

Sergeant John "Jackie" Bremner and Halifax Squadron 102



Halifax Squadron 102



Figure 1: newspaper excerpt from Berliner Morgenpost, 12. 10.2008

The Halifax Squadron 102 consisted of eight men: Pilot George A. Griffiths (141468 RAFVR), Pilot Sgt Kenneth Frederick Stanbridge (1445546 RAFVR), Sergeant John Bremner (1567605 RAFVR), Navigator Reginald C Wilson (169892 RAFVR), Flight Officer Laurie Underwood (55204 RAFVR), Pilot Officer Eric Arthur Church (170702 RAFVR), Warrant Officer Charles Gordon Dupueis (176437 RCAF) and Sgt John Bushell (1623401 RAFVR) (Aircrew Remembered, 2011).

The 102 Halifax Squadron was based at Pockington in Yorkshire. In addition to the crash of 'Od Flo', 7 aircraft were shot down on the same night during the raid on Berlin, amounting to the greatest single loss in bombing raids across both WWI and WWII. In addition to 'Old Flo', Captain Fellerer shot down a further three British aircrafts on the night of 20th January 1944 (Aircrew Remembered, 2011).

Reginald Wilson, navigator of the former crew and rear gunner John Bushell, were able to parachute to safety before the Halifax bomber landed in a forest on the outskirts of southeast Berlin. Thereafter, Bushell and the remaining living crew members, including Laurie Underwood (bomb aimer) and George Griffiths (pilot) were both taken prisoners of war. In addition to Sergeant Bremner, wireless operator Eric Church, second pilot Kenneth Stanbridge and Canadian mid upper gunner all tragically lost their lives (Hall, 2008).

The Search



Figure 2: Photo of Sergeant John Bremner.

Source: Hall, A. 2008. *War hero is finally buried - 64 years after he was gunned down by a German bomber*. [Online]. [12 June 2023]. Available from: [War hero is finally buried - 64 years after he was gunned down by a German bomber | Daily Mail Online](#)

Reginald Wilson was determined to find the crash site of the aircraft to strive to recover the remains of the crew. After an enquiry sent to the Berlin Heimatsmuseum in Köpenick and receiving over 60 leads, Wilson was able to locate the crash site near the S Bahn station at Hirschgarten in Berlin. Here, metal shards that were expected to belong to the Halifax aircraft of Wilson's former crew were found alongside the remains of a human skeleton.

Approximately 64 years after the crash, the DNA of the remains was traced back to Sergeant Bremner's sister, Marjorie Acon. In 2008, Bremner was given a burial with full military honours at the Berlin 1939-1945 Commonwealth War Cemetery, which both Acon and Wilson attended.



Figure 3: Newspaper excerpt from Köpenicker Abendblatt 16.07.2008.