

Captain Eric Melrose 'Winkle' Brown, CBE, DSC, AFC, Hon FRAeS, RN

It was with great sadness, that PFBC was notified of 'the passing' of Eric 'Winkle' Brown - one of our Hon.VPs, and a great Friend... We quickly contacted Jean on behalf of all the Friends of PFBC, to express our sincere condolences for the loss of her dear partner, who was the most remarkable man we have welcomed to Poole.

Simply the Best

with a charmed life

Eric Melrose Winkle Brown

Born Leith, Scotland
21st. January 1919 -
Died Redhill, Surrey
21st. February 2016

Eric's wartime portrait
photo from circa 1940



Flew 487 different types of 'mostly' Combat Aircraft:
An unbeatable World Record !



For those who were fortunate enough to attend the Flag Officers' Dinner held in the Mountbatten Suite of the Royal Motor Yacht Club, on Saturday Evening of the 12th. Oct. 2013, with members of PFBC as guests, will never forget how this 'remarkable man' spoke with such modesty - in holding everyone spellbound about his exploits ! Our Hon. Commodore, Air, David Mauleverer had 'persuaded' him to visit Poole, and he was very taken by the beauty of our Harbour, so much so that he would have liked to have been based at our RNAs. [The nearest he got to RNAs Sandbanks in Sept. 1940 was Yeovilton.]

He was posted to HMS Audacity (formerly the enemy's Hannover), a merchant ship which had been captured in March in the W. Indies, and converted to become our first escort carrier to protect convoys. Audacity had just a flight deck with no hangar space, so 802 Sqdn's Grumman Martlets were secure topside - and vulnerable to attacks from the long range Focke Wulf Condors when on the Gibraltar run. On her 4th. convoy, Audacity was harassed by Condors + 12 U-boats, with specific orders to destroy at all costs (U-131 had to be scuttled), and U-751 claimed the prize as Audacity sank 500mls off Finisterre ! In the sea a large group of survivors huddled together waiting rescue, but tragically perished one-by-one as the life-savers became sodden, until only Winkle & his co-pilot survived due to their RAF mae-vests. He truly had a charmed life, and cheated death on various occasions !

Desert Island Discs... <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04nvgq1#play>

HMS Audacity lost 21st. Dec. 1941



Stations of Coastal Command... Then and Now, by David Smith

As a part of the 'After the Battle Series', this significant book charts the origins + growth of Coastal Command in 1936 through to its significant role in WW2 in combatting the U-Boat menace to our shipping, from that ring of Bases created around our shores down to Gibraltar & the Azores - 53 in total - involving a wide range of aircraft ! In this, acknowledgement is given to RAF Hamworthy: *Simply a must read*



PFBC Honorary Positions & Life Members

Foundation Trustees: Ken Sanson, Harry Alexander, Bertie Bowman, + Aimée (now Coord for PFBC Projects); Archive Adviser: Mike Phipp

PFBC ACTs: Val Lewis, Terry + Stephanie Mobley & Heather Sturman

Hon. Commodore, Air: David Mauleverer

Patron: Lady Cobham

Honorary President: Jeremy Waters

Hon. Vice Pres: Leslie Dawson, June Topham, Douglas Cook OBE; Adrian Borrill, Colin Cruddas, Libbie Escolme-Schmidt, Brian Galpin, Norman Hull, Capt. Bill Lock, Tessa McIntyre, John Parsons, Mike Phipp, Vic Pitcher, Babs Plumbridge, Colin Pomeroy, Dr. Lesley Runnalls, Sam St. Pierre, Colin van Geffen, Richard Tazewell, and John Wilson

also including Ian Andrews (who Represents all of our HLMs)

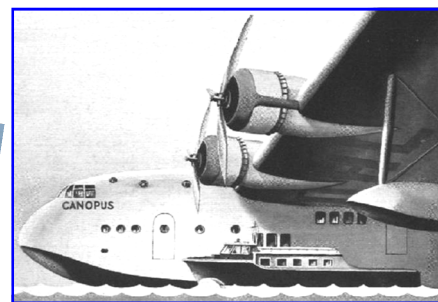
Senior 'Hons.'
within PFBC



Poole Flying Boats Celebration

Charity No. 1123274

Trustee Newsletter: Easter 2016



THE 'OPUS

** PFBC rides forth and spreads its wings

With best wishes to You for Easter from the PFBC Trustees...

With much media focus on the Refugee Crisis arising mainly from the dreadful conflict in Syria and the influx of displaced people from that country, spilling over into Turkey & Greece and then onwards thro' the Balkan countries to W. Europe... there is somewhat of a comparison to the WW2's Refugees: Where Poole featured significantly in the 'flight and plight' of people principally from the Low Countries using small boats, who were shepherded by the RN along the Channel to Poole ! Other safe havens were Weymouth, Plymouth & Falmouth etc.

Huddled in the lee of Brownsea Is



By July 1940, a total of 18,000 Belgian + 1,000 Dutch & others, had refuge provided; some went on by sea or air; many did not enter employment without the consent of the Min. of Labour, in support the war effort until war ended, and then go home. So initially everyone had to be processed, and be in a camp... such as the one built on Brownsea with canvas & local timber. [That is why WW2 photos of Brownsea appear denuded of trees.] The local Health Authorities, support services & Immigration were involved until the temp. accommodation was emptied, and a few enemy infiltrators were weeded out + dealt with !

A handful of refugee families subsequently made Poole their home

Some of the thirty Friends of PFBC at the Unveiling!



Mike Phipp who delivered the unveiling speech, stressed that PFBC is currently researching a comprehensive list of all those on Poole's Flying Boats who were at Harbour Heights, and also earlier at the Haven Hotel, including a Royal Party bound for NZ (to take part in the centennial celebrations there, as it was too dangerous for our King & Queen to travel abroad during WW2). This is important work to more comprehensively understand & to appreciate our knowledge of these highly significant venues!

PFBC proudly presents a Blue Plaque for Harbour Heights.

Friends of PFBC were welcomed to the unveiling of a Blue Plaque for the Harbour Heights Hotel courtesy of John & Julian Butterworth and colleagues of the FJB Hotels' Group... not forgetting Dan Taylor who has since moved on to his new posting with British Airways... This Blue Plaque is the 9th. significant element in our 'Poole Flying Boats & Seaplanes Harbour Trail', and this is an important addition, for the many special people who enjoyed their stay *however brief* ~ and for Stewards who were trained there in Catering & Serving. It was also a memorable landmark for many travellers, who were beginning their journeys to the south, eastwards, and to the west with early morning departures, during 'the darkest days of WW2', and in the postwar austerity era for Great Britain that followed on. This Blue Plaque details proud links with the fledgling BOAC, that relocated here from the Haven Hotel with the imminent threat of invasion following the fall of France & Italy joining the Axis Powers.

Also with the brave airmen of RAAF Australian 461 Squadron & those on the RAF 210 Sqd. Catalinas from RAF Hamworthy protecting the Western Approaches + also the Bay of Biscay: These included the current senior holder of the Victoria Cross John Alexander Cruickshank who enjoyed the Mess facilities, and fleeting acquaintances with the various VIPs staying over.

More than 100 Flying Boats, both military and civil air were involved over the years with Poole Harbour... but a trio were especially synonymous with Harbour Heights - these were the giant US-built Boeings - Bristol, Bangor, and the favourite of Winston Churchill - Berwick! [He flew on Berwick and Bristol.] These were a vital Transatlantic link with Canada and the US... also connecting Africa, S.America, the Windies and Bermuda... Each clocking-up more than a million Transatlantic miles, until the final crossing from Poole to Baltimore on the US east coast, exactly 70 years ago on the 10th. March with the Unveiling by Poole Cllr. Mohan Iyengar (*most fittingly previously with BA*)!



Cllr. Mohan Iyengar

Stephen Macey has written:

In May 1945 my father (still serving in the RAF), landed in Poole Harbour on an RAF Flying boat, having come in from Singapore. He'd been ordered next to attend the Air Ministry in London, and stayed overnight at Harbour Heights, which was at that time an RAF Transit Mess... So he departed for London shortly after arriving back. He told me that the weather was unusually cold, indeed it was snowing and they all were walking around in the 'Biggles type' flying jackets to keep warm; it must have been quite a shock after the hot and humid Singapore!



Photo enhanced by Julian Butterworth - Courtesy of FJB Hotels' Coastline Magazine 2016. Boeing 314A G-GBZ Bristol taking-off from Poole Harbour postwar

BOURNEMOUTH AIR FESTIVAL Thurs 18th.- Sun 21st. August 2016
bournemouthair.co.uk

ALL CONTACTS PLEASE

Pooler Flying Boats Celebration
 For the attention of:- - - - -
 Parkstone Library Buildings
 1 Britannia Road Parkstone
 Poole Dorset BH14 8AZ

For membership of Friends... and renewals contact Bertie Bowman.
 For bookings of tickets for PFBC Celebrations contact Ken Sanson,
 and all other general enquiries - PFBC's Office registered address.

PFBC Email: info@pooleflyingboats.com
 PFBC Website: www.pooleflyingboats.com

and please mark clearly who you are contacting...

Remember Friends' Library Afternoons on 1st and 2nd. Tuesdays of each cal. month