



306th BG Museum

Newsletter 13 – Nov 2021

Welcome all to the 306th Museum Newsletter here at Thurleigh.

Museum Closed for the winter

Sunday 31st October was our last official opening day of the Museum for public drop in, but we are open via appointments on the Facebook Site all year round and this only due to the dedication of our Chairman John Watson-Read.

This last season, was hampered again by COVID, so as we enter our 4th Season (Tax Years), we hope we can arrange more days with events, especially as the 306th will be celebrating 80 years from their arrival at Thurleigh, so we will keep you posted.

Archbury Jug

I was pleased to see in this month's Flypast Magazine (December 2021), an article referencing "Twelve O'clock High" and the famous toby jug.

You can purchase your own Toby jug, and inform your household on the next mission by turning it.

Our Version of the Toby Jug is showing us permanently on a mission!

I have put the link in the covering email. It is a US based site, so be careful with customs & shipping charges if you live outside the US.





Bletsoe Memorial

John and I attended an exhibition at St Mary's Church, Bletsoe, on the 28th October, It was dedicated to the Crew of Donald J. Schaefer who crashed in Bletsoe after take-off on the 26th April 1944. The exhibition was to raise funds to erect a memorial to the crew, I have posted on the covering email links to the Facebook, BBC report and Video about this great cause and the extensive research completed by Mary Laws, who's land the Crash Site is located in.

The crew had a mix of experience and Technical Sgt Charles E Weller was flying his 25th mission he was 22 years old.

George S Littlefield who survived the crash was back as a Tail Gunner just four months later, and died on the 21st March 2007 aged 83, if you have any information on George then please let me know.

At 0540 aircraft 469 was taking off on runway 24 (Thurleigh), north east to south west. Sparks were seen coming from No.2 engine port side. Aircraft took off and started a gentle bank to port which became steeper as turn continued. A/C was last seen flying in a steep diving turn. Aircraft crashed about a mile from the airfield killing everyone aboard except Sgt George S. Littlefield, the tail gunner.

Mission: Brunswick, Germany. (Nickel bombs leaflets)

Time: 05.40 hours.

Unit: 367th Bomb Squadron / 306th Bomb Group (H)

Type: Boeing B-17G

Serial No. 42-31469

Coded: GY- K

Location: Near Bletsoe Castle, Bletsoe, Bedfordshire, England.

Pilot: 2/Lt. Donald J. Schaefer 0-754381 – Killed.

Co-Pilot: 2/Lt. Floyd B. Henry 0-814898 – Killed.

Navigator: 2/Lt. Willard A. Transeth 0-702985 – Killed.

Bombadier: 2/Lt. Roy A. McKinney 0-757006 – Killed.

Top Turret/Eng: T/Sgt. Charles E. Weller 15110110 – Killed.

Radio/Op: S/Sgt. Sheldon H. Kinberg 12181044 – Killed.

Ball Turret: Sgt. John C. Simons 33596385 – Killed.

Waist Gunner: T/Sgt. John W. Byrd 18170062 – Killed.

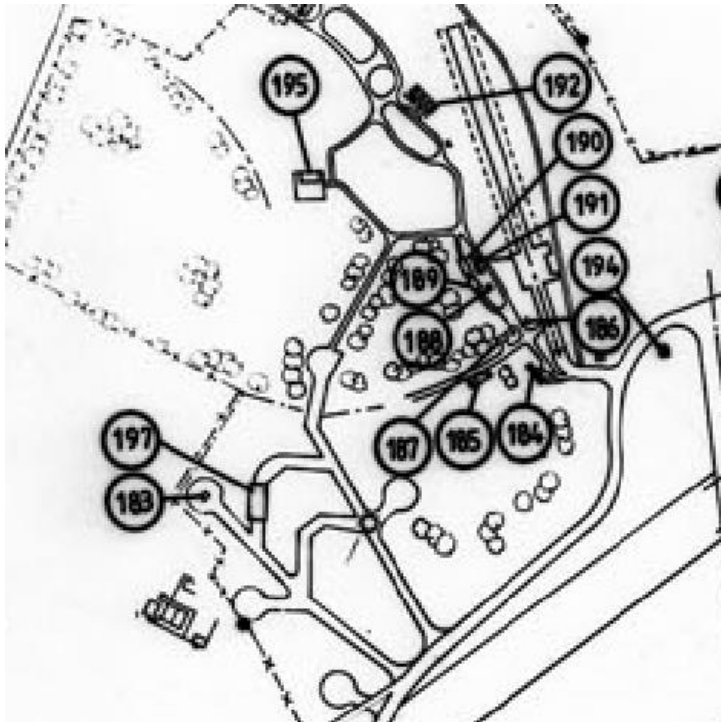
Waist Gunner: Sgt. Ronald M. Minter Jnr. 15196568 – Killed.

Tail Gunner: S/Sgt. George S. Littlefield – Survived.



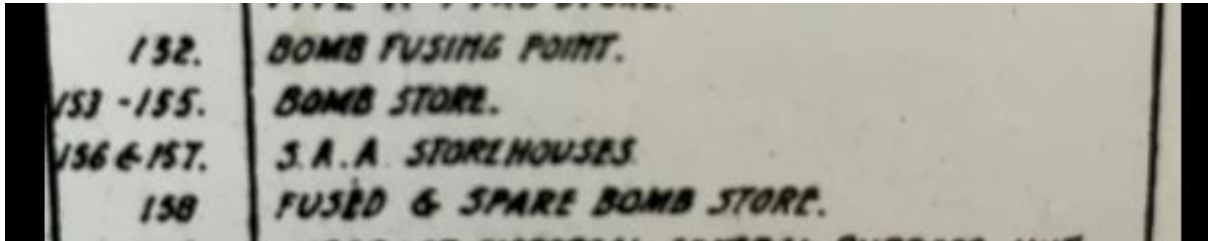
Museum Building Number (UPDATE)

Thanks to an email from Barry Tomlinson and some excellent detailed information on the layout and building numbers from RAE Bedford, we can confirm the Museum number of “185” in the picture from the newsletter “June 2021” is from the RAE days.



This means from the Layouts we have at the Museum:





The layout I have of the 306th shows the building number as 156, so we should re-number the Museum as 156.

I hope that makes sense and you all agree!!

Changes to the Website

Over the winter downtime, we are also updating and refreshing the Website, this will mean the site will be down while the changes are happening.

If you have any suggestions to improve the website and information you would like to see or suggested links, then please let me know.

The new website along with the Facebook page will be our portal for you all and prospective visitors to keep updated on our events.



If you have some article's you wish to contribute to the newsletter or some Donations to display in the Museum or just need a chat then we are always available.

We are looking to make next season (2022) our best yet so please help us spread the word.

Mark