

**Group Captain Peter Reginald Whalley Wickham**  
**DSO DFC\* USA Silver Star**



George Orwell was of the opinion that the RAF during WW2 was a distinctly middle-class organisation, observing that it was *"hardly at all...within the ruling class orbit"*. In some aspects, the class system did rule, especially with some of the 'auxiliary units' formed by the wealthy and titled of London who flew during the weekends. Officers wore a different cloth of their uniforms to the other ranks, and usually enjoyed the privilege of flying the same aircraft most days, whilst Sergeant pilots had to take what ever machine was available. This also filtered down into any awards given, officers receiving theirs in silk lined leatherette cases, while NCO's had to make do with plain cardboard boxes!

Churchill also commented on the class system, *"those excellent sons of the lower middle class, that is, the offspring of hard working teachers, bank clerks, Methodist shopkeepers, and low ranking bureaucrats have saved this country well"*

Peter Reginald Whalley Wickham certainly fitted the description of 'coming from middle class', and when one examines his turbulent childhood and early teens, it will be seen how his character was formed. He also fits into being a *'first class'* fighter pilot, who flew operationally from the very start of WW2 until the end in 1945, gaining four gallantry awards along the way. Here is his unique story:-

Peter's father, Edmund Hugh Whalley Wickham was born in 1885, the son of a Somerset vicar, Archdale Palmer Wickham, and Peter's mother, Evelyn Mary (nee Brancker) born 16.1.1887, also had a Somerset vicar as a father, which maybe, brought them together.

Edmund Wickham was known by all as *'Ted'* whilst Peter's mother had the nickname of *'Birdie'* or *'Mama'*. At the start of the twentieth century having left his education behind, Ted made his way to Brazil for a new life as a coffee planter. This didn't last long as he returned to the UK on the 24th January 1914, landing at Fishguard from the *SS Hildebrand*

After a whirlwind romance, Ted and Birdie married at Axbridge Somerset in April 1914, he promising her a new life in East Africa, in the German held territory of Tanganyika (now Tanzania). On landing at Dar es Salaam, Governor Schnee warned them both to go to Zanzibar instead, or face the probability of internment, as war between the UK and Germany was brewing. Neither of them heeded this advice and made their way to a place called Soga where Ted had been offered the position as manager of the *Kifulu Rubber Estate*. Although life was better there than in Dar es Salaam, this was German East Africa, and English citizens were not made welcome.

The Wickham's did have good neighbours though, living nearby were a Polish Count and Countess, who had their welfare at heart, especially after war was declared on the 4th August 1914, when along with 200 other British and Belgium citizens the Wickham's were interned, with Messrs. Ross, Joelson, Hunter, Innes, Currie and Reade.

This was not a pleasant experience, life in these camps was very tough, and no doubt put pressure on their marriage. (\* a full report of conditions in these camps was submitted to Parliament in September 1917 by various witnesses).

On August 12th Ted and Evelyn were only given a half hours warning by the Germans to collect their belongings before being placed on a train and shunted back and forth along the main line between Dar es Saalam and Tabora. At a place called Bugiri the only water available was full of small worms that had to be strained through fine cloth to get rid of the largest of them, diarrhoea was commonplace. At another place called Kikombo they were kept locked up in a corrugated roofed warehouse, for over 36 hours, where the heat was unbearable. Food and water were often denied them, only later finding out that Red Cross food parcels had been divided up amongst the guards. On the 1st October they left Tabora by rail for Kilimatindi Fortress, on arrival then being forced to walk some 11 miles, ending up with a multitude of cuts caused by the thorny bushes along the route. Conditions here were very harsh as they were under German military law, administered by Kapitan Coltzan, any complaints were regarded as a revolt and would be treated as such. It was almost a daily occurrence for the African and Indian prisoners to receive 25 lashes of the whip by the German guards, for any small misdemeanours especially by one guard called Herr Dorendorf, who referred to everyone as 'swine'. By November 1914, the food became worse, and was rat-ridden, with a small amount of meat (this being refuse from the meat market) supplemented with beans and millet bread along with weak coffee. From the 11th February to 27th May 1915, they were billeted at Kiboriani, and then taken back to Tabora, where native guards were also now employed (under Herr Dorendorf).

The guards took great delight in seeing Europeans engaged in heavy work all day, and then having to empty the latrines. By April 1916 there were 49 European prisoners, 34 of whom were women, 12 with babies. Evelyn gave birth herself to a daughter on the 3rd June 1916, and gave her the name of Mehala Mary. The Germans made little effort to accommodate any new mother with extra food or supplements for the baby, and the women relied on other prisoners to obtain extra food for them. Ted and Evelyn became separated in different camps, and in July 1916 Evelyn was ordered to live outside her camp with her baby, which she refused to do, then being forced to sign a paper that she was in the camp at her own request. Meanwhile, British and Belgium forces were advancing towards Tabora, and on the 15th September 1916, an artillery duel took place between the Belgium and German forces about 12 km outside Tabora. During the next couple of days the German guards slipped away at night, taking some Indians to carry their bags and goods. On the 19th September a Belgian contingent under Colonel Olsen and a British officer marched into the town at midday and released all the prisoners, Evelyn with Mehala amongst them.

#### *Relief of Tabora*





Evelyn had been suffering with a poisoned foot for some time, and was taken at first to a hospital at Mwanza on Lake Victoria, and then on to Port Florence, where after a full recovery she made her way to Nairobi, eventually meeting up with Ted.

The experiences Ted witnessed whilst interned had a direct effect on him, and developed his hatred of the Germans, so much so, that he enlisted into the 3rd King's African Rifles in April 1917 (*Special List*). He is shown in Army Lists as a Temporary Lieutenant with a later posting to Palestine, (*Forces War Records*), but this must be an attachment to another regiment, as most KAR served in garrisons in East Africa until the duration of hostilities. In the meantime, Evelyn had given birth to a son in Nairobi on the 26th March 1918, whom they named Peter Reginald Whalley.



*Evelyn Wickham and her cousin*

At the end of WW1, Ted and Evelyn decided to stay in East Africa, but life was hard, and by the early 1920's they had moved back to Tanganyika. Their marriage became strained and Evelyn walked out, a terrible disgrace in those times, leaving Ted to bring up the two children. Divorce swiftly followed, and under the law (until 1927) the father was always given custody of any children.

*Ted Wickham with Peter and Mehala in Tanganyika*



Evelyn struck up a friendship with a planter named Nino de Luigi (born 1886 and died at Koffiefontein South Africa on 1.8.40). They had two girls; Giovanna Maria (born 30.9.19 died 20.8.2014) and Margherita Francesca de Luigi (born 1924 died at Keverne Cornwall on 25.6.2013). These two half sisters of Peter ended up living in the UK and having children themselves. It is not known if Peter was ever aware of this, or met up with them at any stage.

Ted Wickham employed a nanny to look after the children and was also helped by his brother Reginald (b 1889 and known as Rex) and his wife Edith, who moved from Kabale in Uganda, where Rex was a civil servant.

The strain of family life and work for Ted became too much and he arranged for the children to be sent back to England, to be brought up by Ted's parents in Somerset. Peter and Mahala arrived back in the UK on the 16th August 1925 aged 7 and 9, accompanied by their uncle Rex and auntie Edith.



*Peter and Mahala in Somerset*

After a year with their grandparents, the two children had just started to adjust to their new life in Somerset when they were given the terrible news that their father had been killed by an elephant charging him in the bush near Nyeri on the 19th September 1926. Their mother returned to the UK to console them, but soon returned to East Africa, living her life there until her death at Ngare in Tanzania on the 28th August 1973. The children were educated at first locally in Somerset, but then in 1928, aged 10, Peter was sent to Temple Grove School in Eastbourne, East Sussex, for the next three years.



*Temple Grove School Eastbourne*

**TEMPLE GROVE SCHOOL**  
EASTBOURNE.

*Head Master :*  
REV. H. W. WATERFIELD, M.A. (formerly Queen's Scholar of Westminster and Exhibitioner of Trinity College, Cambridge.)

*Second School Master :—*R. G. A. WATERFIELD, B.A.  
(formerly of Bradfield and Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.)

**T**EMPLE GROVE was founded in 1810 at East Sheen, and was removed to Eastbourne in 1907.

Boys are prepared for the Public Schools and the Navy. They are admitted about the age of 6 and should leave for the Public Schools at the age of about 14.

The School is situated about a mile from the sea, on the edge of the Downs and Golf Links. It was specially built for the purpose of a school, and stands in its own grounds, including a Cricket Field of seven acres, Tennis Court, Woodland and Garden.

The buildings include a Chapel, Library, Gymnasium, Fives Court and Rifle Range.

There is a private Swimming Bath in the grounds for the summer months, where the boys are taught to swim.

A large staff of Resident Masters is maintained so that the classes are small, and each boy has individual attention.

Particular attention is paid to Physical Training.

The Junior School of about 30 boys, under 10, is in a separate house adjoining the main building.

Mr. Waterfield has a house in the country near Tunbridge Wells, where boys may be taken for the holidays if desired.



In 1931 aged 13 years Peter gained a scholarship to Marlborough College in Wiltshire where he applied himself in his studies, becoming a Prefect and representing the school in hockey, also commanding a platoon as a sergeant in the OTC. He is shown on a passenger list of *SS Newfoundland* arriving in Liverpool from St John's on 16.9.35. He left college in July 1936, enrolling into Farnham Military College, Surrey. Army life was not for him, and he applied for a commission in the RAF instead.

On the 7th January 1937 Peter entered the RAF College at Cranwell as a Flight Cadet, as part of 'C' Squadron. Again, he did well in his studies, also representing the college at cricket and hockey.



*Peter Wickham 2nd from right - back row RAF Cranwell December 1938*

*Cranwell Cricket Team - Peter Wickham front row on right*





On the 16th December 1938 Peter was commissioned as a Pilot Officer, after further induction and training he was initially posted to No 3 Fighter Squadron based at *RAF Kenley*, but was immediately transferred to 41 Squadron at *RAF Catterick* on 17.12.38, flying the Mk1 Spitfire. On the 2nd January 1939 he attended a two month course at the School of Air Navigation and on 30th March 1939 he was flying Spitfire K9855 in heavy rain, when on landing at Catterick, he hit a hedge, which tipped the aircraft on it's nose, slightly injuring him and writing the aircraft off (it was then only used for ground instructional use).

On the 16th May 1939, Peter was posted to HQ Middle East Command, Sudan Defence Force, operating out of Helwan 15 miles south of Cairo, protecting the force from attacks by the Italian *Regia Aeronautica*. Peter was then posted to 'A' flight of 112 (*Shark*) Squadron commanded by Flight Lieutenant WC Williams. In June 1940 with the Italian entry into the war Peter was then attached to 33 Squadron flying Gladiator aircraft, based at Maaten Gerwala in the Western Desert in order to gain further experience. On three separate occasions he was shot down, having to make the long walk back to base and thereby earning the award of 'The Flying Boot' from his squadron colleagues.



On the 29th June 1940, along with five other pilots Peter took off at first light, in order to patrol the Mersa Matruh area . At 1215 hours contact was made with the enemy, 5 Italian aircraft from *160 Squadriglia* were intercepted. The 33 Squadron Operational Record Book (ORB) records the encounter thus:-

*' Italian (Reconnaissance) Ro 37 forced down to land 3 miles west of Sidi Aziez after being attacked by one of our aircraft flown by P/O PRW Wickham. Rear Gunner apparently hit. The a/c apparently landed in enemy territory. 3 CR 32's were encountered by one of our formations of 3 a/c in the Ridotta Capuzzo area. 1 CR42 claimed by P/O Wickham, this flown by Sottotenente Antonio Weiss, Adjutant of 12 Gruppo, pilot wounded, landing near the 'Litoranea Road west of Bardia'*

The next day Peter was in the air at 0800 hours in Gladiator N5783 on a patrol with Flying Officer Ernest (*Dixie*) Dean when they encountered 3 Italian CR32 (or CR42 aircraft, reports differ), escorting a Romeo Ro 37 reconnaissance aircraft over Bir Sceferzen. The Ro 37 was immediately shot down, followed by two CR32's. These were claimed by Wickham and Dean, who later gave an account in his combat report:-



*“Peter Wickham and I were patrolling near Bardia, and spotted two CR42’s. We each took one, and within minutes there were two black plumes on the ground. I got involved with another CR42, a quite aggressive ‘Eyeticie’ (most rare), and I unfortunately got into a head-on attack with him, which is not recommended. We had three passes at one another but with no apparent damage, except that when we reached base together I didn’t perform any victory rolls, although Peter was performing perfect flick rolls in formation. Lucky for me, because my riggers reported to me that my centre sections were badly damaged, and it was well I had overcome my exuberance”.*



*Dixie Dean - Pete Wickham with 33 Squadron*

Almost every day 33 Squadron was involved in a number of patrols, many contacts with the enemy being made by the pilots who were from all parts of the Commonwealth who hated red tape, discipline was almost non-existent, and seemed to follow Pete from then on! By August he had transferred back to 112 Squadron, ( ‘A’ Flight ) detached to Sidi Barran. It wasn’t long before he was in combat with the Italian Air Force again. During the morning of 17th August, the Mediterranean Fleet were on the high seas bombarding Bardia harbour and Fort Capuzzo for 22 minutes in support of the Army ashore.



*Italian SM 79 Bombers*

Both the RAF and Fleet Air Arm provided top cover for the battleships, *HMS Warspite*, *Ramilles* and *Malaya*, supported by the cruiser *HMS Kent* and various destroyers. The attacks on the Royal Navy began at 1040 when twenty five Italian SM 79 bombers were spotted at 12,000 feet heading for the Fleet. Six Gladiators from 112 were in the immediate area and commenced an interception of the bombers, managing to shoot five of them down, one of these claimed by Peter Wickham.

Flying Officer John Lapsley told a newspaper reporting the attack:-

*I arrived just as five S 79's had dropped their bombs, all well astern of the fleet, and they were making off. These Italian aircraft seem to be built of ply-wood, at any rate you have to dodge the pieces that come flying back at you when you fire your guns.*

*On the 3rd September 1940 Peter Wickham was promoted to Flying Officer, and was posted back to 33 Squadron on the 30th October, now flying Hurricanes, from Fuka to take part in the First Libyan Campaign which opened up in December.*

On Christmas day at around 1500 hours, 23 Gruppo of the *Regia Aeronautica* flew it's first escorting mission, with 34 CR42's escorting SM79 bombers to attack Sollum Harbour. Pilots from 33 Squadron having their Christmas lunch interrupted were soon up in the air and engaged in combat. Flying Officer's Pete Wickham and Vernon Woodward, singled out their targets, aiming their guns at one SM 79 and one CR42, later claiming damage to each of them. Although a valiant effort was made by 33 Squadron, they were outnumbered and had to flee. The Italians claiming two Hurricanes probably shot down, with damage inflicted on an aircraft carrier (not confirmed).

In the New Year 33 Squadron moved to Amriya in Egypt, and then on to Eleusis in Greece on the 19th February 1941. Germany declared war on Yugoslavia and Greece on the 6th April, it's forces streaming through the Rupel Pass, by which time 33 Squadron had moved to Larissa in Greece.



*33 Squadron at Larissa April '41*

*Wickham centre in Irvin Flying Jacket - Pattle lying on the ground under roundal*

On this same day, Squadron Leader 'Pat' Pattle the CO of the squadron led 12 Hurricanes to patrol over Bulgaria, where they met up with 8 Me 109's from 8/JG 27 led by Oberleutnant Amp Becker of the German Luftwaffe, who was shot down immediately by S/L Pattle. Pete Wickham attacked three 109's in the combat, shooting one down eventually.

Six days later whilst on patrol Flying Officer Wickham spotted a Bf 110 Reconnaissance aircraft from 7(F) LG2 flying over Mount Olympus, after a lengthy game of 'cat and mouse', he shot it down in flames (flown by Lieutenant George Lange, fate unknown). On April 20th Eleusis was almost under constant attack during the day, but during the afternoon there was a lull with enough time for the ground crews of 33 to service the Hurricanes. However at about 1645 a formation of 100+ Ju88's (from 1/LG1) and Do 17's, (from II/ZG26) escorted by Bf 109's and Me 110's were seen to be approaching Athens. Nine Hurricanes from 33 Squadron and six from 80 were just preparing to take off from Eleusis when a Bf 110 appeared over the landing ground dropping its bomb load.

Luckily none of the aircraft was hit and they took off individually forming up into sections of two and three.

The first trio of Hurricanes to arrive over the port, flown by Pete Wickham, 'Ping' Newton and Flt Lt Henry Starrett saw 15 Ju 88's dive-bombing ships in the harbour (the Greek hospital ship *Ellenis* being sunk during the attack).

The Hurricanes dived in on the attack, Wickham shooting one down, with Newton claiming two more. Pilot Officer William Vale arrived on the scene and later reported:-

*"I carried out 8 attacks on the Ju 88's, one caught fire and started going down, so I left him and attacked another. Big chunks broke away from his wings and fuselage, with smoke pouring from his engines. He went down vertically and I was then attacked by a 109, but I easily outmanoeuvred him".*

At Eleusis, the returning Hurricanes were refuelled and rearmed as quickly as possible before returning to the ongoing combats in the air. Squadron Leader 'Pat' Pattle had already landed twice, and he now took off for the third time leading the remaining 15 Hurricanes, despite feeling unwell with flu, his temperature having been recorded earlier as 103 degrees! He attacked a swarm of Ju88's protected by masses of Me 110's, but he managed to shoot down a Ju 88 before being overwhelmed and shot to pieces by two of the Me 110's, his aircraft then exploding and falling into the sea on fire.



**\*\*Marmaduke 'Pat' Pattle DFC and Bar** is credited with personally destroying over 50 enemy aircraft (on the 28th March 1941, claiming 4 shot down in one day) 2 shared, 8 probables, 6 damaged, and 3 aircraft destroyed on the ground, making him the top RAF 'Ace' of WW2.

Peter was promoted to Flight Lieutenant (War Rank) on the 3rd September 1941, and at the end of his 'tour' in the Middle East, having completed over 300 hours operational flying, Peter Wickham was returned to the UK on the 19th September. After a short rest he was posted to 53 OTU at *RAF Heston* and then on to 72 Squadron at *RAF Biggin Hill* as 'A' Flight Commander on January 12th 1942, with Brian Kingcombe as the CO.

Pete Wickham's first major sortie with the squadron was '*Operation Fuller*' known as the 'Channel Dash' of the German battleships *Scharnhorst*, *Gneisenau* and the *Prinz Eugen* from the port of Brest (where they had undertaken repairs), through the Dover Straits and back home to Germany (German coded *Cerberus*). This became a catalogue of errors by the British, with resounding disastrous consequences.



*Swordfish attacking German Fleet in the Channel*

The German battle group of 66 ships with a continuous air cover of 250 day and night fighters left Brest on the night of 11th February 1942. Twelve Spitfires of No 72 Squadron along with four other squadrons, were tasked with protecting the six Swordfish aircraft, (from No 825 Fleet Air Arm), that were armed with torpedoes and tasked to attack the German fleet.

Only 72 Squadron managed to rendezvous with the Swordfish, led by Lt Commander Eugene Esmond in the attack. Against the mighty power of the guns on the big ships and the power of the Luftwaffe, there was little chance of success.

All the Swordfish were shot down, only five crew members surviving.

Some 242 RAF bombers were then sent to try and bomb the German fleet, but to no avail, damage to the ships was minimal, before they raced home safely to German ports. Lt Cdr Esmond was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross, with other gallantry awards given to the survivors, and a Mention in Despatches to those that died.



On the 17th March 1942, Peter Wickham was given command of 111 Squadron, flying Spitfires from *RAF Debden*, and famous during the Battle of Britain for its 'head on attacks'. Rhubarbs, fighter sweeps and bomber escorts would now be its primary role.

It wouldn't take Peter Wickham long to get amongst the action. At 1120 hours on the 26th April the squadron led by Pete acted as escorts to bombers raiding Longueness Aerodrome, the squadron held a big party that night toasting the success.

On the 27th April 1942, at 11.50, the RAF mounted a daytime bomber attack with fighter escorts against St Omer-Wizernes (*Circus Op 142*). The *Debden Wing* acted as escort cover with 12 Spitfires from 71 (*Eagle*) Squadron, 12 Spitfires from 65 Squadron and 12 Spitfires from 111 Squadron led by Squadron Leader Peter Wickham, who gave this report:-



*"I was Raggle leader of the escort cover wing. Some 5 miles north of St Omer about 8 FW190's and 6 Me 109's came up ahead and then down on us from above. Two 109's tried to get behind me. I turned on them and gave a 1 second burst at each as they began to dive away, with a 60 degree deflection on the beam. The first e/a went down over the vertical, a plume of smoke and a small streak of flame coming from underneath the pilot's cockpit. I had seen canon strikes on it. My cine-gun switch was on (a copy of the film is held at IWM No 128) This Me 109E claimed as damaged. No results were observed on the second e/a, which was nearly out of range. This engagement at 12.10 took place at 1700ft, range 250-300 yards, I fired 60 - 20mm cannon rounds and 200 -.303 rounds"*

**\*\* The Luftwaffe sent Me 109's from JG 26 (Schlageter) to engage this force.**

111 Squadron were continually involved in these Circus ops as well as Rodeo's (fighter sweeps without bombers) and Ramrod's (sweeps intent on destroying targets). Sergeant Bert Bryson was a Rhodesian pilot in 111, and Pete Wickham chose him to be his wingman on several occasions. He wrote to me from Zimbabwe in July 1990 recounting one such op with Peter Wickham, also commenting upon his character:-

*"On the 1st June 1942, we were on a sortie to Bruges (Circus 179) I was acting as wingman to Pete, when we were well and truly 'bounced' by FW 190's. Our No 4 got hit, (Sgt WH Cumming), and both Pete and I went back to help, but I got hit as well, making my aircraft un-flyable, and after a few more 'reminders' (in the form of bullets in the cockpit) I decided it was time to bale out. I landed in the sea and was soon picked up by 'Jerry', spending two years 'in the bag' as a NCO and one year as a commissioned officer"*

**\*\* Peter Wickham had recommended Sgt Bryson for a commission a week before this sortie.**

*"I always thought Pete to be a wonderful CO, he led his men by example, not too much 'bull' on the ground, but demanded a high state of discipline in the air, he was a far better pilot himself than he made out. Off duty he liked to read cowboy stories, he sometimes used to push the peak of his cap up (like a baseball player), it was very worn and greasy, a bit of a 'line shoot' I suppose. Sgt Mouland RCAF recalled that Pete always ate green peas from the garden for his hang-overs"*

George Heighington was a Warrant Officer with 111 and would be awarded the DFC in 1947, he too wrote to me in 1990:-

*"I recall joining 111 at Debden as a sergeant, and on my first morning at dispersal I was waiting to meet the CO who was Pete, when one of the others said, "Here's the old man now". I looked out of the window to see a tallish man emerging from a Hillman staff car, who then reached back into the car and fetched out an old rag with which he proceeded to clean the windscreen. When he'd finished he seemed to be punching the rag into some sort of shape and after a couple of manoeuvres put it on his head. It was his service cap. He then came into the dispersal hut, without a word being said by anybody, the only person around who thought this a bit odd was me! On another occasion when we were due to go on a spot of leave Pete lined us all up and threw out a challenge, the man returning wreaking of the most exotic and erotic perfume would get another day off. The next day we were all lined up again for the CO's inspection, and Pete passed down the line sniffing each in turn, and pronouncing the winner, and was as good as his word. A similar reward was offered to the pilot who could turn up at dispersal wearing the most outrageous pyjamas"*

On the 2nd June Peter again led the squadron on a Channel sweep, whilst the bomber force attacked targets in France.

On the 12th June Peter Wickham as the CO, was presented with Spitfire BM634 (JU-N) named O'Bandeirante at RAF Debden by the Brazilian Ambassador to the UK, Senor J J De Lima E'Silva De Aragao, who was then honoured with a flypast. Group Captain John Peel DFC ( Battle of Britain veteran) was the Station CO at RAF Debden at this time.



*Peter Wickham Brazilian Ambassador and John Peel*

The rest of June was taken up with low flying exercises, aerobatics and dummy combats, however, on the 22nd Peter led a sweep over Ostend, followed the next day by a close escort to 12 Bostons bombing Dunkirk.

Len Hurle was an officer Controller at *RAF Church Fenton* in the summer of 1942 and re-called to me in 1990 that Pete Wickham had landed at Church Fenton in a Typhoon on one occasion, having been diverted, due to murky weather. Pete issued him an order to “*get that kite covered up with a guard*” as he was on some ‘hush-hush’ work. Pete later told him that it was fitted with 40mm cannon for tank-busting, and when he fired the cannons, the whole aircraft shook, as though the rivets would fly out!

\*This may have been a try-out for use in *Operation Jubilee* in August.

Finally, after two years of continual arial combat since the start of the war, both in the Middle East and Europe, Peter Wickham was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross, the award being published in the London Gazette of the 24th July 1942 :-

***‘This officer is a fine leader and courageous fighter. While serving in the Middle East he destroyed at least 9 and damaged many other enemy aircraft. Since his return to this country, Squadron Leader Wickham has completed many sorties during which he displayed fine leadership and a magnificent fighting spirit at the time’.***

On the 6th August Peter Wickham did a lone weather recce along the Channel, followed three days later by a Rodeo leading the 308th USAAC over France, and doing the same over Hardelot on the 11th. A further Rodeo took place with the 308th over Dunkirk on the 17th. These were probably all ‘exercises’ in getting the 308th ready for the big ‘op’ two days later.

On the 19th August 1942, Canadian and British troops made ‘*a reconnaissance in force*’ on the harbour town of Dieppe as a prelude to D Day. They were supported and protected by the largest array of RAF and USAAF aircraft up until that time. In all, there were 46 Spitfire, 8 Hurricane, 3 Typhoon and 4 Mustang Squadrons under the control of Air Marshal Trafford Leigh-Mallory. (*Operation Jubilee*)

Pete Wickham was in the first wave, taking off in Spitfire EP 166 JU-N at 0415 hours, leading 111 Squadron in protecting the bomber force. His second sortie was at 0715 hours, leading the American 308th Fighter Squadron, this time in Spitfire EP 798. He did a similar sortie leaving Kenley at 1015 hours, arriving over Dieppe half an hour later. At 1220hrs having refuelled and re-armed Pete Wickham was again leading 111 Squadron over Dieppe, this time engaging with Fock Wulf 190’s, two of which he damaged. Grabbing a short rest and some refreshments whilst his aircraft was made ready, Peter was back in the air at 1510 hours for the fifth time over Dieppe.



*Returning to RAF Kenley from Dieppe flying Spitfire JU-N August 1942  
(Painted by John Young with a print run of only 850 and a commemorative plate by Coalport)*

For this final time he was leading the American 308th Squadron (31st Fighter Group) again in Spitfire EP 166 JU-N.

His third combat report of the day with the 308th gives this account:-  
*I was leading 308th (USA) with 350 (Belgium) above us. We took off at 10.00 hours to patrol the target area. As soon as we arrived we were met by many FW190's, some of which, were bombing the ships. During the enduring combats I fired on at least five of them. From one quarter deflection shot at about 300 yards I saw cannon strikes. It half spun several times from about 2000 feet and went down towards the sea. I broke off as I was attacked by another. I fired at several more, one from about 150/200 yards. I observed hits on the fuselage, just behind the engine. It seemed to stagger, pulled up slightly and then went into a slow dive with a lot of smoke coming from it. I was about to finish it off when I had to break away as another enemy aircraft was firing at me from a very close range. Rounds fired:- 70 of 20mm -200 of .303 Cine gun used.*

Peter Wickham was credited with two damaged FW 190's at 1045, flying at 5-10,000 feet over Dieppe that day.



*111 Squadron 1942 Peter Wickham standing 6th from left*



For his actions and leadership on this day he was awarded an immediate bar to his Distinguished Flying Cross, the announcement later appearing in the London Gazette (LG) on 22.9.42.

***'This officer who has led his squadron in a large number of operational sorties, has displayed outstanding leadership, skill and initiative. During the combined operations at Dieppe on August 19th 1942, Squadron Leader Wickham led his squadron in the first sortie before dawn and in a further four during the same operation. He has personally destroyed 9 enemy aircraft, probably destroyed a further five, and damaged several others.'***

The very next day, the 20th, Peter Wickham was leading the wing, acting as escort to 12 Flying Fortresses bombing Amiens at 1725 hours.

On the 21st August he was on a diversionary sweep along Ostend, whilst Fortresses bombed Amsterdam.

On the 28th he led a Rodeo to Hardelot (as Yellow 1) where they encountered heavy flak over Boulogne, and this was to be his last sortie with 111 squadron.



*Peter Wickham standing beside 'O'Bandeirante'*

On the 30th August 1942, he handed the Squadron over to his old pal, Squadron Leader Tony Bartley DFC, and Peter was posted to command 131 (County of Kent) Squadron on the 31st August, flying Spitfire Vb's from RAF Tangmere in Sussex.

The squadron was employed mainly on *Rhubarb* ops, and Peter completed another 180 hours operational flying. He was posted to HQ Fighter Command (*Bentley Priory*) on November 6th, and the next day was attached to RAF Membury working with the 8th USAAF Reconnaissance Units stationed there. This would probably influence his later attachments in '44 to the US 4th Fighter Group.

By December '42 he had married Sheila Marjorie Shute, (*nee Macneal*) at Chelsea Registrar Office, London. Sheila had been introduced to him by his friend and fellow pilot 'Ace' Tony Bartley, she was one of the beautiful and elegant 6 foot tall, Macneal twins, well known in high society.

Both sisters were regulars at the *White Hart* pub near Biggin Hill, during the Battle of Britain, and knew Tony. Pilots of 92 Squadron named them the '*Belles of Biggin Hill*'. She was first married to Squadron Leader Freddie Shute of 152 Squadron, whose Gladiator (*N5646*) engine had failed over the North Sea whilst searching for a 'ditched' aircraft in June 1940. Sadly, her second marriage to Pete Wickham only lasted a year. He was made substantive Flight Lieutenant on 17th December 1942.





*White Hart 1940 - Johnny Kent on left - Tony Bartley 2nd left - Geoff Wellum rear on right*

Peter Wickham joined 122 (*Bombay*) Squadron at *RAF Eastchurch* as it's C.O. in April 1943, flying the new Spitfire Mk IX's, on *Rhubarbs* and *Roadsteads* and *Ramrods*.



On the 17th April at 1434 hours he led 122 along with 453 on *Circus Op 284* where attacks on Abbeville were made, on their return route that were attacked by 55 FW 190's of *Jagdgeschwader 26* known as '*The Abbeville Boys*', various claims were made by each side. After landing, the aircraft of 122 were refuelled and re-armed just in time for *Circus 285* to take place attacking the railways at Zeebrugge. Peters next sortie was at 1100 hours on the 13th May escorting 6 Mitchells bombing the marshalling yards at Boulogne, followed during the afternoon with *Ramrod 71* attacking the Potez Airframe Works at Meaulte in the Somme area. On the 14th May Peter was leading *Ramrod 73* at 1245 hours escorting Fortresses bombing various areas in France, followed the next day escorting Bostons attacking Poix. Most of July August and September was taken up with *Sweeps*, and *Ramrods* also attacking Marshalling Yards, in which Peter took an active part as can be seen in the Squadron Operational Record Books (ORB's)

4th July *Ramrod 124*- 12 Mitchells bombing Amiens at 1640 hours.

9th July involved a sweep at 0700 hours with 65 and 602 Squadrons, and *Ramrod 127* escorting 12 Mitchells bombing St Omer railway yards.

10th July 0700 - *Ramrod 129* Sweep with 12 Venturas bombing St Omer-heavy flak.

14th July 0800 - with 65 and 602 Squadrons, escorting 18 Bostons bombing Abbeville.

15th July 1600 - Escorting 12 Bostons bombing Poix.

16th July 1915 - with 65 and 602 escorting 18 Marauders bombing Abbeville, on this occasion *The Abbeville Boys* stayed away.



*'Abbeville Boys' (Robert Taylor)*

On the 25th July 1943, Ramrod 154/II was mounted against Zeebrugge when 65, 122 and 602 Squadrons each supplied 12 Spitfires to support medium bombers attacking the Zeebrugge Coke -ovens.

On leaving the target area, around 1500 hours, 122 was 'bounced' by 12 FW 190's from above and astern. Squadron Leader Wickham was flying Spitfire EN841 during this encounter, and later made this combat report:-

*"I was leading my squadron as close escort to 18 Marauders bombing targets in the Ghent area. Just after the target we moved over to the right of the formation. We were then bounced by 2 FW 190' and 2 109's - with the 109's flying No 2 to the 190's. Red and Yellow sections broke to the right, from the on we were heavily engaged by approximately 30 e/a -190's and 109's and later by another 30/40 e/a. I am sure there was at least one Reggiane 2002 mixed up in them. I fired various bursts, and claim one 109 damaged on the wing in front of the pilots windscreen. Red 3 witnessed this. I also damaged one FW 190 on it's starboard side, I think I destroyed a FW 190, as it passed under my nose I saw him flicking downwards at about 2000 feet escorted by 2 190's. I was in no position to confirm this as I was engaged on my own by 20-30 FW's and Me 109's".*

Squadron Leader Wickham was credited with one probable FW 190, one damaged FW 190, and one damaged Me 109.

18th August 1943, 1145 - Escorting 36 Marauders bombing Poix.

19th August 1635 - Escorting 36 Marauders bombing St Pol.

4th September 1755 - with 19 and 65 Squadrons high cover to 36 Marauders bombing St Pol.

5th September 0830 - Escorting 23 Bostons bombing Weensdrecht.

6th September 1125 Withdrawal cover to Fortresses from Germany

8th September 0835 - Top cover escort for Fortresses entering Germany.

Peter stayed with 122 Squadron until 6th December 1943, joining 15 Wing and then becoming Wing Leader of 122 Wing 83 Group in the 2nd Tactical Air Force (TAF) operating in Europe, and at the same time made a temporary Squadron Leader on the 1st January 1944.

From January to March 1944 he served as Officer Commanding Training Wing at RAF Grangemouth, after which he was on detachment to the 8th USAAF, flying Mustangs, firstly with the 2nd Tactical Exercise Unit as Chief Flying Instructor.



Once a week it was usual for an officer to give a talk on a particular subject, it was noted in the unit diary that W/C Wickham gave a talk on the subject; *'What to do with the German people after the War'*, which led to a heated discussion! On the 7th July Peter then joined the HQ Squadron of the 4th Fighter Group 8th Air Force, taking part in nine missions, some of these with the 336th (*Debden Eagles*) Squadron operating from RAF Debden, over Europe.



*Peter Wickham attached to 4th Fighter Group USAAF 1944 - flying Mustang QP-Z*

Flight Sergeant Thorstein Jonsson (a pilot from Iceland who was an 'Ace' and awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal) flew as a wingman to Pete Wickham and recalled they flew together over the beaches a day after D-Day. *" We were flying at about 500 feet, it was bad visibility with low cloud and drizzle, combined with smoke from the beach, looking for German transport. Pete came on the radio ordering TOMBOY (Debden Wing) and DOGWOOD (65 Squadron) to split up, as it was too poor for a Wing formation (which he liked to fly), wishing everyone good luck"*

Another mission mentioned in the USAAF diary of the 336th was on the 1st August 1944:-

*The 239th operational sortie of the squadron, acting as withdrawal support to B-17 bombing numerous targets in the Paris area, between 1320 and 1755hrs.*

*W/C Wickham flew our Mustang QP-Z in a section composed of Colonel Blakeslee, Captain Godfrey and Lieutenant Glover. They flew below the Group, looking for enemy aircraft. Their mission was uneventful. Rendezvous with bombers at 1433 hrs at 22-25000 feet, SW of Paris, no e/a seen, exceptional light flak on the whole mission, especially over the Paris area. Mission was successful.*





*L-R standing is Pete, Gilbert Hunt-Warren Johnson- John Godfrey -Roylance 'Dutch' Henwick (SAAF)- Neil Van Wyk- front corner is Fred Glover and Nathan Lippman (4th flight Surgeon)*

This photograph was taken in August 1944 whilst Peter was flying with the 336th, note that he is wearing a US A2 leather flight jacket, and not his RAF service jacket.

Pete Wickham remained on strength until 12th August 1944, when he was posted to HQ Air Defence of Great Britain (ADGB).

From October 1944 to 16th March 1945 he was a staff officer at HQ Fighter Command, after which he led the *Peterhead Mustang Wing* on sorties protecting Bomber Command aircraft bombing targets along the Norwegian coastal area.

On the 1st June 1945 Group Captain AP Hope, the Officer Commanding *RAF Peterhead Station*, recommended Wing Commander Wickham DFC and Bar to be awarded a non-immediate Distinguished Service Order, which was later published in the London Gazette 17.8.45:-

**I strongly recommend W/C Wickham the non-immediate award of the DSO for courage and devotion to duty of the highest order over a long period.**

**From September 1939 to May 1941 he served in 112 Squadron and in 33 Squadron flying Gladiators and Hurricanes in Egypt, the Western Desert and Greece. During this period he completed approximately 300 hours operational flying and at the end of the tour was awarded the DFC.**

**From January to December 1942 he served in No 11 Group as a flight commander in No 72 squadron, and from March as CO of 111 and 131 Squadrons. He completed 180 hours operational flying and was awarded a bar to his DFC for his part in the Dieppe operations.**

**After a short rest Wing Commander Wickham joined 122 Squadron as CO in April 1943 and in November 1943 he became Wing Commander Flying of 122 Wing (83 Group). With these units he took part in numerous operations under the control of 11 Group, completing another 180 hours operational flying.**

**From January to July 1944 he was again on a rest acting as Officer Commanding Training Wing at RAF Grangemouth, but in the latter month joined the 8th USAAF at Debden and with them carried out numerous escort sorties on Mustangs. Between October 1944 and March 1945 he was a Staff Officer at HQ Fighter Command and in the middle of March was posted to this station as Wing Commander Flying for operations over Norway. Since July 1944 he has completed over 100 hours more operational flying.**

**During the war he has destroyed 10 enemy aircraft, probably destroyed 7 and damaged 15, as well as destroying much motor transport and other ground targets. From my own personal knowledge I can confirm that Wing Commander Wickham, in spite of an exceptionally long operational career, has maintained his enthusiasm and desire to engage the enemy in any way possible. His leadership is of the highest order and inspires the greatest confidence in the pilots who follow him. His flying and fighting skill as one might expect is exceptional. He is undoubtedly one of the most experienced pilots in the command due to his fighting career which has extended over five and a half years in every theatre of war from the Western Desert to Norway.**

Group Captain Ian Parker, Officer Commanding RAF Turnhouse remarked on 1st June:-  
**'Strongly Recommended'**

Air Commodore Prickman Air Officer Commanding 13th Group remarked on the 2nd June:-

**'A leader of outstanding ability whose operational record merits the award of DSO'**

Air Marshal Sir James Robb Air Officer Commanding in Chief of Fighter Command ten days later, signed off the recommendation for the Distinguished Service Order to be awarded.





*Peterhead Wing 1945 Pete Wickham in centre wearing sunglasses*

On the 11th June 1946, the London Gazette published the news that Peter Wickham had been awarded the American Silver Star (only 24 issued to the RAF during WW2):-



***‘ For gallantry against the enemy in aerial warfare whilst serving as a fighter pilot, Wing Commander Wickham displayed outstanding aerial technique and operational skill. He is one of the few pilots who was on operational missions in the first and last days of the European War. As a fighter pilot his numerous sorties include missions in the Middle East (including Greece) and in Western Europe (including Norway). From July to October 1944, he was attached to an American Fighter Group and carried out sorties into the heart of Germany. He has destroyed ten enemy aircraft, probably destroyed another seven and damaged 15 as well as inflicting a great deal of damage to ground targets. Wing Commander Wickham is a most skilful operational pilot with a vast experience, the determination and courage exhibited by him reflect great credit upon himself and the Royal Air Force’. (USAFE General Order 82 - 2/4/46)***

At the end of the war Peter decided to stay on in the RAF and on the 1st November 1945 was attached to *RAF Turnhouse* HQ Midlothian Section, Scotland a fighter station flying Spitfires that would eventually in 1947, become Edinburgh Airport handling civil aircraft.

On the 27th February 1946 Peter was posted to HQ 13 Group flying from *RAF Kenton* helping to protect the North of England in home defence duties. Two months later (7.4.46) he was posted to HQ South East Asia Command at *RAF Changi*, Singapore, flying Spitfires helping to protect Burma, Malaya, and Borneo. On the 25th May he was posted to 28 Squadron at *RAF Kai Tak* in Hong Kong, again flying Spitfires in the fighter-reconnaissance role, then taking up duties at the Air HQ Malaya until the end of the year.

By the 7th March 1947 he was back in the UK attached to the School of Land/Air warfare at *RAF Old Sarum*, Wiltshire. Here, along with Army officers he was taught the rudiments of co-operation between air and ground forces. This was enhanced by a further two months at No 1 Advanced Training School at *RAF Digby*.

On the 14th June 1947, Peter was again posted overseas, this time to Air HQ Ceylon at Colombo. On the 15th February 1948 he was posted to *RAF Koggala* a re-fuelling depot for aircraft travelling from Calcutta to Perth.

By the 5th November Peter had been returned to No 5 Personnel Despatch Centre at Blackpool (*RAF Padgate*) and then onto No 1 Pilot Refresher Flying Unit at *RAF Moreton in Marsh* by December 7th.

In the new year of 1949 Peter was posted to No 226 Operational Conversion Unit at *RAF Bentwaters*, Suffolk to train on flying Vampires and Meteor jets, and then posted to 43 Squadron at *RAF Tangmere*, Sussex, actually flying the Meteor on home defence duties.

As the commanding officer Peter would often have to entertain visiting officers from other air forces who were on attachment to the RAF, this photo was taken in December 1949 at *RAF Tangmere* with an exchange officer, Major Donovan F Smith of the USAAF, shown to the right of the picture.



*RAF Tangmere December 1949*

On the 8th August 1950 Peter was posted to *RAF Gutersloh* in Germany, flying Vampires. This was an old *Luftwaffe* airfield that had been taken over by the USAF in 1945 and then handed over to the RAF in order to have a base during 'the cold war'. On the 15th January 1951 he was posted to the Air Staff College at Bracknell, Berks, training in administrative and staff duties for the year. His British Passport issued in July 1950 shows an address of *Edington House*, Bridgewater in Somerset (a Grade II listed country house of 7 bedrooms - bed and breakfast),



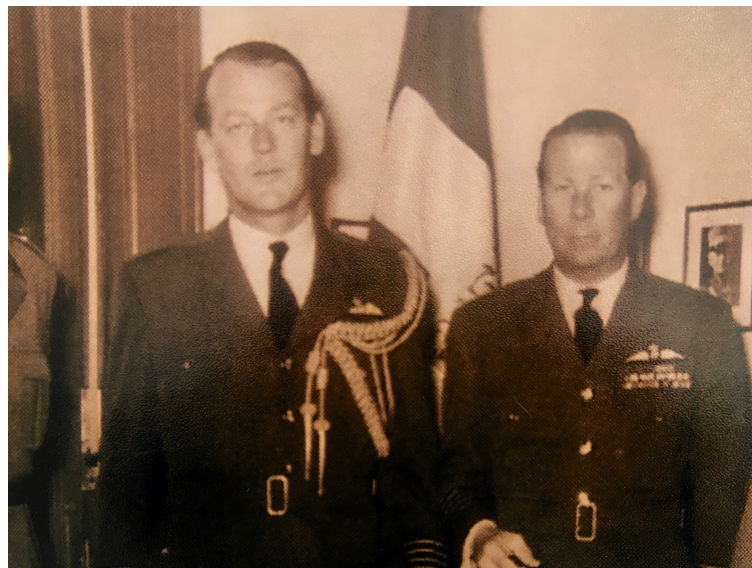
At the start of the New Year, he was posted to HQ No 23 Group, Flying Training Command, and then onto No 10 Advanced Flying Training School, on the 15th January 1952. By the 15th April 1953 he was back on staff duties at HQ Fighter Command, which included time at the Central Fighter Establishment at *RAF Raynham*, learning up to date fighter tactics on jets. He was promoted an acting Group Captain and was presented to meet HM the Queen on July 15th 1953 at *RAF Odiham* during the Coronation Review, later watching the fly-past of over 600 aircraft, with 300 on static display.



On the 31st August 1953 Peter was posted to command *RAF Duxford*, a station that had made it's name during the Battle of Britain but was now entering it's final use as a front line fighter station equipped with Meteors, Hawker Hunters and Gloster Javelins, ready to shoot down soviet bombers should the 'Cold War' turn hot!



In December he married Joan Goodhew (born 12.1.21) at Westminster Registrar Office, but again this union would not last, she dying in Norwich on the 23rd March 2013. After three years at Duxford, he was posted in May 1956 to the Air Ministry Unit at Norfolk House in London, one of the places that the D-Day plans were discussed, and in the late 50's dealing with the Supreme Headquarters for Allied European Forces (S.H.A.E.F.) On the 29th of June 1956 Peter was promoted to acting Group Captain and was posted as the Air Attache in Berne Switzerland, a post he held for two and a half years. Peter returned to the Air Ministry Unit on the 18th February 1959, his post taken over by the Battle of Britain 'Ace', Group Captain Billy Drake DSO DFC. Billy was able to indulge his passion for ski-ing, and socialising, whilst serving his term of office. After his service career ended, Billy moved to Spain and opened a bar on the beach, whilst Peter ended his career living at *The College Arms* pub at Pamber End Hampshire.



*Group Captains Pete Wickham and Billy Drake in Berne Switzerland*

I met Billy Drake at '*The Flying Legends*' held at RAF Duxford in July 2005 when he confirmed how highly Peter was regarded within the RAF, both as a fighter pilot and a well liked officer with his men, and could match him drink for drink on social occasions! Peter Wickham finished his career with the RAF working on Air Defence Plans at the Air Ministry which would involve the likelihood of nuclear weapons being used in the 'Cold War', a very stressful posting.

Peter finally retired from the service on 26th March 1961, as Group Captain, receiving a letter of thanks from the Defence Minister at the time, on behalf of HM Queen.

A Minister who probably had no real idea what it had been like to be an operational fighter pilot from the very beginning of the war, until the end, fighting almost daily, with the very best of squadrons, in three theatres of war, and gaining four gallantry medals along the way. Peter became a businessman in civil life, making several trips to most of the countries in Europe and the United States throughout the 60's, as his well stamped passport shows.

It was only in August 1965, that the Home Office (*Nationality Division*) wrote to Peter finally confirming that he was now regarded as a full citizen of the United Kingdom and the Colonies, issuing him with a new British Passport No 536198.

Within two years Peter's health had deteriorated, and he was making regular visits to The Royal Berkshire Hospital at Reading.

Peter died suddenly at Basingstoke General Hospital, Hampshire, after a long illness on 29th April 1970, his death certificate confirming cirrhosis of the liver.

Peter Wickham was cremated at Aldershot Crematorium at 3pm on Tuesday 5th May, his remains were taken by the family, with no marker being left in the Remembrance Gardens (info from crematorium service manager Christine Warren).





29.6.40 - Ro37 Destroyed 3 miles West Sidi Aziez	- Flying Gladiator K8031	33 Squadron
29.6.40 - CR 32 Destroyed	"	"
30.6.40 - CR 42 Destroyed Bardia	"	N5783 33 Squadron
17.8.40 - S79 Destroyed Bardia /Alexandria	"	"
25.12.40 - CR 42 Shared Damaged - Sollum Area	"	Hurricane 1
6.4.41 - Bf 109 Destroyed Rupel Pass Bulgaria	"	"
13.4.41 - Bf 110 " Mount Olympus Greece	"	"

20.4.41 - Ju 88	"	Piraeus Greece	"	"	"
27.4.42 - Bf 109E	Damaged	5m N St Omer France	Spitfire Vb	AR 281	111 Squadron
19.8.42 - Fw 190	"	Off Dieppe	"	EP 166	"
19.8.42 - Fw 190	"	"	"	"	"
25.7.43 - Fw 190	"	Ghent Area	"	EN 841	122 Squadron
25.7.43 - Fw 190	"	"	"	"	"
25.7.43 - Fw 190	Probable	"	"	"	"
25.3.45 Fw 190	Damaged	S of Bremanger	Mustang IV Z		Peterhead Wing

\* 10 A/C Destroyed (3 No details) 7 Probables (6 No details) 15 Damaged (9 No details)

***With Grateful Thanks to:-***

The Wickham Family Archives - Rex Wickham  
 111 Squadron Association - Reg Wyness  
 72 Squadron Association  
 RAF Disclosures Unit - RAF Cranwell  
 RAF College Cranwell - Mrs Buckberry  
 RAF Museum London - Gordon Leith  
 Ministry of Defence - Air Historical Branch London  
 Ministry of Defence - Personnel Management London  
 Ministry of Defence - Air S 10 Dept London  
 Home Office - London  
 The National Archives - Kew London  
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 Imperial War Museum - London  
 American War Museum - RAF Duxford  
 USA Air Historical Centre - Maxwell Air Force Base Alabama USA  
 Colonel R Baker /Major Barlow/Captain Joe Reams  
 USA Association 4th Fighter Group - Cleremont Florida USA - Chuck Konsler  
 British Association 4th Fighter Group - Tim McCann  
 Marlborough College - WJ Uzielli  
 Hampshire Registrar  
 Rosenstiel's - 'Dover Patrol' (850 Limited Signed Prints) - Artist John Young  
 'Dover Patrol' - Limited Edition Plate by Coalport/Wedgewood Factory - Stoke on Trent  
 Flight Safety Foundation  
 Find My Past Website  
 Ancestry Website  
 12 O'Clock High Website  
 Rushmoor Council - Christine Warren  
 George Heighington - Crediton Devon Ex- Pilot 111 Squadron  
 Ernie Mourland - Canada Ex- Pilot 111 Squadron  
 Thorstein Jonnson DFM Sweden Ex Pilot 111 Squadron  
 Len Hurle - Eastwood Essex - Ex Controller RAF Church Fenton  
 ACM Sir Christopher Foxley-Norris KCB DSO - Henley on Thames  
 ACM Sir Harry Broadhurst KCB DSO DFC\* AFC Order of Orange, USA Legion Merit  
 Group Captain RMB Duke Woolley - Chichester DSO DFC\*  
 Air Commodore John Ellacombe CB DFC\* - Northwood Middx  
 Bert Bryson- Norton -Zimbabwe (former Flight Sergeant and Wingman to Wickham)  
 Henry Boot - Air Historian/Author - Holland  
 Colin Pateman - Air Historian /Author - Sussex  
 Philip Kaplan - Air Historian/Author - Santa Monica USA  
 Royal Berkshire Hospital  
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ECR Baker - Author '*Ace of Aces -MJ Pattle*'

Brian Cull/Don Minterne - Authors '*Hurricanes over Tobruk*'

TH Wisdom Author - '*Wings over Olympus*'

Hakan Gustavsson - Author '*Commonwealth Bi-Plane Air Aces*' and his website

Gary L Fry - Author '*Escort to Berlin-The 4th Fighter Group in WW2*'

John Rawlings - Author '*Fighter Squadrons of the RAF*'

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