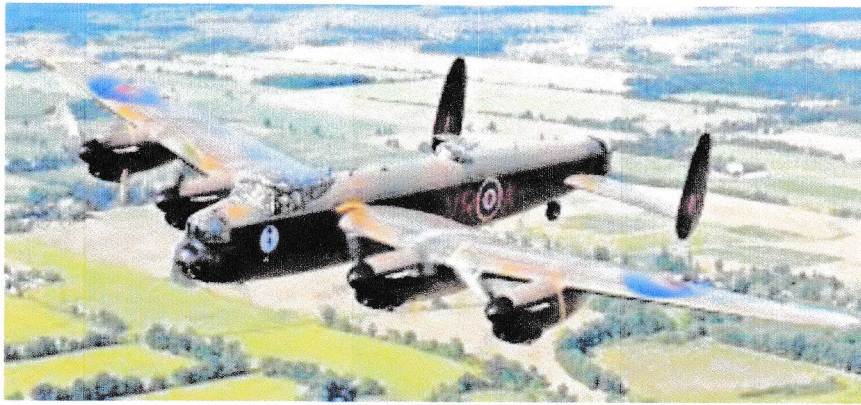




Notes on the loss of

Lancaster JB471

10th April 1944



A Lancaster Bomber similar to JB471

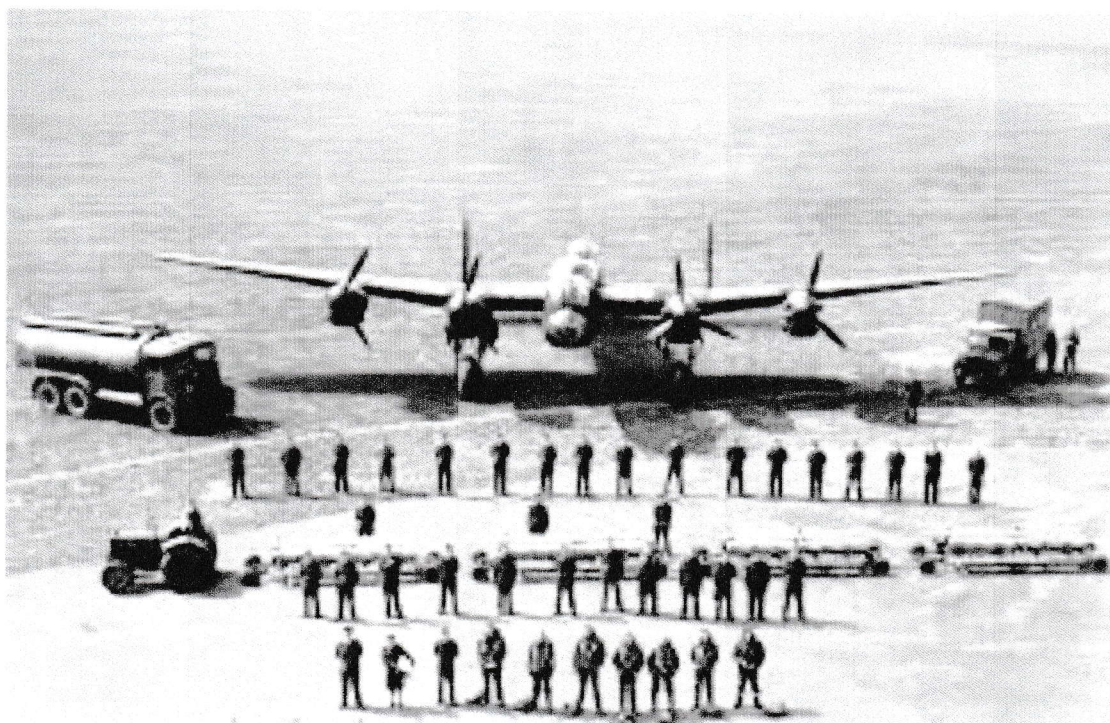
Lancaster Bomber JB471

On April 10th 1944 on Cefn Gast farmland, Llanwrtyd Wells a Lancaster bomber crashed with all lives lost.

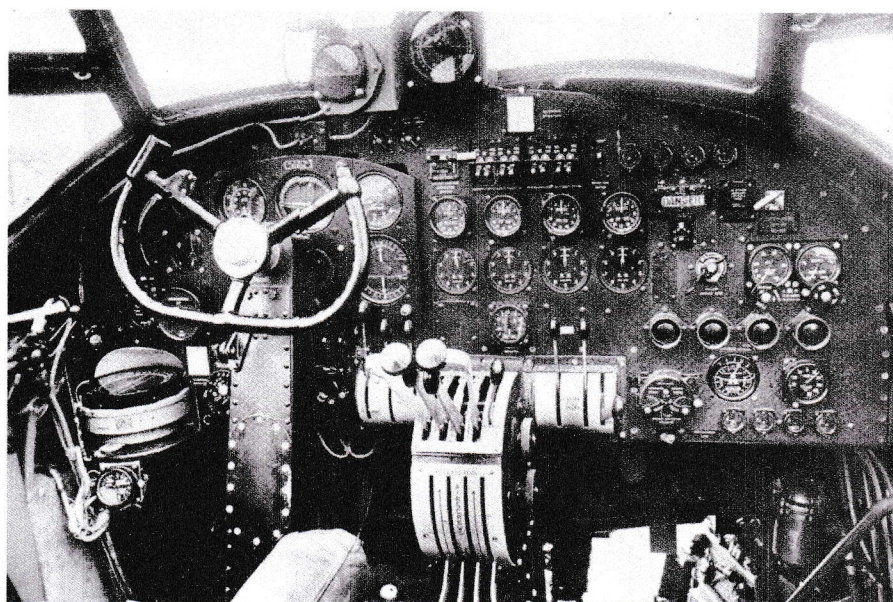
The crew were members of the Pathfinder Navigation Training Unit based at RAF Warboys near Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire and would have eventually joined 156 Pathfinder Squadron.



156 Squadron with their mascot



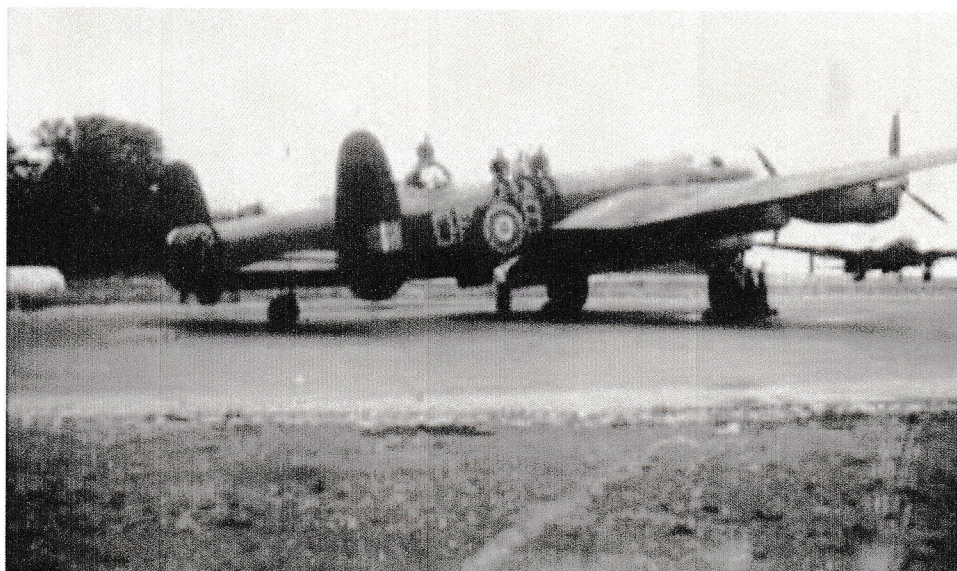
What it takes to maintain, arm and fly a Lancaster Bomber.



The pilot and flight engineer sat side by side on the roof of the bomb bay. Above them was the expansive canopy which gave good visibility above and to the front and sides. The pilot sat to the left on a raised portion of the floor. The flight engineer sat to the right of the pilot on a collapsible seat known as a dicky seat. The fuel gauges and controls were on a panel behind him and to his right.



















A Royal Visit by Queen Elizabeth to RAF Warboys - February 1944 - two months before Lancaster JB471 and eight crew perished.



A Lancaster bomber with ground support crew.

Commonwealth Grave Records of the Crew

PFNTU	10/04/1944	Training	JB471	Lancaster III	T/o Warboys for a cross country exercise. At approximately 1800, the bomber caught fire in the air and crashed near Llanwrtyd Wells in Breckonshire, a small town off the A483 road and roughly midway between LLandoverly and Bulth Wells. F/L Sloper had recently completed a tour of pathfinder duties with 156 Squadron.						
	Rank	Init	Surname	Decoration	Unit	Age	Disposition	Service No	Cemetery	CWGref	Deceased
	F/Lt	J L	Sloper	DFC +		21		147214	Bath (Haycombe) Cemetery	2691752	10/04/1944
	W/C	J D	Green			28		33253	GOLDERS GREEN CREMATORIUM	2430866	10/04/1944
	Sgt.	S J	Warrenger					2220811	Bath (Haycombe) Cemetery	2691786	10/04/1944
	W/O2	A P	Malzan			30		R/750	Bath (Haycombe) Cemetery	2691679	10/04/1944
	F/Sgt	G J B	Shields			28		R/164713	Bath (Haycombe) Cemetery	2691749	10/04/1944
	Sgt.	H	Johnstone			22		1119201	WHITBURN CEMETERY	2812817	10/04/1944
	Sgt.	W W	Farmer			21		1603478	Bath (Haycombe) Cemetery	2691591	10/04/1944
	Sgt.	J H	Cleminson-Passey			23		2210186	WIDNES CEMETERY	2701109	10/04/1944

Part of RAF Warboys Official Diary

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
WARBOYS	1.4.44.		P/O A/F/L A. EMBLEY, D.F.C. (142914) Nav/B. Instructor, posted to 582 Squadron for Op. Aircrew duties.	
			P/O A/F/L D.B. KING, D.F.C. (J.17505) Nav/B. Instructor, posted from 7 Squadron.	
	3.4.44.		No. 85 Course commenced training with 2 crews from 97 Sqn. 1 from 7, 1 from 156 and 1 from 19 O.T.U.	
	9.4.44.		No. 86 Course commenced training with 6 crews, 3 from 582, 1 from 156, 1 from 635 and 1 from 7 Sqn.	
	10.4.44.		Lancaster JB.471 took off on a cross country flight and crashed in Wales. All members of the crew were killed.	
	12.4.44.		No. 87 Course commenced training with 5 crews, 2 from 35, 1 from 156 and 2 from 7 Sqn.	
	13.4.44.		No. 13 Nav/B. course commenced with 9 pupils.	
			F/L A/S/L J.P. GREGG, D.F.C. (62263) awarded a Bar to the Distinguished Flying Cross.	
			P/O A/F/L J.L. SLOPER, D.F.C. (147214) awarded a Bar to the Distinguished Flying Cross.	
			P/O A/F/L W.L. BAGG, D.F.C. (129522) awarded the Path Finder Force Badge.	
			S/L E.E. RODLEY, D.S.O., D.F.C. (64472) authorised to wear the ribbon of the Air Efficiency Award.	
	15.4.44.		W/CDR. J.D. GREEN (53253), Pilot. Cremation ceremony held at Colder's Green. F/L A.P. HILTON represented the Royal Air Force.	
			P/L J.L. SLOPER, D.F.C. (147214), Instructor Pilot; 2220811 SGT. WARTNER, S.J. - P/MC.; R.750 W/O MALZAN, A.F. - Nav.1; R.164713 SGT. SHIELDS, G.J. - Nav.2; 1603478 SGT. FAIRER, W.W. Air Gunner, buried in the Haycombe Cemetery, Bath. P/LT. H.C. THORN, D.F.C. and P/O S.D. COO, D.F.M. represented the Royal Air Force.	
			1119201 SGT. JOHNSTON, H. buried at home in Lanarkshire. S/L M. SATTLE, D.F.C. represented the Royal Air Force.	
			2240186 SGT. GLENNISON, J.H. buried in Widness Borough Cemetery, Widness. P/L J.W. ARMITAGE, D.F.C. represented the Royal Air Force.	
			These are the eight members of Lancaster Aircraft JB.471 which crashed on 10.4.44.	
	16.4.44.		No. 88 Course commenced training with 7 crews, 2 from 156, 2 from 7, 1 from 83 and 1	

P.T.O.

**CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD
ENQUIRY REPORT - CORE RECORDS**

Enquiry reference number: E6457

Prepared by: Chris Martin, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust

Produced for: Tony Egan, {organisation}

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Search criteria

Information about Lancatser III JB471 crash site

PRN 130217 NAME AVRO LANCASTER III JB471

NGR SN904496 COMMUNITY Treflys

TYPE MODERN, AIR CRASH SITE. Rank: 1

SUMMARY

DESCRIPTION The author notes that the aircraft was assigned to NTU. The aircraft broke up after the pilot lost control near Llanwrtyd Wells on 10/4/1944. Eight crewmen were killed. The crash occurred just after 5pm. The crew comprised Flt Lt J L Sloper DFC, pilot; Wing Commander J D Green, second pilot; W/O A P Malzan, navigator (a Canadian); Sgt G J Shields, navigator (a Canadian); Sgt H Johnstone, wireless operator; sgt S J Warrenger, flight engineer; Sgt J H Cleminson, mid-upper gunner, and Sgt W W Farmer, air gunner (8 in total). The pilot lost control in cumulo-nimbus clouds and the aircraft broke up in the air. One of the wheels was flung almost a quarter of a mile away. The crew were trapped inside as it burst into flames and would-be rescuers could do nothing to assist. (Doyle Rush, E, 2008, Rocks in the Clouds: High Ground Aircraft Crashes in South Wales, pg, 29, 106) The Lancaster was one of 550 Mk III delivered to the RAF between June and December 1943 by Avro at Manchester. Its service life included assignments to 156/NTU squadron. The aircraft lost its tail plane, went into a dive, and crashed at Llanwrtyd Wells on 10/4/1944. (Halley, J J, 1990, Royal Air Force Aircraft JA100 to JZ999, pg14) Merlin 28 engines were installed in early production, Merlin 28s or 38s at mid-production and Merlin 38s on late production. (Robertson 1971, p256-257) Doyle Rush (1993, 90) refers to the crash being at Llangammarch Wells. All eight crew died. Probably the Lancaster noted in a list produced by South Wales Aircraft Preservation Society (courtesy of Arwel Michael), which specifies the location. However, information in <http://www.rafcommands.com/forum/showthread.php?10171-F-Lt-JL-Sloper-DFC-amp-Bar-Flt-Lt-K-Munro-DFC-amp-Bar> suggests the crash site was close to the road between Llanwrtyd Wells and Llangammarch Wells, therefore about 3km to the south.

CONDITION Condition: Not known Description: - Related event: 132131 Date of entry: 2012-01-12 00:00:00

STATUS None recorded

CROSS REFERENCES NPRN 515338CPAT132130, CPAT132131

SOURCES

English Heritage 2002 Military Aircraft Crash Sites. Archaeological guidance on their significance and future management
Hankinson, R & Spencer, J 2014 Military Aircraft Crash Sites. Scheduling Enhancement Programme CPAT report 1249

Recollections of that day.

Memories fade along with the years, but here are some recollections of that day

At the time of the crash, Mr Alan Davies of Troed y Rhiw Fach Farm, was a Leading Observer on duty at the Royal Observer Corps post at Neuaddau Farm. His colleague observed the plane and alerted him about the crash. Alan caught sight of the tail plane which had detached from the bomber, crashing with the gunner still in the turret. He jumped on his bike and cycled to the crash site near Cefn Gast farm. He was one of the first to arrive and saw the rear tail gunner dead in the turret and another member of the crew up to his shoulders in the bog unfortunately dead too. The remainder of the aircraft was further along towards Cefn Gast farm.

The late John Price remembered hearing an unusual aircraft noise as he stood on the bridge in Llanwrtyd and then heard the noise of a crash. He jumped on his bike and cycled towards Cefn Gast and came upon the site of the crash. He remembered seeing the dead pilot's body and noted that his watch had stopped at the time of the crash.

In her book, Pearls of Childhood, Vera Gissing, one of the pupils at the Czech school which had been evacuated to the Abernant Hotel recalls....
... "we heard a plane overhead. This was nothing unusual as there was an American base nearby, but this plane was flying too low and the engine didn't sound right. We ran out, heard an explosion, then saw a flash and thick smoke rising. We all started running towards the plane but the headmaster turned us back, allowing only the senior boys and the teachers to accompany him. They returned several hours later, pale and shaken. A twin engined Wellington bomber had crashed; there were no survivors. The boys had helped to transport the bodies to the local chapel which was turned into a mortuary. 'The most eerie thing' said one of them, 'was that their watches were still ticking...'"

(It is apparent that the identification of the bomber was incorrect as there were no other crashes in that vicinity during the time that the children were at the Abernant Hotel.)



On the 75th anniversary of the crash I visited the crash site along with my friend, Jim Davies and Farmers Arwyn and Dewi Evans. We laid a small posy of flowers, read out the names of the air crew and stood in silence for a moment. Later the flowers were taken to St. Cadmarch's Church and placed below the memorial to air crews lost in this area which includes the names of the crew of Lancaster Bomber JB471.

Tony Egan

Acknowledgements:

My thanks to Arwyn and Dewi Evans from Cefn Gast Farm, Alan Davies for his eye witness account, the late John Price for his memories of the day, Jim Davies for help with the research, Heather Davis for photographs and typing.

