centre – free admission.

The Heritage Centre is located on the famous bomber base from which 617 Sqn, the Dambusters, flew their legendary raid in May 1943. For his leadership on this raid, Wg Cdr Guy Gibson was awarded the VC, the third to be awarded to someone based at Scampton during



WWII; the previous recipients being Flt Lt Roderick Learoyd and Sgt John Hannah. Guy Gibson's renovated office is part of the Heritage Centre.

However, there is more than the Dambusters, the Heritage Centre covers the history of the base from 1917 up to the present day, which includes the Red Arrows. Also featured is the station's role as a V-Force base for the Vulcans and their Blue Steel missiles; this supported by displays of disarmed ejection seats and clothing as worn by today's aircrew.

During base tours you will see the on-site locations where the Dambusters film was shot; you may also see the grave of Guy Gibson's pet labrador dog. Depending on when you visit the Reds could be flying on a practice sortie.

The Heritage Centre is open every day but by appointment only so you will need to call, or email to make your visit reservation. Photographic identification is required by each visitor to gain access to RAF Scampton, this will be checked on arrival at the Main Guardroom, and overseas visitors are required to provide passport details as proof of ID.

617 Squadron - The Dambusters

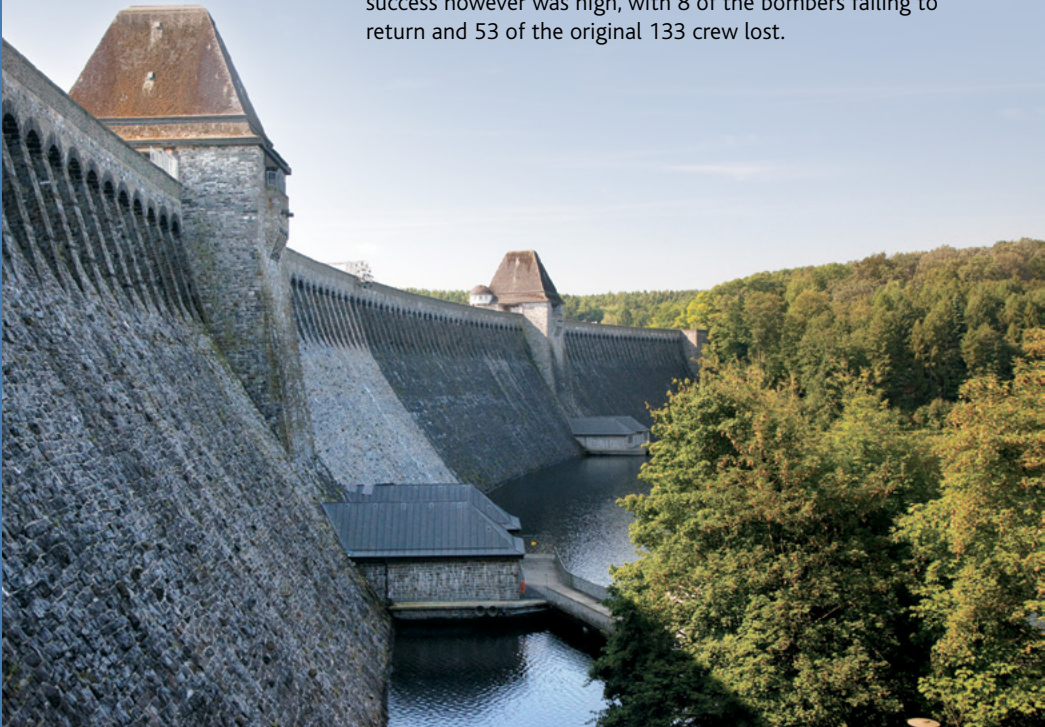
On the evening of 16th May 1943, 19 Avro Lancaster bombers, led by Wg Cdr Guy Gibson took off from RAF Scampton, bound for the Ruhr Valley – the industrial heartland of Nazi Germany.

They took a zig-zag route across the Netherlands and northern Germany, flying at less than 200 feet to avoid enemy defences, towards the huge dams of the Ruhr Valley. The first wave of aircraft approached the Möhne and Eder dams, and the second wave flew on to the Sorpe, Ennepe, Lister and Diemel dams.

Once at their targets, at a height of 60 feet and flying at precisely 220 mph, the bombers released the now famous 'bouncing' bombs. Designed by Dr Barnes Wallis, the five ton, drum shaped bomb travelled along a narrow angle of descent, hitting the water and bouncing or skipping along the surface in a 'ducks and drakes' fashion until it reached the dam where it sank. The water pressure set off the fuses and the bomb exploded, tearing a gigantic gap in the dam wall.

First the Möhne dam was breached, then the Eder – releasing millions of gallons of water (a 9ft wave of 100 million cubic metres of water tore through the Möhne Valley alone killing some 1294 people and flooding towns and villages in its path). Hydro-electric turbines were ruptured, severing power to the Ruhr's industries.

The second group of bombers approached the other 4 dams but only attacked the first two. The Sorpe was hit, but the breach was above water level. Operation 'Chastise' was a success and Guy Gibson was awarded the VC. The price of this success however was high, with 8 of the bombers failing to return and 53 of the original 133 crew lost.



RED ARROWS

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 952811 & SK 964796; located on base accessed via the Guard Room

ADDRESS:

PR Office, The Red Arrows, Royal Air Force Scampton, Lincoln, Lincs LN1 2ST

Telephone No: 01522 733279

Email: RAFAT-HQPRALL@mod.uk

Website: www.raf.mod.uk/reds

One of the world's premier aerobatic display teams the Red Arrows celebrated their 50th display season in 2014.

Operations tend to follow a standard format and typically 3 new pilots join the team each year and their training begins in earnest each October, in the Lincolnshire skies over the home base of RAF Scampton. They will have flown in the rear seat behind an experienced team pilot for the last month of the previous display season, but the initial weeks are spent converting to the

Hawk and then looping and rolling in small formations over Scampton airfield. As their proficiency grows, so the height is lowered and formation size increased.

Meanwhile, deep servicing of the aircraft is carried out in rotation so that the pilot's training sorties can progress uninterrupted up to 3 times a day, 5 days a week. By early February, all of the aircraft are available and the pilots are ready to fly 9 aircraft formations. The Team can now concentrate on developing a display sequence, sometimes incorporating new ideas during the winter.



The work-up training culminates with a detachment to the RAF base in Cyprus where fine weather guarantees continuity of flying and allows the final polish to be put on the display. The full display sequence, flown in good weather, demonstrates many different formation manoeuvres. An observation area for the public is situated at the junction of the A1500 and B1398.



1. Commemorative display behind the carved pulpit at St John the Baptist Church
2. South Carlton church
3. RFC / RAF memorial plaque on the pulpit

South Carlton

69 Squadron AFC which had formed in Egypt, was transferred to South Carlton in December 1916 and with RE8s worked up as a reconnaissance unit

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 951767; the village is located off the B1398 Lincoln to Ingham road

DATES OF OPERATION:

1916 to 1920 – WWI training base

SQUADRONS:

39 Sqn; 45 Sqn; 61 Sqn; 69 Sqn (AFC); 46 TDS; 34 TDS

During WWI, with increasing losses of operational pilots over the battle front, many new aerodromes were established throughout England and early in 1916 South Carlton was opened as a training station.

39, 45 and 61 Training Squadrons were moved onto the aerodrome and with various types of aeroplane, began the task of training pilots for fighter and reconnaissance duties.

69 Squadron AFC which had formed in Egypt, was transferred to South Carlton in December 1916 and with RE8s worked up as a reconnaissance unit before being posted to France in September 1917. This squadron later became the squadron responsible for the autopsy and burial of the German WWI fighter ace the 'Red Baron'.

In July 1918 the training squadrons for South Carlton were amalgamated to form No 46 TDS, and along with 34 TDS at Scampton, became the 23rd TW. With the close down of Scampton in April 1919 the aeroplanes of 34 TDS were transferred to the strengths of 46 TDS. However with the end of the war 46 TDS was also run down and subsequently disbanded in April 1920.

Although the aerodrome was closed down in the 20's several buildings still exist on the site, now being used as farm stores and are not accessible to the general public. A carved pulpit was installed in St John the Baptist Church, South Carlton. This features a thin brass plaque, which acts as a memorial to the men of the RFC and RAF who lost their lives flying from the aerodrome.



1. A light aircraft prepares to take off at Sturgate
2. A disused wartime building at Sturgate
3. Hangars & workshops at Sturgate
4. Airfield entrance to Sturgate
5. Some of Sturgate's thriving aviation community

Sturgate

Sturgate was opened in 1944 as a bomber base within No. 1 group, Bomber Command

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 877878; South east of Gainsborough, between the villages of Upton and Heapham

DATES OF OPERATION:

1944 to 1946 – WWII training base
1953 to 1958 – USAF base
1969 to current – Civilian flying

SQUADRONS:

1520 BAT; 1 ACS; 50 Sqn; 61 Sqn; 3928 ABG

Sturgate is a former WWII airfield that, unlike many of its contemporaries has maintained its aviation connections, albeit as a civilian airfield.

Sturgate was opened in 1944 as a bomber base within No. 1 Group, Bomber Command, but it seems doubtful that any operations were dispatched from its runways, being used until the end of the war for training purposes.

The airfield's first unit was 1520 BAT Flight, which arrived from Leconfield in September 1944; to be joined in November by No. 1 Group ACS. In February 1945 the BAT Flight disbanded and in May ACS left the station to be replaced in June by 50 and 61 Sqns, who flew their Lancasters from Sturgate until January 1946. With the squadrons gone the airfield was placed on Care and Maintenance until the early 50's.

With the onset of the cold war and the deployment of American forces in Britain, in June 1953 Sturgate was allocated to the USAF. Number 3928 ABG, part of the 7th Air Division of SAC, was formed on the airfield. Flying was very limited, despite many thousands of dollars being spent rebuilding runways and other facilities, on one occasion a squadron of RF84 jet fighters spent a short time on the airfield. In 1958 the airfield was handed back to RAF control, although used as a supply base by the Americans until 1964. The site was disposed of by the Ministry in 1965.

Civilian flying began at Sturgate in 1969 with the beginning of a charter and taxi operation using a Piper Aztec Aircraft. The airport has grown and today is a thriving centre for civil aviation.



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- 1. Crew of Wellington II PH-H W5419
- 2. Sgt Hannah & F/Sgt McDevitt
- 3. Wickenby WAAFs
- 4. Wickenby's watch office still in use
- 5. Building on the left, Airmen's Mess and Cookhouse entrance; building on the right camp cinema (the Rex)
- 6. WAAF Wireless Operator
- 7. RAF Wickenby Lancasters and crews
- 8. Lancaster PH-U

Wickenby

Work had been completed by the autumn of 1942 and on 25 September 12 Sqn moved with its Wellingtons from Binbrook

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 102809; the RAF Wickenby Memorial is well signed posted from the junction of the A158 and the B1399 roads

DATES OF OPERATION:

1941 to 1945 – WWII bomber base
1946 to 1956 – Maintenance Unit & munitions storage
1960s to current – Civilian flying

SQUADRONS:

12 Sqn; 626 Sqn; 93 MU

The contractors McAlpine moved to Wickenby late in 1941 and began to construct a bomber airfield for No. 1 Group, Bomber Command. Work had been completed by the autumn of 1942 and on 25 September 12 Sqn moved with its Wellingtons from Binbrook. In November Lancasters replaced the Wellingtons, the squadron using its new aircraft for the first time during January 1943.

In November 1943 C Flt of 12 Sqn was detached to form an operational nucleus for 626 Squadron which formed at Wickenby. Together the two units operated the Lancasters in the bomber offensive until the end of the war. They also dropped food supplies as part of Operation Manna and repatriated POWs as part of Operation Exodus. In July 1945 12 Sqn returned to Binbrook and 626 Sqn disbanded on the 14 October.

Wickenby was then transferred to 40 Group, MC, and became the home of 93 and 92 MUs. For a number of years the unit used the war time runways for the storage of many thousand surplus bombs, the majority of which were disposed of safely in the sea during the early 50's.

Wickenby closed down in 1956 and by the mid 60's had been disposed of, the majority of which returned to agriculture, although the war time control tower and surrounding area are used by a private flying group and many other companies.

The airfield is also home to the RAF Wickenby Memorial Collection, a thriving aircraft restoration company and the charity Flights for Life, which aims – *“To give children and young adults who are suffering from life limiting illnesses the opportunity to experience the magic of flight”*. <http://flightsforlife.co.uk>

RAF WICKENBY MEMORIAL COLLECTION

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 104810; the RAF Wickenby Memorial is well signed posted from the junction of the A158 and the B1399 roads

ADDRESS:

RAF Wickenby Memorial Collection,
The Control Tower, Wickenby Aerodrome,
Langworth, Lincoln LN3 5AX

Telephone No: 01673 885000

Email: rafwmm@outlook.com

Website: www.wickenbymuseum.co.uk

Opening hours:

1 April to 31 October - 9am to 5pm daily

1 November to 31 March - 9am to 4pm daily

Admission fees: Visitor Centre – free admission

Housed on the first floor of the watch office the RAF Wickenby Memorial Collection commemorates all who served at RAF Wickenby from 1942 – 1956; especially the 1,146 aircrew who failed to return from operational sorties in World War II. The displays feature interesting artefacts related to RAF Wickenby, 12 Sqn, 626 Sqn and the Lancaster bomber and its crews.

The archive was originally started by the Wickenby Register, but recently it has more than doubled in size, due to the work and research of the RAF Wickenby Memorial Collection.

Much of the archive has been digitised and cross referenced. This enables searches to be made using a person's name, crew members or plane to find all relevant documents and photographs. Research visits to access the archive by appointment only.

Wickenby has been an active civil airfield since the 1960s and today it is home to an active flying club. At the entrance to the airfield is an impressive memorial stone that features the badges of 12 Sqn and 626 Sqn; and a representation of Icarus. The RAF Wickenby Walk is a line of trees and plaques, from the memorial along to the watch office that has been planted in memory of RAF Wickenby's veterans.



Other Locations

Blyborough

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 112 SK 953937

A Class 1 night landing ground was established at Blyborough for 33 (HD) Sqn during the period it was operational in North Lincolnshire from December 1916 to early 1918. This location is now farmland, which lies between the B1398 and A15 roads.

Cockthorne

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 069875

A Class 2 landing ground was established at Cockthorne Farm for 33 (HD) Sqn from December 1916 to June 1919. Originally it was only used by day, but lighting, consisting of petrol soaked rags in tin cans, was provided during the latter part of the war. This location is now farmland, which lies west of the A46 road.

Cuxwold

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 113 SK 185010

This Class 2 night landing ground was used by 33 (HD) Sqn from December 1916 to June 1919. The site which covered some 80 acres was the target for bombs from the Zeppelin L46 on the night of 24 September 1917. Attracted by the lights of flares marking the landing area bombs fell in surrounding fields without causing damage. This location is now farmland, which lies south east of the A46 road.

Kexby

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 122 SK300655

The scene of a Lancaster Bomber flying over the Lincolnshire countryside during the World War II was painted on the wooden wall of the

original Kexby / Upton village hall which, at that time, was being used as a Naafi Club. The painting is thought to have been the backdrop to the stage used by the servicemen



for entertainment. It is signed by the artist R S Thomas and dated 1944.

Hidden for many years under a false wall, the painting was re-discovered when the building was being prepared for demolition in 1987. The village hall committee offered the mural for display to the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Museum at RAF Coningsby where it remained for the next three years. In 1990 it was decided that the painting should return to its original site, to the new village hall at Upton/Kexby.

Laughterton

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 838761

Located in Laughterton on the junction of A1133 road with road to Kettlethorpe / Fenton is the appropriately named Propeller Island, which is the location for the village's RAF Memorial. This takes the form of a single blade from an Avro Lancaster bomber set in a simple stone cairn.

This memorial was dedicated at a ceremony held on 16 July 1994. Unusually it commemorates the 50th anniversary of the deaths of the crew of two RAF bombers – Stirling EH940 from 1661 HCU RAF Winthorpe; and Lancaster LM29, from 103 Sqn RAF Elsham Wolds; both aircraft crashed near to the village in the summer of 1944.

Other Memorials



Bransby

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 121 SK 900793

A memorial plaque in memory of 49 Sqn crew of Hampden lost out of RAF Scampton 25 January 1942 can be found in a shelter in the Peter Hunt Memorial Garden at the Bransby Horses Centre. The plaque was dedicated on 25 January 1992. <https://bransbyhorses.co.uk/>

East Stockwith

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 112 SK 790946

A memorial has recently been raised on the corner of Back Street and St Peters Close in Stockwith to the memory of the crew of Lancaster ME323, PH-P of 12 Sqn flying out of RAF Wickenby on 4 March 1945. The aircraft was shot



down by an intruder during night training flight at 0110 hours and all seven crew were killed. The memorial incorporates a propeller recovered from crash site and it will be dedicated in summer 2018.

Laughton

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 112 SK 848976

Located in the village cemetery a memorial sundial on a blue/grey plinth was raised in 2005; its inscription reads: "Remembering aircrew who lost their lives in this area during WW2. This memorial was placed here by Laughton Parish on 5th June 2005. "Lest We Forget"

Adjacent to the cemetery in Laughton Woods a gum tree was planted to commemorate the crew of Lancaster W4314 lost on 1st September 1943 while operating out of nearby RAF Blyton with 1662 HCU. The aircraft was lost at 0325 hours while on night cross-country exercise; all 7 crew were killed and this included 4 Australians.



Caistor

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 112 SK 094016

This memorial plaque is affixed to the low garden wall of a house on the south side of Caistor to North Kelsey road, near to the hamlet of North Kelsey Moor. The memorial was dedicated 5th April 2014 and commemorates the loss of Lancaster R5672 on 8th April 1944.

The aircraft was based at No 1 LFS at RAF Hemswell. Nine people were killed in the crash, including a female ATA pilot and several members of ground crew.



Market Rasen

LOCATION / GRID REF:

Sheet 113 SK106887

On 9th May 2010 a memorial plaque on the wall of the Market Rasen Railway Station was dedicated to the five man crew of Valiant, V-bomber, WZ363 from 207 Squadron at RAF Marham, Norfolk, that was lost on 6th May 1964. The aircraft crashed close to West Farm on the Linwood Road and burst into flames, shortly after it had undertaken a practice "roller landing" at RAF Binbrook during a low-level training flight.

A flower planter and memorial painting are also now located adjacent to the plaque.

ACCOMMODATION



Blyton

★★★ GUEST ACCOMMODATION

www.blytonponds.co.uk
TEL: 01427 628240

Blyton Ponds, Sunnyside Farm, Station Road, Blyton, Gainsborough DN21 3LE



Cammeringham

★★★★ BED & BREAKFAST

www.fieldviewbandb.com
TEL: 01522 730193

Field View B&B, Field View, Back Lane, Cammeringham, Lincoln LN1 2SH

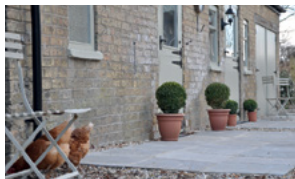


Marton

★★★★ GUEST HOUSE

www.blackswanguesthouse.co.uk
TEL: 01427 718878

The Black Swan, 21 High Street, Marton, Gainsborough DN21 5AH



Grange de Lings

★★★★ BED & BREAKFAST
SILVER AWARD

www.bridlewaybandb.co.uk
TEL: 01522 545693

Bridleway, Riseholme Gorse, Grange de Lings LN2 2LY



Cammeringham

★★★★ FARM HOUSE
SILVER AWARD

www.cammeringham-estate.co.uk
TEL: 01522 730788

Groom's Cottage, The Cammeringham Estate, Lincoln LN1 2SH



Bardney

★★★ GUEST HOUSE

www.bardneyblackhorse.co.uk
TEL: 01526 398900

The Black Horse, 16 Wragby Road, Bardney, Lincoln LN3 5XL



Nettleham

★★★★ S/C GOLD AWARD

www.oldvic.net
TEL: 01522 750819

Old Vicarage Cottages, Bluestone, 15 Crescent Close, Nettleham, Lincoln LN2 2SP



Hemswell Cliff

AA ★★★★★ GUEST HOUSE
HIGHLY COMMENDED

www.hemswellcourt.com
TEL: 01427 668508

Hemswell Court, Lancaster Green, Hemswell Cliff, Gainsborough DN21 5TQ



Ingham

★★★★ S/C GOLD AWARD

www.dairybarningham.co.uk
TEL: 07747 893465

The Old Dairy Barn, 33 The Green, Ingham, Lincoln LN1 2XT



Brattleby

★★★★S/C

www.lincolncottages.co.uk

TEL: 01522 730561

The Stable, Sunnyside,
East Lane, Brattleby
Lincoln LN1 2SQ



Scampton

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TEL: 07825 984503

Glebe Farm Cottages,
Horncastle Lane, Scampton
Lincoln LN1 2SZ

WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK



Welton

BLACK BULL INN

www.blackbullwelton.com

TEL: 01673 860220

9 Lincoln Road,
Welton, Lincoln,
LN2 3HZ



Blyton

BLACK HORSE INN

www.blackhorseblyton.co.uk

TEL: 01427 628277

93 High Street,
Blyton, Gainsborough
DN21 3JX



Nettleham

THE PLOUGH

www.facebook.com/plough

nettleham.uk

TEL: 01522 750275

1 The Green, Nettleham
Lincoln LN2 2NR



Scampton

DAMBUSTERS INN

www.dambustersinn.co.uk

TEL: 01522 731333

23 High Street,
Scampton, Lincoln
LN1 2SD



Willingham by Stow

HALF MOON INN

TEL: 01427 788340

23 High Street,
Willingham by Stow,
Gainsborough DN21 5JZ



Caistor

THE WHITE HART

www.whitehartcaistor.co.uk

TEL: 01472 851734

21 South Street,
Caistor, Market Rasen
LN7 6UB



Binbrook

THE CLICK'EM INN

www.clickem-inn.co.uk

TEL: 01673 398253

Swinhope, Binbrook,
Market Rasen
LN8 6EN



Gainsborough

THE CLOCK HOUSE

www.clockhousecafebistro.co.uk

TEL: 01427 238283

3 Lord Street,
Gainsborough
DN21 2DD



Glentham

THE CROWN INN

www.facebook.com/

TheCrownInnAtGlentham/
TEL: 01673 878294

High Street, Glentham,
Market Rasen LN8 2EQ

WHERE TO VISIT



Gainsborough

GAINSBOROUGH OLD HALL

www.gainsborougholdhall.com

TEL: 01522 782040

Parnell Street,
Gainsborough
DN21 2NB



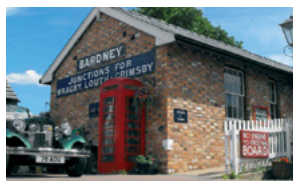
Caistor

CAISTOR ARTS & HERITAGE CENTRE

www.28ploughhill.co.uk

TEL: 01472 851605

28 Plough Hill,
Caistor, Market Rasen
LN7 6LZ



Bardney

BARDNEY HERITAGE CENTRE

www.bardneyheritage.com

TEL: 01526 397299

Station Yard, Station Road,
Bardney, Lincoln
LN3 5UF



Gainsborough

GAINSBOROUGH HERITAGE CENTRE

www.gainsboroughheritage.com

TEL: 01427 610526

The Old Post Office,
12 North Street,
Gainsborough DN21 2HS



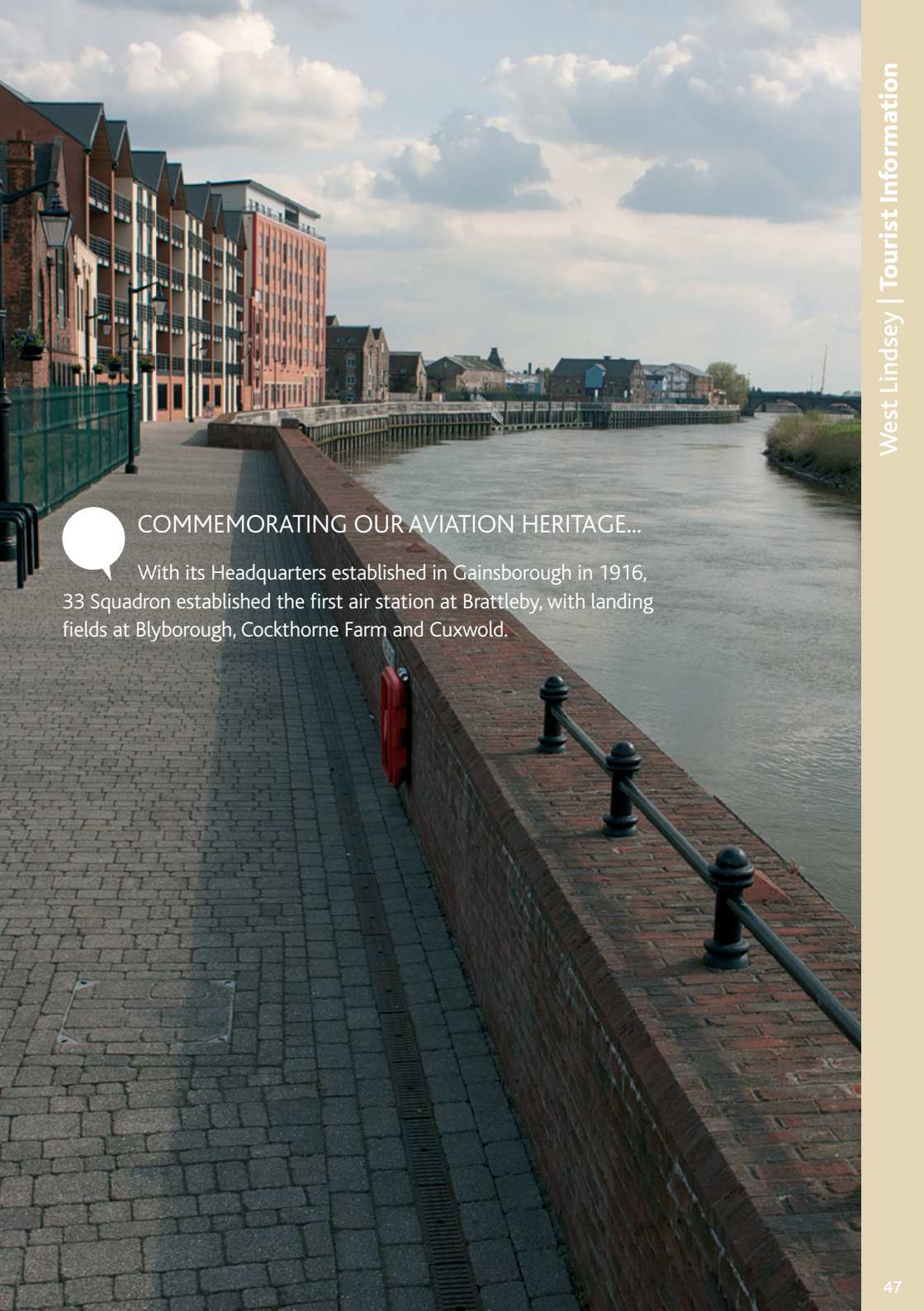
Bransby

BRANSBY HORSES

bransbyhorses.co.uk

TEL: 01427 788464

Bransby,
Lincoln,
LN1 2PH



COMMEMORATING OUR AVIATION HERITAGE...

With its Headquarters established in Gainsborough in 1916, 33 Squadron established the first air station at Brattleby, with landing fields at Blyborough, Cockthorne Farm and Cuxwold.

How to get here

Road

A1 & M180 run close to the district, giving access to the national motorway network.

Places within 30 – 90 mins journey time include Lincoln, Doncaster, Sheffield, Leeds, Nottingham, Hull, Immingham & Grimsby.

Rail

NATIONAL RAIL WEBSITE
www.nationalrail.co.uk

Air

HUMBERSIDE AIRPORT

Humberside Airport is on the A18, located three miles from Junction 5 on the M180

www.humbersideairport.com

ROBIN HOOD AIRPORT

Robin Hood Airport, Doncaster, Sheffield
Sited in the heart of the Yorkshire and Humber region and close to Sheffield, Leeds, Hull, York and Lincoln.

www.robinhoodairport.com

EAST MIDLANDS AIRPORT

East Midlands Airport is in the centre of the country, surrounded by the cities of Nottingham, Derby and Leicester

www.eastmidlandsairport.com

Further information

www.visitlincolnshire.com

For further information on anything contained in this publication please telephone 01427 676666 or e-mail tourism.info@west-lindsey.gov.uk



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Research and editorial: Howard Heeley, Down To Earth Promotions. Design: Mill Design & Advertising. Print: Pyramid Press