

## PHOTOS SOUGHT!!!

*[Version 20, current as of 4 December 2011]*

### Researcher Matt Poole seeks photos of specific RAF Liberators and their crews – all lost in accidents or on ops

While I am interested in photos of any RAF Liberator which flew with a Southeast Asia RAF Liberator squadron (and including 159 and 160 Squadron aircraft from pre-India ops in the Middle East), I am especially keen on uncovering photos of the 24 Libs listed below. All were destroyed in accidents or in combat. These are only a few of the RAF Liberators lost in the Far East.

At the top of my wish list are:

- Photos of 159 Squadron's **BZ962 "D"**, named "**Daring Diana.**", in which my mother's first husband, Sgt George Plank, died on 29 Feb 1944
- Photos of 357 Squadron's **KH326 "X"**
- Photos of 358 Squadron's **EW124 "H"**
- Photos of 215 Squadron's **KH214 "D"**
- Photos of **EW225** of the Air Fighting Training Unit

Next in priority on my wish list are these:

- Photos of **EW247 "A"** of the Air Fighting Training Unit
- Photos of 355 Squadron's **KH250 "H"**, named **HAWKEYE**
- Photos of 159 Squadron's **BZ938 "W"**, named **WOTTAWITCH!!**

Ideally I would like to borrow photos, to scan them myself at high-resolution. In lieu of borrowing photos, I am requesting that high-resolution scans be e-mailed to me; high-resolution scans from these old photos would capture maximum details.

I seek photos of the crewmen, not just the machines. I am in touch with the kin of many of these airmen, and I want to share photos with them, as appropriate.

If you can help, please contact me at:

Matt Poole  
12307 Middle Road  
Wheaton, MD 20906 USA  
Tel: 301-933-1727  
E-mail: feb2944 AT aol.com (replace the AT with @ and remove the spaces)

If contacting by e-mail, please put something like "**Liberator photos**" in the "**Subject**" box, so that I can know the incoming e-mail from someone I do not know is not spam!!

The Liberators and their names/nose art (where known) are presented on the next page.

**159 Squadron:**

AL526 "G"	possibly <i>Goofy</i>
AL560 "N"	(name/nose art unknown)
AL581 "O"	(name/nose art unknown)
BZ841 "G"	(name/nose art unknown)
BZ926 "P"	<i>Pegasus</i>
BZ938 "W"	<i>WOTTAWITCH!!</i>
BZ962 "D"	<i>"Daring Diana."</i>
BZ978 "W"	<i>Winnie</i>
BZ992 "E"	(name/nose art unknown)
KH255 "C"	(name/nose art unknown)
KL671 "Q"	<i>Queenie</i>

**203 Squadron:**

KG986 "F"	(name/nose art unknown)
-----------	-------------------------

**215 Squadron:**

KH214 "D"	(name/nose art unknown)
-----------	-------------------------

**355 Squadron:**

EV902 "Z"	(name/nose art unknown)
KH250 "H"	<i>HAWKEYE</i>

**356 Squadron:**

EW114 "S"	(name/nose art unknown)
KL654 "R"	(name/nose art unknown)

**357 Squadron:**

KH326 "X"	(name/nose art unknown)
-----------	-------------------------

**358 Squadron:**

EW124 "H"	(name/nose art unknown)
KH215 "K"	(name/nose art unknown)
KH277 "Z"	(name/nose art unknown)
KH278 "W"	(name/nose art unknown)

**Air Fighting Training Unit:**

EW225	(fuselage letter code & name/nose art unknown)
EW247 "A"	(name/nose art unknown)

## Key to crew listings below:

**RAF:** British Royal Air Force  
**RAAF:** Royal Australian Air Force  
**RCAF:** Royal Canadian Air Force

**RNZAF:** Royal New Zealand Air Force  
**RIAF:** Royal Indian Air Force

### Lib #1: AL526 "G" (nose art may have been Goofy)

- A Mark II Liberator of 159 Squadron.
- Missing, Special Operation, flare dropping along Arakan coast, night of **6 / 7 April 1943**
- All crewmen are missing, no known graves.
- I corresponded with the kin of 3 crewmen.

Pilot: 64282 F/O James Crichton **STEVENSON** DFC (RAF)  
2nd Pilot: 926857 F/Sgt John Albert **BEACH** (RAF)  
Navigator: J/4784 F/Lt William Maxwell **STRUTHERS** (RCAF, from Canada)  
\*1<sup>st</sup> Wireless Op: 535019 F/Sgt Cyril Guy **RICH** (RAF, from England)  
\*2<sup>nd</sup> Wireless Op?: 627985 F/Sgt Stephen Frederick **PANNELL** (RAF, from England)  
\*Air Gunner?: 1305419 F/Sgt Leslie Ernest **WARDILL** (RAF)  
Air Gunner: 1281616 F/Sgt Thomas James **GWYNN** (RAF)  
Air Gunner?: 1378543 F/Sgt William Charles **TASSELL** (RAF, from England)  
Air Gunner?: 403027 F/Sgt Neil Edgar **POWELL** (RNZAF, from New Zealand)

\* All three were trained Wireless Operators.

### Lib #2: AL560 "N" (nose art unknown)

- A Mark II Liberator of 159 Squadron.
- Crashed at Salbani Airfield, West Bengal, India at approx. 1100 hrs on **12 August 1943**. An unsuccessful landing had been made on 3 engines during a training or test flight. AL560 was attempting to complete a circuit in preparation for another landing try when it crashed.
- 7 died, including a groundcrewman along for the ride. These 7 men are buried in Ranchi War Cemetery, India.
- 1 survived – a Sgt Gristwood or Grisewood (crew position or duty unknown).
- I corresponded with the kin of 2 crewmen (Smith, Simmons) and with the son of a close female friend of Pettingale's when he was based in the UK.

Pilot: J/16279 F/O Stanley Linwood **PETTINGALE** (RCAF, from Canada)  
2nd Pilot: J/12568 F/O Edwin Earle **SMITH** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Navigator: 137338 F/O Jermyn Samuel **GREENGRASS** (RAF)  
Observer: 1379274 F/Sgt Robert John **HUTTON** (RAF, from England)  
Wireless Op/Air Gnr: 990569 Sgt Harry Denzil **CHAPMAN** (RAF, from England)  
Air Gunner: 404100 W/O John Francis **SIMMONS** (RNZAF, from New Zealand)  
Groundcrewman: 1430704 LAC David **COOPER** (RAF, from England)  
Position?? Sgt Gristwood or Grisewood (sole survivor)

### Lib #3: AL581 "O" (nose art unknown)

- A Mark II Liberator of 159 Squadron
- Shot down attacking Mingaladon Airfield, Rangoon on the night of **22 / 23 February 1943**.
- All crewmen, including 159 Squadron's Commanding Officer, W/Cdr C.G. Skinner, were killed.
- Although allegedly buried near the wreck (per Japanese wartime newspaper in Rangoon), the bodies were never recovered post-war and are officially missing to this day.
- I corresponded with the kin of 2 crewmen.

Pilot: 29148 W/Cdr Clifford George **SKINNER** (RAF, from England)  
2nd Pilot: 102113 F/O Charles Desmond **KENWRICK-COX** (RAF, from England)  
Navigator: 82962 F/Lt Geoffrey Robert **HUMPHRIES** (RAF, from England)  
1st Wireless Op?: 40716 F/Lt John William **COATES** (RNZAF, from New Zealand)  
Air Gunner? 109491 F/Lt George Norman **THOMPSON** (RAF, from England)  
Air Gunner: + 551364 F/Sgt Hubert Brindle **McCREERY** (RAF)  
Air Gunner: 1164379 Sgt Frederick Merville **CHRISTMAS** (RAF, from England)  
Air Gunner: 402114 F/Sgt Norman Henry **MAUL** (RNZAF, from New Zealand)  
Rear Gunner: 947752 F/Sgt David Phillip **DOAK** (RAF, from England)

[ Lib #3: AL581 "O", continued ]

- + Date of death is 28 February 1943, per the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. All other crewmen are listed by CWGC as dying on 23 February. This discrepancy may just be an error.

Lib #4: BZ841 "G" (nose art unknown)

- A Mark III Liberator of 159 Squadron.
- Shot down by Ki-43 fighter over Rangoon, Burma night of 9 / 10 October 1943
- All crewmen were killed in the air combat and crash. Their bodies were recovered post-war for reburial in Rangoon War Cemetery, Burma.

Pilot: 84686 S/Ldr Louis Patrick **MASSEY** DFC & Bar (RAF, from England)  
2nd Pilot: 656440 W/O William Gibson **BLUE** (RAF, from England)  
Navigator: 1105448 F/Sgt Richard Alexander **LEWIS** (RAF, from Rhodesia)  
1st Wireless Op: 997899 W/O Allan **SIMPSON** (RAF, from Scotland)  
2nd Wireless Op/Air Gnr: 1059446 Sgt John Edward **WADSWORTH** (RAF, presumably from England)  
Beam Gunner: J/87039 P/O Paul **BELKIN** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Mid-upper Gunner: 970256 W/O John Langler **RIDSDALE** (RAF, from Wales)  
Rear Gunner: 751073 W/O Robert Allen **POWRIE** (RAF, presumably from England)

Lib #5: BZ926 "P", Pegasus

- A Mark III Liberator of 159 Squadron.
- Winged horse nose art (no text) was based upon the familiar Socony Oil logo (later Mobil Oil).
- Second of two 159 Squadron Liberators shot down by the same pair of Ki-43 fighters over Rangoon, Burma, night of 29 February / 1 March 1944.
- 6 of 9 crewmen bailed out and were captured. Of these, 2 died in Rangoon Jail and 4 were liberated.
- Wreckage of "Pegasus" was never located. The remains of the 3 crewmen who did not escape the doomed bomber are still missing.
- **I found the sole surviving crewman (Don Lomas, died 2008) and the kin of all 8 other crewmen.**

Pilot: 114064 F/Lt Edward James Douglas **STANLEY** (RAF, from England)  
2nd Pilot: ++ 149321 P/O Johannes Harmen Hendrik "Tommy" **LENTZ** (RAF, from the Netherlands)  
Navigator: 404487 F/Lt Thomas John **O'DONOHUE** DFM (RAAF, from Australia)  
1st Wireless Op: # 1062286 W/O John **WESTERMARK** (RAF, from Scotland)  
Flight Engineer: ++ 1545800 Sgt Norman John **DAVIS** (RAF, from England)  
Mid-Upper Gunner: 1807507 Sgt Stanley William **CHALCRAFT** (RAF, from England)  
Beam Gunner/2nd W/Op: @ 1360083 W/O John Donald "Don" **LOMAS** (RAF, from England)  
Beam Gunner: ++ 1315284 F/Sgt Jack **HARRIS** (RAF, from Wales)  
Rear Gunner: # 1312142 W/O John William Frank "Jack" **KING** (RAF, from England)

*Italics* Died in the air combat; missing with no known grave.  
++ Survived POW captivity, Rangoon Jail, died in the early 1970s  
@ Survived POW captivity, Rangoon Jail, died (age 92) in 2008  
# Died in POW captivity, Rangoon Jail, buried in Rangoon War Cemetery, Burma

Lib #6: BZ938 "W", WOTTAWITCH!!

- A Mark V Liberator of C Flight (Special Flight), 159 Squadron.
- Nose art was of a beautiful woman hunched atop a broom, with text reading *WOTTAWITCH!!* The painting was based on the June 1943 Esquire magazine pinup girl artwork of Alberto Vargas.
- Went down southwest of Rangoon, Burma on the night of 31 January / 1 February 1945 during a radar & radio detection flight. The memoir & logbook of the skipper, S/Ldr J.W. Bradley, said that a fighter attacked, but there has been no other reference to a fighter attack. In the 1990s A.G. Jeffrey, the navigator, said he knew of no such attack, and believed the trouble was due to a major engine malfunction.
- 3 crewmen were not seen after bailout. 6 men (2 officers, 4 F/Sgts) were turned over to the Japanese by Burmese villagers. Several days later the 2 officers were separated from the F/Sgts and sent to Rangoon Jail, where they survived. The 4 F/Sgts were later executed by the Japanese.
- The graves of the 4 executed airmen lie in Rangoon War Cemetery, Burma.
- **I corresponded with A.G. Jeffrey before his death in the 1990s. I corresponded with the kin of 7 other crewmen.**
- The nephew of Arthur Williams reached the crash site in January 2010 and read a prayer.
- 6 Japanese were convicted of the murder of the 4 crewmen. 3 were hanged, 3 received prison sentences.

**[ Lib #6: BZ938 "W", continued ]**

Pilot: \*\* 84656 S/Ldr James Wilson **BRADLEY** DFC (RAF, from England)  
2nd Pilot: + 710193 F/Sgt Leslie **BELLINGAN** (RAF, from Rhodesia)  
Navigator: \*\* 147114 F/O Allan Graham **JEFFREY** (RAF, from England)  
Wireless Operator: 156570 F/O William James John **LOWERY** (RAF, from England)  
Flight Engineer: + 1231723 F/Sgt Robert James **SNELLING** (RAF, from England)  
Wireless Op/Air Gnr: 421484 W/O Arthur Roland **WILLIAMS** (RAAF, from Australia)  
Air Gunner: 1592986 F/Sgt Leslie **ADAMS** (RAF, from England)  
Wireless Op/Air Gnr: + 1803337 F/Sgt John Derek **WOODAGE** (RAF, from England)  
Wireless Op/Air Gnr: + # 1393806 F/Sgt Stanley James **WOODBIDGE** GC (RAF, from England)

*Italics:* Believed to have bailed out; not seen by other 6 crewmen after reaching the ground.  
+ Beheaded by the Japanese on 7 February 1945. Buried in Rangoon War Cemetery, Burma.  
\*\* Captured, separated from the 4 others, sent to Rangoon Jail, liberated.  
# Posthumously awarded George Cross, 1948, for his courage in defying captors in the face of death; he was the last to be executed. His father flew to Rangoon and attended the 2-month war crimes trial in 1947. His debunking of a date-related defense alibi was instrumental in winning convictions.

**Lib #7: BZ962 "D", "Daring Diana."**

- A Mark VI Liberator of 159 Squadron.
- First of two 159 Liberators shot down by the same pair of Ki-43 fighters over Rangoon, Burma, night of **29 Feb / 1 March 1944**.
- The entire crew died on 29 February.
- Some wreckage (low-altitude mid-air explosion) was found in 1952, along with the remains of 7 unnamed crewmen who had been buried by local villagers. These 7 were exhumed and reburied – in separate "unknown RAF airman" graves – in Rangoon War Cemetery, Burma. They shall not be exhumed.
- The last 2 crewmen's remains are still missing.
- A poor quality image of the nose art is found in the 159 Squadron nose art section of this website. This tiny photographic print was handed out in 1944 to various ground and aircrew on 159 Squadron. All the prints of this that I have seen, so far, are of similar poor quality. No other photos of BZ962 have yet materialized. The text "*Daring Diana*." was painted alongside a sexy woman.
- I corresponded with the kin of all 9 crewmen. My mother is the widow of George Plank (not my father).
- I already have photos of each crewman but am always interested in seeing more photos.

Pilot: 420112 F/Sgt Allan Edward **ARNOLD** (RAAF, from Australia)  
2nd Pilot: 1262742 W/O Victor Ernest **WHITEHALL** (RAF, from England)  
Navigator: 1319428 F/Sgt Arthur Robert "Bobby" **BURN** (RAF, from England)  
1st Wireless Op: 50589 F/O Bernard **CLIFTON** DFM (RAF, from England)  
Flight Engineer: 1682798 F/Sgt John Henry Starmar **LEAK** (RAF, from England)  
Mid-Upper Gunner: 771563 Sgt Ansel Ernest Blackburn **STOUT** (RAF, but from India)  
Beam Gunner/2nd W/Op: 1435434 Sgt Charles Alfred George **PLANK** (RAF, from England)  
Beam Gunner: 1659085 Sgt Desmond Riversdale Anthony "Tony" **BURGESS** (RAF, from England)  
Rear Gunner: J/86883 P/O Michael Ludlow **DAVIS** (RCAF, but from England)

**Lib #8: BZ978 "W", Winnie**

- The nose art (no text) was a caricature of Winston Churchill.
- A Mark VI Liberator of 159 Squadron.
- Attacked by fighters during low-level dawn raid on the Bangkok-Lampang Railway, **6 October 1944**
- Ditched in the Bay of Bengal while trying to reach Chittagong.
- 1 died in the air combat.
- 4 died in the ditching.
- Air-Sea Rescue aircraft spotted three crewmen in dinghy on several occasions, and a rescue launch was very close, but the survivors fell into Japanese hands. 1 of these died in POW captivity in Rangoon Jail on 28 October. 2 survived Rangoon Jail to be liberated.
- The 6 who died have no known graves.

**[ Lib #8: BZ978 "W", continued ]**

Pilot: \*\* 1550526 W/O John "Jock" **MCKINNON** (RAF, from Scotland)  
2nd Pilot: # 1338538 F/Sgt L.G. **ROPER** Roper (RAF, from England)  
Navigator: \*\* 416627 W/O Clive Symes **SWAN** (RAAF, from Australia)  
Wireless Operator: + 420172 W/O Errol Percival **FORD** (RAAF, from Australia)  
Flight Engineer: # 1891770 Sgt S. **HILL** (RAF, from England)  
Beam Gunner: \*\* 423854 Sgt John Arthur **NELSON** (RAAF, from Australia)  
Mid-Upper Gunner: \*\* 1345502 F/Sgt William Noble **PATERSON** (RAF, from Scotland)  
Rear Gunner: *R/184955 F/Sgt Harry Frederick **RICHARDSON MID** (RCAF, from Canada)*

+ Killed in the air by gunfire from Japanese fighter. No known grave.  
\*\* Killed in the ditching; did not make it out of the aircraft. No known grave.  
# Exited ditched aircraft and made it into dinghy. Survived POW captivity in Rangoon Jail.  
*Italics:* Although wounded, he exited ditched aircraft and made it into dinghy. Died in POW captivity in Rangoon Jail. No known grave.

**Lib #9: BZ992 "E" (nose art unknown)**

- A Mark VI Liberator of 159 Squadron.
- Shot down by defensive anti-aircraft fire near Ban Dara Bridge in northern Siam during an early morning low-level raid on rail targets, **6 October 1944**.
- 4 crewmen died in the aircraft/crash (missing, no known graves).
- 5 crewmen bailed out, were captured, and held in Bangkok. Treated well during POW internment under the control of Thai military. All 5 were liberated.
- **I corresponded with the kin of 1 crewman.**

Pilot: ++ 417002 W/O Leo Arthur **BARR** (RNZAF, from New Zealand)  
2nd Pilot: # 1324322 Sgt Kenneth Gordon **PRICHARD** (RAF, from England)  
Navigator: ++ J/12276 F/O David McDonald **BRUCE** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Wireless Operator: ++ 1318896 F/Sgt Ronald W. **DERRICK** (RAF, from England)  
Front Gunner: # 1894746 F/Sgt John Squire **RATCLIFFE** (RAF, from England)  
Mid-Upper Gunner: ++ 407291 F/O Reginal Thomas **HOCKING** DFC (RAAF, from Australia)  
Ball Gunner: # 1796515 Sgt George **KERNOHAN** (RAF, from Northern Ireland)  
Rear Gunner: # 1522977 Sgt Patrick **HOGAN** (RAF, from Scotland)  
Flight Engineer: ++ 1803261 Sgt T. W. **RUTTER** (RAF, from England)

# Killed in air or in crash; missing, no known grave.  
++ Prisoner of War, liberated 20 August 1945.

**Lib #10: KH255 "C" (nose art unknown)**

- A Mark VI Liberator of 159 Squadron.
- Engulfed in flames after being hit by anti-aircraft fire over Khao Hua Gang railway yards, Siam during daylight attack, **9 February 1945**. Crashed roughly two miles later.
- A sequential series of photos of KH255's last moments was taken from an adjoining Liberator, but none of these has materialized. The family of the navigator received one of the photos post-war from a returning veteran, but it has been misplaced in recent years. The nephew of the pilot seeks copies of these graphic photos.
- The entire crew of eight perished on 9 February 1945 and are buried in Taukkyan War Cemetery, Burma.
- **I corresponded with the kin of 3 crewmen.** The skipper's nephew corresponded with the kin of 1 or 2 more crewmen.

Pilot: J/12468 F/Lt William Gerald **SCHROEDER** (RCAF, from Canada)  
2nd Pilot: J/44860 F/O Richard Lyle **McMILLAN** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Navigator: J/45103 F/O Nick **ZAKOW** (birth name ZAICZKOWSKI) (RCAF, from Canada)  
Air Bomber: J/43938 F/O Kristinn Gudmundur **JOHNSON** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Wireless Operator: J/45225 Flying Officer Robert **TALBOT** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Flight Engineer: 1739627 Sgt Derrick Charles North **BURTON** (RAF, from England)  
Front Gunner: 2222977 Sgt Roland Bernard **BRIGHT** (RAF, from England)  
Rear Gunner: J/95229 Pilot Officer Francis James **CONWAY** (RCAF, from Canada)

### Lib #11: KL671 "Q" (named *Queenie*, but nose art unknown)

- A Mark VIII Liberator of 159 Squadron.
- Seen flying engulfed in flames in a heavy downpour during a Special Duties supply-dropping operation over central Burma, **3 August 1945**. An explosion was heard before impact.
- The remains of only 6 of the 8 crew were found at the scene. They were buried by villagers. Inexplicably, the remains were never exhumed and moved to a war cemetery. The 8 crewmen are missing, no known graves.
- I corresponded with the kin of 1 crewman.

Pilot: 421505 W/O David Joseph **GALLAGHER** (RNZAF, from New Zealand)  
2nd Pilot: 432927 F/Sgt Jack Edmund **WILMITH** (RAAF, from Australia)  
Navigator: 427077 F/Lt Donald Cross **FINLAYSON** (RNZAF, from New Zealand)  
Air Bomber: 1684358 F/Sgt Victor Gordon **TAYLOR** (RAF, from England)  
Wireless Op/Air Gnr: 1567017 F/Sgt James **JOBSON** (RAF, from Ireland)  
Flight Engineer: 2210463 Sgt Edward Francis **HUGHES** (RAF, from England)  
Air Gunner (Front?): 1895231 F/Sgt Stanley **ALEXANDER** (RAF, from England)  
Air Gunner (Rear?): 425534 W/O Colin William **McCARTHY** (RNZAF, from New Zealand)

### Lib #12: KG986 "F" (nose art unknown)

- A Mark VI Liberator of 203 Squadron.
- On **20 March 1945**, following low-level attack on shipping at Delehleh (Oelehleh) at the northern tip of Sumatra, the Liberator crashed into the ocean off of the island of Peunasu (now also identified locally as Deudap). A burst of anti-aircraft fire had exploded underneath the aircraft.
- 3 men reached the shore of Peunasu Island. Allegedly 1 unnamed airman died there and was buried on the beach. Also, allegedly, the 2 other airmen were captured.
- Officially all 10 crewmen are missing, no known graves.
- I corresponded with the kin of 2 airmen.

Pilot: ++ J/22813 F/Lt Shirley William **MORRIS** (RCAF)  
2nd Pilot: 153776 F/O Louis Mary Joseph **GRANT** (RAF, British national living in Belgium until 1940)  
Nav/Bomb Aimer: 421460 F/O Archibald Pollock **SMITH** (RAAF, from Australia)  
Wireless Op/Air Gnr: 1120910 Sgt Alexander Murdock **LANG** (RAF, from Scotland)  
Wireless Op/Air Gnr: 1312970 F/Sgt Wilfred Arthur **COLLINS** (RAF, from England)  
Wireless Op/Air Gnr: 1337779 F/Sgt Ernest Edward **LEFTWICH** (RAF)  
Wireless Op/Air Gnr: 1318346 F/Sgt John Douglas **SILKSTONE** (RAF, from England)  
Flight Engineer: ++ 1894482 F/Sgt Eric **PETERS** (RAF, from England)  
Air Gunner: 1829311 Sgt Angus Forrest **HERD** (RAF, from Scotland)  
Air Gunner: 1895383 Sgt Dennis Clifford **OAKDEN** (RAF, from England)

++ Allegedly captured by the Japanese, sent to Singapore, and then to the Japanese Army Air Force's 9th Air Division at Palembang. A post-war investigation was carried out, but the ultimate fate of the men is a mystery.

### Lib #13: KH214 "D" (nose art unknown)

- A Mark VI Liberator of 215 Squadron.
- Shot down by anti-aircraft in southeastern Burma, during a low-level attack on a bridge along the notorious Burma-Siam Railway, **3 January 1945**.
- The crew remains were recovered and buried by the Japanese in the nearby village.
- The communal grave was shown to the first Allied grave search team to reach the area, 26 September 1945. A photo was taken of the memorial service held at graveside.
- The remains were never moved to Thaybyuzayat War Cemetery, only 27 miles away.
- The kin were never told that a grave existed; I corresponded with the kin of all 11 men.
- Due to politics, it has been impossible in recent years to gain access to the village where the bodies were buried.



**[ Lib #13: KH214 "D", continued ]**

Pilot: J/24393 F/Lt Charles Milne "Steve" **BRODIE** (RCAF, from Canada)  
2nd Pilot: J/23534 F/O Murray **POTTS** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Navigator: J/6157 F/Lt Ken **COX** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Bomb Aimer: 164352 P/O James **NESBITT** (RAF, from England)  
Flight Engineer: 1541705 F/Sgt Harry **DAWSON** (RAF, from England)  
1st Wireless Op: J/13395 F/Lt Art **HARRIS** (RCAF, from Canada)  
2nd Wireless Op: R/119324 W/O Harold Oliver **IRVINE** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Front Gunner: 1333702 W/O Alfred Thomas **READ** (RAF, from England)  
Mid-Upper Gunner: 112240 F/Lt Hkun U **SAO** (RAF, but from Burma)  
Ball Gunner: 3050579 Sgt William David **ADAMS** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Rear Gunner: J/93729 F/Sgt William Leigh **WASHBROOK** (RCAF, from Canada)

**Lib #14: EV902 "Z" (nose art unknown)**

- A Mark VI Liberator of 355 Squadron.
- Collided in formation with EW144 of 356 Squadron during daylight bombing operation to Maymyo Railway Station, Burma, **16 September 1944**.
- 8 died in the collision or crash and are buried in Taukkyan War Cemetery, Burma.
- 3 who bailed out survived POW incarceration.
- **I corresponded with Alan Bailes and with the kin of 2 other crewmen.**

Pilot: 297176 F/Lt Ernest Philip Jeffrey **GRAY** (RAAF, from Australia)  
2nd Pilot: 985000 W/O Arthur **GREEN** (RAF, from England)  
Nav/Bomb Aimer: + 904677 W/O Ralph W. **STEPHENS** (RAF, from Canada)  
1st Wireless Op/Air Gnr: + 751298 W/O Alan **BAILES** (RAF, from England)  
2nd Wireless Op/Air Gnr: 179673 P/O Frederick Edward **BLACKMAN** (RAF, from England)  
Flight Engineer: 1582267 F/Sgt Len J. **LEWIS** (RAF, from England)  
Mid-Upper Gunner: + 1559985 F/Sgt Peter H. **DEXTER** (RAF, from England)  
Flight Engineer: 1582267 F/Sgt Leonard James **LEWIS** (RAF, from England)  
Ball Gunner: 412011 Sgt Roy **KELSALL** (RAF, from England)  
Front Gunner: 1897319 Sgt David John **DRAKE** (RAF, from England)  
Rear Gunner: J/25844 F/O John Bernard **FITZGERALD** (RCAF, from Canada)

+ These 3 bailed out and were captured. They survived POW incarceration in Rangoon Jail, Burma.

**Lib #15: KH250 "H" (HAWKEYE)**

- A Mark VI Liberator of 355 Squadron.
- Nose art of a cartoonish bird astride a bomb, plus the text *HAWKEYE*.
- Shot down (into the ground, not the sea) by anti-aircraft fire during a low-level bombing raid on Port Blair, Andaman Islands (Burma) on **17 May 1945**.
- Only 1 parachute was spotted by other aircraft. This was F/Sgt Harold Wynne, KH250's mid-upper gunner. Captured alive, he died three months later when injected with poison by a Japanese doctor on 17 Aug 1945 – after Emperor Hirohito's surrender radio broadcast.
- 10 crewmen are officially "missing". However, the communal grave holding crew remains buried by the Japanese near the crash site was brought to the attention of the British when they reoccupied the area in Oct 1945. For inexplicable reasons the British chose not to exhume the remains from the very accessible gravesite. Instead, they constructed a proper grave marker, with brick, concrete, and a plaque naming the missing aircrew.
- The families of the missing airmen were given conflicting information. It is known that the Air Ministry told F/O Totham's widow that her husband's remains were among those buried in the communal grave. The Air Ministry also initially told other families of a communal grave but later, in 1949, came a letter saying that there was little hope of the grave ever being located.
- The Commonwealth War Graves Commission visited the grave in April 2011. Its report was presented to the UK Ministry of Defence, which has decided to excavate the grave in the hope of finding remains. No date has been set for the exhumation; discussions and planning are ongoing.
- The earthquake and tsunami of 26 Dec 2004 devastated the area and damaged the grave. The concrete is severely cracked, and the site is flooded daily by tidal action as a result of land subsidence.
- The aircraft was captained by F/O Totham, a veteran of 31 ops with Bomber Command. As it was his and his crew's first op with 355 Sqn, a "screen" pilot, P/O Duckworth, was aboard to observe and advise (the common practice for a new crew). The experienced P/O Duckworth had completed a tour of ops with 355.
- **I have corresponded with the kin of 9 crewmen.**



**[ Lib #15: KH250 "H", continued ]**

Pilot: 177155 F/O Rowland **TOTHAM** DFC (RAF, from England)  
2nd Pilot: 1522985 F/Sgt John Herbert **MCDOWALL** (RAF, from England)  
Screen Pilot: 197862 P/O Robert James **DUCKWORTH** (RAF, from England)  
Navigator: 1804316 F/Sgt Harold Walter **EMERSON** (RAF, from England)  
Bomb Aimer: 187828 F/O Ieuan Anthony **MORGAN** (RAF, from Wales)  
Wireless Operator: 655366 W/O Harry **JOHNSON** (RAF, from England)  
Wireless Operator: 977546 W/O Hugh **CAMPBELL** (RAF, from Northern Ireland)  
Front Gunner: 179043 F/O Frederick Edward **RUMSEY-WILLIAMS** DFC (RAF, from England)  
Ball Gunner: 1557907 Sgt Leslie **BENFELL** (RAF, from England)  
Mid-Upper Gunner: + 1516012 F/Sgt Harold **WYNNE** (RAF, home unknown)  
Rear Gunner: 1380358 F/Sgt Robert Murdock Bannerman **McPHERSON** (RAF, from England)

+ Captured after bailing out. He died as a POW on South Andaman Island on 17 August 1945 and lies buried in Kirkee War Cemetery, India.

**Lib #16: EW114 "S" (nose art unknown)**

- A Mark VI Liberator of 356 Squadron.
- Collided in formation with EV902 of 355 Squadron during daylight bombing operation to Maymyo Railway Station, Burma, **16 September 1944**.
- The entire crew was killed in the accident and crash. They are buried in Taukkyan War Cemetery, Burma.
- **I corresponded with a woman who dated Sgt Waghorn during the war.**

Pilot: 567123 F/Sgt John James **COLLINS** (RAF, from England)  
2nd Pilot: 1394254 F/Sgt John Edward **CARR** (RAF, from England)  
Nav/Bomb Aimer: 1126225 F/Sgt Alan **WILSON** (RAF, from Northern Ireland)  
Wireless Op/Air Gnr: 1259967 Sgt Victor John **VALLIN** (RAF, from England)  
Flight Engineer: 1850882 Sgt Peter George **WAGHORN** (RAF, from England)  
Flight Engineer/Air Gnr: 1615749 F/Sgt Raymond Henry **CHAPMAN** (RAF, from England)  
Front Gunner: 1522509 F/Sgt Stanley **MASON** (RAF, from Ireland)  
Mid-Upper Gunner: 1657031 F/Sgt Douglas Desmond **HOLMES** (RAF, from Wales)  
Ball Gunner: 2209578 Sgt Charles Gilbert **GRIFFITHS** (RAF, from England)  
Rear Gunner: 1804433 F/Sgt William Henry **DOBSON** (RAF, from England)

**Lib #17: KL654 "R" (nose art unknown)**

- A Mk VI Liberator of 356 Squadron.
- Missing on a Special Duties operation over Malaya on **23 August 1945**. The wreckage has been located in the jungle and positively identified. The British government again and again refused to recover the remains. The Malaya Historical Group, the Malaysian Army Museum, and the UK National Ex-Servicemen's Association in 2009 conducted a 10-day dig on the site, recovering substantial remains and personal items, to go with what had been recovered on past site investigations. The remains as of 4 Dec 2011 are in Kuala Lumpur in the hands of the country's top forensic experts, awaiting UK Ministry of Defence action.
- The 8 crewmen are officially missing, no known graves, but this status can only change if the UK Ministry of Defence confronts reality and stops shamefully ignoring the Malaysian wreck excavation evidence.
- The kin of most, not all, of the crewmen have been found. **I corresponded briefly with the niece of the 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot,** but the main KL654 researchers have been in touch with her and the families of most of the other crewmen.

Pilot: 158017 F/Lt John Selwyn **WATTS** (RAF, possibly with a US connection)  
2nd Pilot: 166082 F/O Edward Donald **MASON** (RAF, from England)  
Navigator: 166352 F/O William Kenneth **DOVEY** (RAF, from England)  
Air Bomber: 166369 F/O John Trevor **BROMFIELD** (RAF, from England)  
Wireless Operator: 1621393 F/Sgt Arthur **TURNER** (RAF, from England)  
Flight Engineer: 1582692 F/Sgt Jack **BLAKEY** (RAF, from England)  
Front Gunner: 1624252 F/Sgt Raymond Arthur **TOWELL** (RAF, from England)  
Rear Gunner: 2213814 F/Sgt William **ROSS** (RAF, from England)

### Lib #18: KH326 "X" (nose art unknown)

- A Mark VI Liberator of 357 Squadron.
- Failed to return from a Special Duties op to Malaya, **6 June 1945**.
- Wreck discovered in 1955 by a patrol of the Royal Scots Fusiliers, fighting Communist rebels in dense mountainous jungle in northern Malaya, close to the Thai border. No remains were found at that time, in a rushed RAF investigation. When queried in 2007, Fusiliers who were there stated their firm belief that crew remains were present; they don't accept the official RAF conclusion that the crew bailed out.
- The 8 members of the crew are still missing, with no known graves.
- 2009 & early 2010: the wreck was accidentally rediscovered by Malaysian Army border patrols.
- July 2010: the Malaysian Army Museum and the Malaya Historical Group, in tandem, reached the wreck but only had 3 hours on-site. Thai scrap metal merchants had cut up much of the once-relatively intact fuselage.
- A new expedition to the wreck is planned for 2012.
- I corresponded with the kin of all 8 crewmen.

Pilot: J/12779 F/Lt Arie **TIMMERMANS** (RCAF, from Canada)  
2nd Pilot: R/217478 F/Sgt Donald **DELLIS** (RCAF, but from Turks & Caicos Islands)  
Navigator: J/47344 F/O Joseph Jean Paul **PERRON** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Air Bomber: J/47321 F/O Bill **REEVE** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Wireless Op/Air Gnr: J/47871 F/O William Peter **MCLEOD** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Wireless Op/Air Gnr: J/47869 F/O George **FAULKNER** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Air Gunner: R/279733 F/Sgt Harry **ANDREWS** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Air Gunner: R/278843 F/Sgt Reinhold **GIESBRECHT** (RCAF, from Canada)

### Lib #19: EW124 "H" (nose art unknown)

- A Mark VI Liberator of 358 Squadron.
- Failed to return from a Special Duties op to northeast Siam, **19 June 1945**.
- Wreckage and remains of 4 unnamed crewmen were found by a search party in western Burma in November 1945.
- The remains were buried on site and were never moved to a war cemetery. Officially all members of the crew are missing, with no known graves.
- I corresponded with the kin of all 8 men.

Pilot : J/20943 F/Lt Arthur Erick Franklin **ANDERSON** (RCAF, from Canada)  
2nd Pilot: J/44519 F/O Allan McArthur **SILVERTHORN** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Navigator 1459361 W/O Kenneth John **STORRAR** (RAF, from England)  
Air bomber: J/45996 F/O Ernest Franklin **ELFORD** (RCAF, from Canada)  
1st Wireless Op/Air Gnr: 1800541 Sgt Albert William **ROBERTSON** (RAF, from England)  
2nd Wireless Op/Air Gnr: R/260658 F/Sgt Walter George **BOND** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Despatcher/Air Gunner: R/284637 F/Sgt Wilson Alexander **VAUDNER** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Air Gunner: R/281890 F/Sgt Alfred **MAXWELL** (RCAF, from Canada)

### Lib #20: KH215 "K" (nose art unknown)

- A Mark VI Liberator of 358 Squadron.
- 3 Liberators failed to return from 358 Squadron's first Special Duties operation on the night of **22 / 23 January 1945**: KH215, KH277, and KH278. Their individual Drop Zones were in the Hanoi area of French Indo-China. The weather was stormy. It is now known that there was a "friendly fire" coverup allegedly involving 2 of the 3 lost Liberators. According to the vague evidence, a US Army Air Force P-61 Black Widow night fighter or fighters based in China were involved. The loss or losses stemmed from the political tensions between the US and Britain concerning the post-war plans for French Indo-China. The British purposely refrained from informing the US of their Liberator incursions into French Indo-China on 22 / 23 January 1945, resulting in the probable tragedy. It is my guess that only KH278 fell to the P-61 guns, as it came down in French Indo-China; the other two Liberators crashed hundreds of miles from the P-61 patrol area, and with weather as the prime culprit.
- All 8 crewmen from KH215 died in the aircraft's demise and are buried at Tauckyan War Cemetery, Burma.
- KH215 reportedly crashed at "Tisen", which is Tisan, in the Chin Hills, Chin State, Burma (23 deg 07 min N, 93 deg 46 min E). This is only 10.7 miles from the reported crash site of KH277 at Nimzawl, Chin State, Burma (23 deg 06 min N, 93 deg 54 min E). However, the recovered remains from KH215's crash site are buried in a different Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery than KH277's recovered remains.
- I corresponded with the kin of 2 crewmen.

[ Lib #20: KH215 "K", continued ]

Pilot: 139520 F/Lt Kenneth Hartle **BRAILSFORD** (RAF, from England)  
2nd Pilot: J/27639 F/O Walter **RUSSELL** (RCAF, from Canada)  
Navigator: 1550901 W/O Gerard Alexander **O'TOOLE** (RAF, from Scotland)  
Air Bomber: 178370 F/O Leslie **BLICK** (RAF, from Wales)  
1st Wireless Operator: 1183127 W/O James Roland **SWAIN** (RAF, from England)  
2nd Wireless Operator: 1338318 Sgt Joseph Charles **GIBBS** (RAF)  
Mid-Upper Gunner: 1339360 W/O Wesley **LEAR** (RAF, from England)  
Rear Gunner: 54992 F/O Robert John **WILSON** (RAF, from England)

Lib #21: KH277 "Z" (nose art unknown)

- A Mark VI Liberator of 358 Squadron.
- S/Ldr Pim was commanding officer of B-Flight, 358 Squadron.
- 3 Liberators failed to return from 358 Squadron's first Special Duties operation on the night of **22 / 23 January 1945**: KH215, KH277, and KH278. Their individual Drop Zones were in the Hanoi area of French Indo-China. The weather was stormy. It is now known that there was a "friendly fire" coverup allegedly involving 2 of the 3 lost Liberators. According to the vague evidence, a US Army Air Force P-61 Black Widow night fighter or fighters based in China were involved. The loss or losses stemmed from the political tensions between the US and Britain concerning the post-war plans for French Indo-China. The British purposely refrained from informing the US of their Liberator incursions into French Indo-China on 22 / 23 January 1945, resulting in the probable tragedy. It is my guess that only KH278 fell to the P-61 guns, as it came down in French Indo-China; the other two Liberators crashed hundreds of miles from the P-61 patrol area, and with weather as the prime culprit.
- All 8 crewmen from KH277 apparently died in the aircraft's demise. The 5 bodies which were recovered are buried at Imphal War Cemetery, Burma. 3 crewmen are missing, no known graves.
- KH277 reportedly crashed near Nimzawl, in the Chin Hills, Chin State, Burma (23 deg 06 min N, 93 deg 54 min E) This is only 10.7 miles from the reported crash site of KH215 at "Tisen" (Tisan), Chin State, Burma (23 deg 07 min N, 93 deg 46 min E). However, the recovered remains from KH277's crash site are buried in a different Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery than KH215's recovered remains.
- **I corresponded with the kin of 2 crewmen.**

Pilot: ++ 60566 S/Ldr Anthony Stanley Mortimer **PIM** DFC (RAF)  
2nd Pilot: # 1522039 F/Sgt John Hewitt **HOLT** (RAF, from England)  
Navigator/Bomb Aimer: ++ 1585199 F/Sgt Erik Cairnie **HEARN** (RAF, from England)  
Bomb Aimer: ++ 149990 F/O William John **WALLACE** (RAF)  
1st Wireless Operator: ++ 149915 F/O Eric **CLARKE** (RAF)  
2nd Wireless Operator: # 1458467 Sgt George **GITTINS** (RAF)  
Mid-Upper Gunner: ++ 428047 F/Sgt Sidney Ernest **SADLER** (RNZAF, from New Zealand)  
Rear Gunner: # 976434 Sgt James Alfred **ROBINSON** (RAF, from England)

++ Buried in Imphal War Cemetery, Burma  
# Missing, no known grave

Lib #22: KH278 "W" (nose art unknown)

- A Mark VI Liberator of 358 Squadron.
- 3 Liberators failed to return from 358 Squadron's first Special Duties operation on the night of **22 / 23 January 1945**: KH215, KH277, and KH278. Their individual Drop Zones were in the Hanoi area of French Indo-China. The weather was stormy. It is now known that there was a "friendly fire" coverup allegedly involving 2 of the 3 lost Liberators. According to the vague evidence, a US Army Air Force P-61 Black Widow night fighter or fighters based in China were involved. The loss or losses stemmed from the political tensions between the US and Britain concerning the post-war plans for French Indo-China. The British purposely refrained from informing the US of their Liberator incursions into French Indo-China on 22 / 23 January 1945, resulting in the probable tragedy. It is my guess that only KH278 fell to the P-61 guns, as it came down in French Indo-China; the other two Liberators crashed hundreds of miles from the P-61 patrol area, and with weather as the prime culprit.
- No trace of KH278 or her crew was found. All 8 crewmen are missing, no known graves.

**[ Lib #22: KH278 "W", continued ]**

Pilot: 63404 F/Lt Stanley Douglas **MAYHEW** (RAF, from England)  
2nd Pilot: 1385263 W/O Noel Charles **EAMES** (RAF)  
Navigator: 656237 F/Sgt William George **ROBERTS** (RAF, from England)  
Air Bomber: 164129 F/O John **HUGHES** (RAF, from England)  
1st Wireless Operator: 1800854 F/Sgt Butt Victor Arthur Frederick **BUTT** (RAF, from England)  
2nd Wireless Operator: 434671 F/O John Alan **SCHMIDT** (RAAF, from Australia)  
Mid-Upper Gunner: 1626796 F/Sgt John Richard **PERRY** (RAF, from England)  
Rear Gunner: 1699152 Sgt Frank William **MOORE** (RAF)

**Lib #23: EW225 (fuselage letter code and nose art unknown)**

- A Mark VI Liberator of the Air Fighting Training Unit (AFTU) at RAF Amarda Road.
- Collided with Liberator EW247 during formation flying exercise over India, **26 July 1945**.
- Pdf file report on the loss of EW225 and EW247 is found on this website.
- The entire 8-man crew died in the collision and subsequent crash on 26 July 1945. They are buried in Madras War Cemetery, India with the crew of EW247.
- As this flight was a training mission, it is not certain whether S/Ldr Heynert or P/O Bullen was at the controls at the time of the collision.
- A memorial service for the crews of EW225 and EW247 was held on the runway of the abandoned Amarda Road airfield on 26 July 2011.
- **I corresponded with the kin of 5 crewmen.**

Pilot: 149322 S/Ldr Felix **HEYNERT** DFC VK (RAF, but from the Netherlands)  
Pilot: 425880 P/O Ray **BULLEN** DFC (RNZAF, from New Zealand)  
Wireless Op/Air Gnr: 191889 F/O Robert Stanley **MANSON** (RAF, from England)  
Nav/Bomb Aimer: 186422 F/Lt Alexander Norman **BORROW** (RAF, from England)  
Wireless Op/Air Gnr: 197830 P/O Arnie **BRIDGMAN** (RAF, from England)  
Flight Engineer: 187482 F/O Peter **ETTLINGER** (RAF, from England)  
Nav/Bomb Aimer: 103003 F/Lt Sydney Wilfred **WELLS** (RAF, from England)  
Air Bomber: 1397658 F/Sgt Walter Reginald George **WOOD** (RAF, from England)

**Lib #24: EW247 (fuselage letter code "A"; nose art unknown)**

- A Mark VI Liberator of the Air Fighting Training Unit (AFTU) at RAF Amarda Road.
- Collided with Liberator EW225 during formation flying exercise over India, **26 July 1945**.
- Pdf file on the loss of EW225 and EW247 is found on this website.
- The entire 6-man crew died in the collision and subsequent crash on 26 July 1945. They are buried in Madras War Cemetery, India with the crew of EW225.
- A memorial service for the crews of EW225 and EW247 was held on the runway of the abandoned Amarda Road airfield on 26 July 2011.
- **I corresponded with the kin of 4 crewmen.**

Pilot: 191880 F/O Alfred **HERBERT** (RAF, from England)  
Nav/Bomb Aimer: 165506 F/O Peter Hubert Ash **SMITH** (RAF, from England)  
Flight Engineer: 1584886 F/Sgt Cyril **GEESON** (RAF, from England)  
Wireless Op/Air Gnr: 1021128 W/O William Joseph **SMART** (RAF, from Northern Ireland)  
Instrument Repairer: 2247714 A/C1 George William **PAFFEY** (RAF, from England)  
Instrument Repairer: 27616 A/C2 P.V. **MATHAI** (RIAF, from India)