Wings of War Project 2024: A Historical Exploration

I am pleased to present my ongoing research, titled **Wings of War Project 2024**, which documents the history of military aircraft crashes during World War II. This project began with a personal request from a friend, who asked me to investigate an aircraft crash that took place on a mountain near Pwll, between Burry Port and Llanelli. After conducting thorough research, I compiled a detailed report on the incident.

This initial investigation led to another request from an individual associated with the Polish 316 Squadron, who sought assistance in documenting crash sites for a memorial project in Llanelli. For this, I prepared an article that included detailed information about the crash sites and their locations.

Expanding the Scope of the Project

As I continued these projects, I began mapping and documenting additional military aircraft crash sites, focusing on fighter planes. My research expanded as I collaborated with other groups engaged in similar work. The project now includes a fully interactive map with data on crash sites, as well as access to memorials for the crews lost in these tragic events.

Over time, the project grew to include many more crash sites and a variety of related data. It now covers not only the crash locations but also relevant technical information about the aircraft involved. I have worked diligently to ensure that this map is as accurate and comprehensive as possible, providing access to historical records and memorials at each site.

Inspiration from Existing Research

During my investigations, I discovered several reports from the **Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust**, especially their **GGAT 126 Project: Military Aircraft Crash Sites in South Wales** (March 2013). Inspired by this work, I expanded my documentation of crash sites with a specific focus on the crews who perished. This aspect of the project led to the creation of a comprehensive database that includes detailed crash reports, aircraft specifications, and, wherever possible, biographical details about the crew members who lost their lives. In some instances, I was even able to find photographs or additional information about those individuals.

A Memorial for the Fallen

The project has since evolved into a significant body of work, including a **virtual cemetery** that honors the sacrifices of these individuals. This component groups together the stories of those who died, creating a memorial space where their contributions can be remembered. Additionally, I have worked to correct anomalies and inconsistencies encountered during the research process to ensure accuracy and respect for the memory of those involved.

A Resource for Future Historians and Enthusiasts

I believe there is a wealth of valuable historical data within this project that will be useful to future historians, researchers, and the public. The detailed documentation of crash sites, technical information about the aircraft, and personal records of the servicemen lost offers a unique and meaningful perspective on this chapter of World War II history.

This project is meant to preserve and share this history with as wide an audience as possible, ensuring that the sacrifices made during these times are never forgotten.

Airbases Overview & Their Impact

During both World Wars, the RAF (Royal Air Force) and RNAS (Royal Naval Air Service) airfields stationed across Wales played an essential role in the United Kingdom's defence strategy and military operations. These airfields, spread throughout the Welsh countryside and along the coast, were vital hubs for both offensive and defensive missions that contributed significantly to the war effort.

Welsh airbases served multiple purposes: some were training grounds for aircrews, while others launched crucial coastal patrols, anti-submarine missions, and reconnaissance flights. The geography of Wales, with its proximity to key coastal regions and shipping lanes, made it a prime location for defending the Western Approaches and the Atlantic convoys, crucial to the nation's survival during wartime.

Strategic Importance and Operations

Each airfield had a unique role based on its location and resources. Some airfields, such as RAF St. Athan and RAF Pembrey, became critical training centres where new pilots and crews honed their skills. Others, like RAF Valley, served as launching points for vital patrols that monitored and protected the coastlines from enemy submarines and ships.

In addition to defensive operations, these airfields also facilitated offensive missions, particularly in the latter years of the wars, as Britain took the fight to enemy forces. Welsh airbases were involved in providing air cover for maritime convoys, engaging enemy aircraft, and securing vital supply routes that connected the UK with its allies.

Enduring Legacy of Welsh Airfields

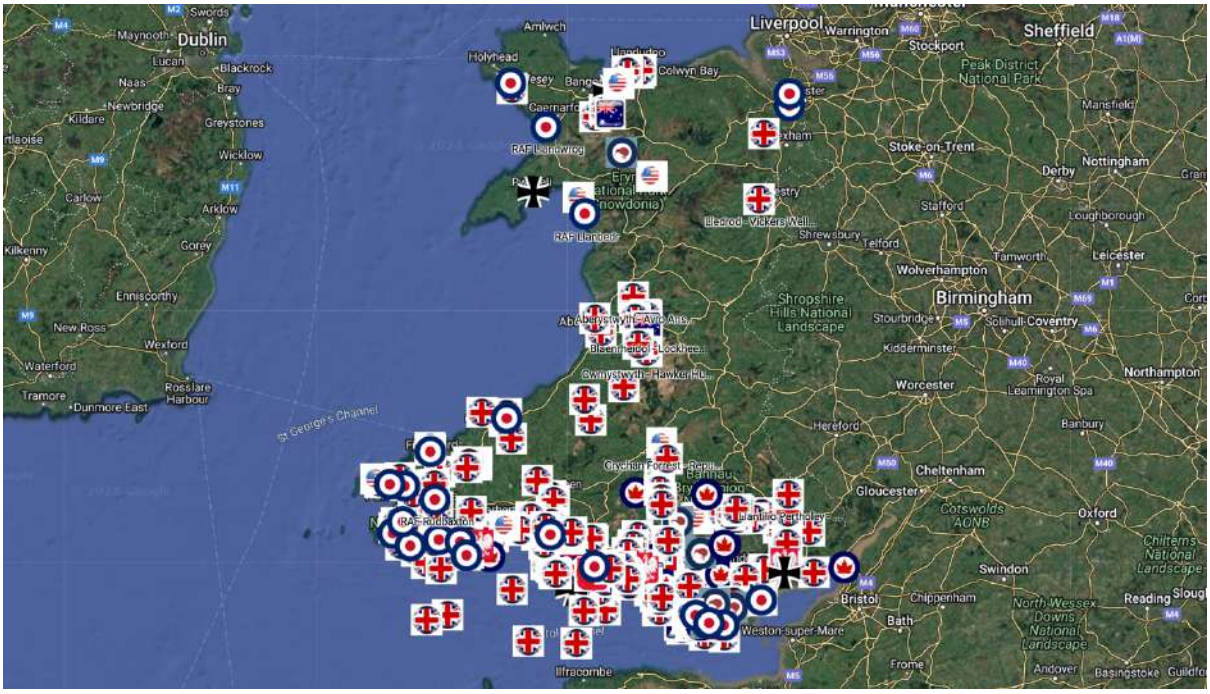
The legacy of these airfields is a testament to the bravery and resilience of the servicemen and women who operated from them. Their strategic significance not only shaped the course of both World Wars but also left a lasting imprint on Wales's rich aviation heritage. Many of

these airfields have since been decommissioned, but their historical importance remains. In some cases, former airbases have been repurposed for civilian use, while others stand as memorials to the crucial role they played.

As we remember these airbases and their contributions to military history, we honour the pivotal part they played in maintaining Britain's air and maritime security during times of great global conflict. The stories of the people who trained, flew, and fought from these airfields continue to inspire future generations, keeping their legacy alive.

Contributions to Future Historians and Researchers

The **Wings of War Project 2024** represents not only a comprehensive documentation of aircraft crash sites but also a unique and meticulously curated resource for future historians and researchers. The extensive mapping of crash sites across Wales and beyond, coupled with detailed data about the aircraft and crew members involved, sets this project apart from other historical studies.



Unique Features of the Crash Site Mapping

One of the standout features of the project is the interactive map I developed, which precisely documents the locations of military aircraft crashes during World War II. This map isn't just a static representation but a dynamic tool that integrates various layers of information, including:

- **Exact Geographical Coordinates:** Unlike many historical resources that provide only general descriptions of crash sites, this project includes precise GPS coordinates for each location. This offers future researchers and historians an invaluable tool for field studies, site visits, and further exploration of these historical locations.
- **Detailed Site Descriptions:** Each crash site on the map includes a comprehensive description, which incorporates not only technical data about the aircraft (make,

model, serial number) but also contextual details such as weather conditions, mission objectives, and the events leading up to the crash. This combination of technical and narrative data provides a fuller understanding of each incident.
- **Historical and Archival Sources:** In addition to mapping the locations, I have cross-referenced these sites with archival documents, accident reports, and first-hand accounts from military records. This level of detail allows researchers to cross-check the information against other sources, offering a more robust picture of the events.

New Insights into Crew Memorialization and Historical Records

The project also contributes new insights into the individuals who served and perished in these crashes. The virtual cemetery component of the project, which groups together the stories of fallen airmen, goes beyond traditional military databases in several keyways:

- **Connecting Faces to Names:** Where possible, I have been able to attach photographs and personal stories to many of the crew members listed. This humanizes the data and makes it more accessible and meaningful to both researchers and the public.
- **Correcting Historical Inaccuracies:** During my research, I have uncovered several discrepancies in existing records. These include some aircraft, incorrect dates, and in some cases, misreported crash locations. By cross-referencing multiple sources and field investigations, I have been able to correct these inaccuracies, ensuring the integrity of the data for future use.

A Valuable Resource for Future Research

The **Wings of War Project 2024** is designed to be a living project that can grow as new information is uncovered. Its interactive nature, combined with the depth of technical and personal data, makes it an indispensable tool for:

- **Field Research:** Future historians and archaeologists can use the detailed mapping and GPS coordinates to conduct on-site investigations, surveys, and preservation efforts.
- **Educational Resources:** The comprehensive data and interactive elements make the project suitable for educational purposes, allowing students and scholars to explore World War II aviation history in an engaging, data-rich environment.
- **Further Academic Studies:** With its focus on both technical data and personal stories, the project provides a foundation for future research into air combat, military aviation history, and the human cost of war. Scholars can build upon the meticulous records and insights offered by the project to pursue more specialized studies, whether in the fields of aviation, military strategy, or war memorialization.

A Legacy for Historical Scholarship

Ultimately, this project offers more than just a collection of facts and figures—it is a carefully constructed resource that preserves and honours the memory of those involved in these tragic events. By making this data accessible to a broad audience, I hope to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing study of military history and provide future historians and researchers with a valuable tool that deepens our understanding of the past.

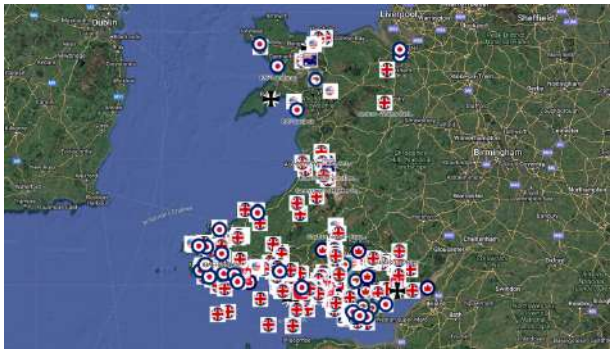
"Wings of War: Exploring the Legacy of Aircraft Crashes in Wales"

This ledger compiles detailed information on aircraft crashes that occurred during World War II in South & West Wales and other regions of Wales. It serves as a comprehensive record of each incident, including details of the aircraft involved, their specifications, and information about the crew members and their final resting places that are known.

"This map is compiled from data provided by two key sources: the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust project GGAT 126: Military Aircraft Crash sites in South Wales (March 2013), The Polish Fighter Squadron 316 Project in Llanelli also Dyfed Archaeological Trust for Cadw also Carmarthenshire Air Crashes by Steven H. Jones. Together, these sources offer comprehensive information on military aircraft crash sites in South Wales, providing valuable insights into the region's aviation history and the impact of conflict on its landscape. This is a link to all aircraft involved, complete with make, model, and specifications:

Contents

1. **Aircraft Crash Details**
    - A list of aircraft crashes, with details on each incident.
    - Entries are organized in alphabetical order by the aircraft model involved in the crash.
2. **Aircraft Specifications**
    - Technical specifications and historical data for each aircraft model involved in the crashes.
    - Information is arranged alphabetically by aircraft model name.
3. **Crew Members and Burial Sites**
    - A record of crew members, including names, ranks, and the locations where they are buried.
    - Listed by crash incident, with details for each crew member associated with the respective aircraft crash.



Map Link

https://tinyurl.com/WW2-SW-CS

Memorials

https://www.findagrave.com/virtual-cemetery/1834844

Acknowledgments

We are grateful for the contributions the following organizations and individuals whose invaluable data has enhanced the comprehensiveness of this document:

- **Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust** for the GGAT 126: Military Aircraft Crash sites in South Wales project (March 2013).
- **Dyfed Archaeological Trust** and **Cadw** for their resources.
- **Steven H. Jones**, author of "Carmarthenshire Air Crashes", for his detailed accounts and research.
- **The Polish Fighter Squadron 316 Project in Llanelli**, for detailed historical insights into the operations and impact of Squadron 316 during the war.

Their dedication to preserving and sharing historical knowledge has made this compilation a valuable resource for understanding the impact of WWII aircraft crashes across South and West Wales and other regions.

Note on Data Accuracy

While we strive to present the most comprehensive and accurate account possible, it is important to acknowledge that not all crash sites could be included in this ledger. Some sites may have been omitted due to misinterpretation of data or possible errors in the original source material. We continue to welcome contributions and corrections that can help improve the accuracy and completeness of our records.

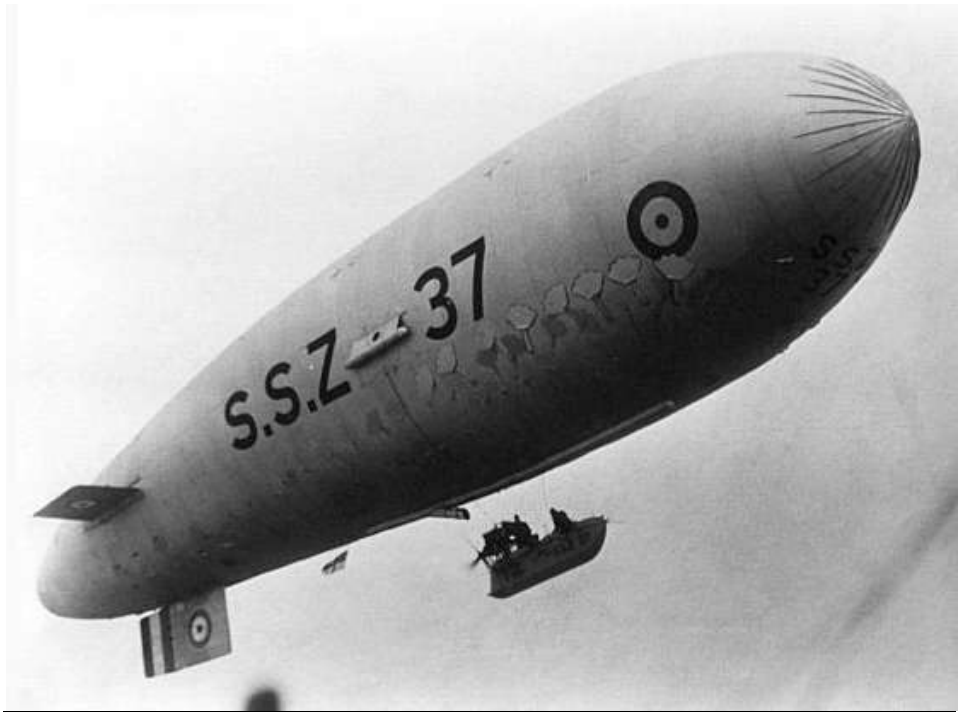
World War 1 Aircraft Crashes

Fishguard - Short 184 (Serial No. 9086)

Date: 24/04/1917
Aircraft Type: Short 184
Serial Number: 9086
Unit: Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) Fishguard
Crash Location: 1 kilometer north of Fishguard
GPS Coordinates: Latitude 52.0033° N, Longitude -4.9833° W

Details: The Short 184 aircraft, with serial number 9086, crashed approximately 1 kilometer north of Fishguard. The specific details regarding the cause of the crash are not detailed in the available data.

Pembroke - SS 42A, Sea Scout Airship



Date of Incident: 12 September 1917
Aircraft Type: Sea Scout Airship
Identity: SS 42A
Base: RNAS Pembroke
Closest Location: Near Pembroke, Wales
GPS Coordinates of RNAS Pembroke: 51.6948° N, -4.9382° W

Incident Summary:
On the night of 12 September 1917, the Sea Scout airship SS 42A from RNAS Pembroke encountered difficulties during a night operation. The airship struck a farm light near its base, causing it to drift out to sea. The incident occurred approximately 2 kilometers from the base.

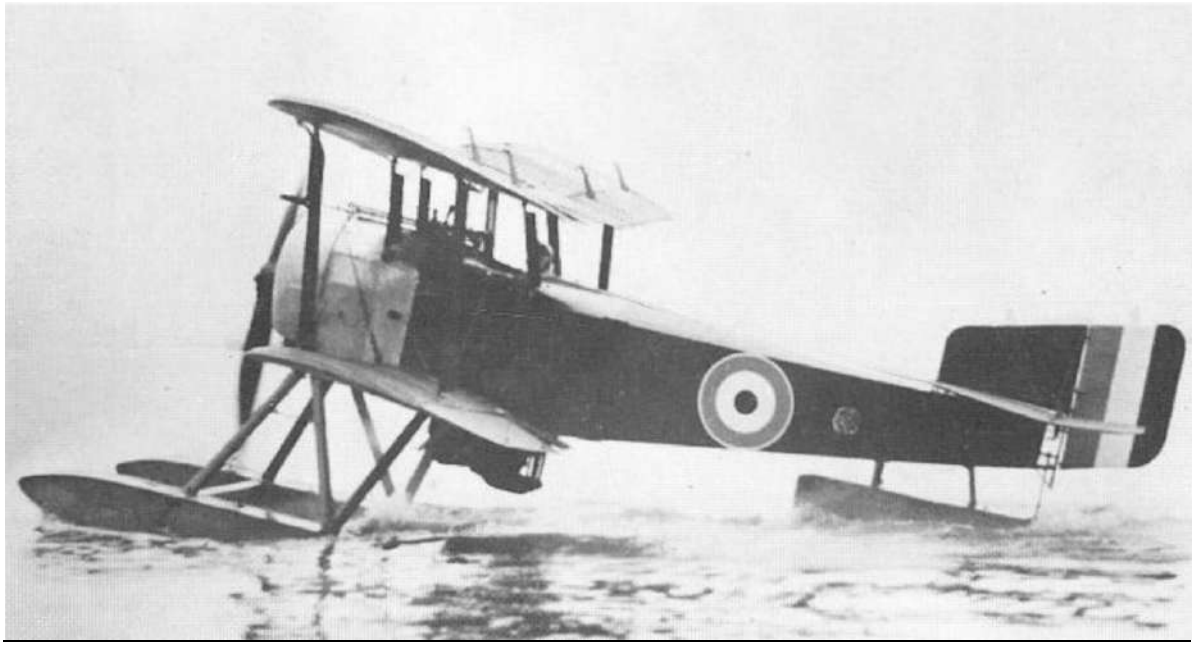
Crew Information:
Currently, there is no available information on the names or identities of the crew members involved in this incident. Further research may be required to obtain detailed records from RNAS Pembroke's archives or historical sources pertaining to airship operations during World War I.

Incident Location Notes:
RNAS Pembroke was an active naval air station during World War I, primarily involved in anti-submarine and reconnaissance missions along the Welsh coast. The base was strategically positioned near Pembroke, Wales, providing critical support to naval operations in the region.

Fishguard - Short 184 N1149

Date: October 28, 1917
Aircraft Type and Number: Short 184, N1149
Location: Windy Hall, near Fishguard, Wales
GPS Coordinates: 51.99943, -4.98607
Description: The Short 184 aircraft (N1149) of RNAS Fishguard collided with a cliff at Windy Hall. The coordinates indicate the approximate location of the crash site.

Cardigan Island – Fairey Hamble Baby



Date of Incident: 21st February 1918
Aircraft: Hamble Baby N1457
Operator: Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) Fishguard
Flight Level: 1,000 feet
Location: Off Cardigan Island approximately GPS coordinates 52.13508, -4.69659

Incident Summary:
On February 21, 1918, a Hamble Baby aircraft, serial number N1457, from the Royal Naval Air Service's Fishguard station crashed while flying off the coast of Cardigan Island. The aircraft was operating at an altitude of approximately 1,000 feet when the incident occurred. The approximate location of the crash was near the given GPS coordinates, N51.7081 W4.6909, off the southwestern coast of Wales.

Cause of Incident:
The exact cause of the crash is not detailed in the information provided. During this period, potential causes could include mechanical failure, navigation errors, adverse weather conditions, or pilot error. Further investigation would be required to determine the specific cause of the crash.

Additional Notes:
The Hamble Baby was a pioneering aircraft of its time, and incidents like this were not uncommon during the early years of aviation. The Royal Naval Air Service played a crucial role in the development of military aviation during World War I.

Swansea – Avro 504K G-EAWK

- **Date of Incident:** 3rd October 1922
- **Aircraft:** Avro 504K
- **Registration:** G-EAWK
- **Operator:** [Insert Operator if known]
- **Flight Level:** 3,000 feet
- **Location:** Swansea Bay, off Blackpill, Glamorgan, Wales
- **Approximate GPS Coordinates:** 51.59487, -3.9803
-

Incident Summary:
On October 3, 1922, an Avro 504K aircraft with registration G-EAWK dived into Swansea Bay off Blackpill, Glamorgan, Wales.

The aircraft was operating at an altitude of approximately 3,000 feet when the incident occurred. Swansea Bay, known for its large and deep-water area, was the site of this tragic accident. Swansea Bay is a significant body of water on the south coast of Wales, and Blackpill is a notable area within Swansea. The Avro 504K was a widely used aircraft during the early years of aviation, primarily for training and various utility roles.

Accidents involving early aircraft often resulted from a combination of factors, including the relatively rudimentary technology of the time and challenging flight conditions. The Avro 504 was a versatile biplane with a notable legacy.

The first strategic bombing raid of World War I was carried out by Avro 504 biplanes in 1914, targeting the Zeppelin sheds at Friedrichshafen.
In addition to its role in early bombing missions, the Avro 504 was also adapted as a makeshift night-fighter in the UK. However, its most significant contribution to the war effort was as a training aircraft.

Extensive production during the conflict resulted in 10,694 units being built by Avro, with additional numbers produced by a dozen sub-contractors. By the time of the Armistice, the Avro 504K was a ubiquitous presence in training units of the Royal Air Force (RAF), both in the UK and abroad. The Avro 504 continued to serve long after the war, solidifying its reputation.

Milford Haven - Short Sunderland L2165

- **Date of Incident:** 3rd October 1940
- **Aircraft:** Short Sunderland I
- **Serial Number:** L2165
- **Operator:** No. 210 Squadron RAF
- **Base:** Pembroke Dock, Wales
- **Location of Crash:** Mouth of Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire, Wales
- **Approximate GPS Coordinates:** 51.67701, -5.14948
-

Incident Summary:
On October 3, 1940, a Short Sunderland I with serial number L2165 from No. 210 Squadron RAF, based at Pembroke Dock, crashed into the mouth of Milford Haven in Pembrokeshire, Wales. The Sunderland was on a routine maritime patrol mission when the accident occurred. The crash took place in the waters near the entrance of Milford Haven, a large natural harbour on the southwest coast of Wales.

Flight Details:
- **Mission Type:** Maritime patrol

Cause of Incident:
The exact cause of the crash is not known. Possible contributing factors could include mechanical failure, adverse weather conditions, or navigational issues. During this period, Sunderland aircraft were heavily involved in anti-submarine and reconnaissance missions, which exposed them to various operational hazards.

Additional Notes:
The Short Sunderland was a large flying boat used extensively during World War II for reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare. The aircraft was renowned for its long range and endurance, making it a crucial asset for maritime patrols. The loss of L2165 and its crew was a significant event, highlighting the risks faced by the Sunderland crews during the war.

Abersychan - Bristol Blenheim L8610

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Bristol Blenheim L8610
- **Type:** Light Bomber
- **Squadron:** No. 17 Operational Training Unit (OTU) RAF
- **Command:** Bomber Command
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SO285046
- **Community:** Abersychan

Incident Description

The Bristol Blenheim L8610 was assigned to the 17 Operational Training Unit (OTU) at RAF Llandow. On the 23rd of September 1940, during a training flight, the aircraft was operating on instruments alone due to poor visibility and adverse weather conditions. Tragically, it collided with the summit of Garn Wern at approximately 425 meters above sea level. All three crew members aboard the aircraft were killed instantly in the crash.

In 2000, a memorial was placed at the crash site by the pilot's niece to honour the memory of those who lost their lives.

Historical Context

The Bristol Blenheim was a British light bomber used extensively in the early years of World War II. It was one of the first British aircraft to feature an all-metal stressed-skin construction and retractable landing gear. The Blenheim played a significant role in the Battle of Britain,

performing both bombing and reconnaissance missions. The 17 Operational Training Unit was responsible for training aircrews in the operation of light bombers like the Blenheim, preparing them for frontline service in Bomber Command.

Flight Crew

1. **Sergeant Hubert Henry Wilson**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Personal ID:** 745159
    - **Status:** Killed
    - **Burial:** Bury Cemetery, Huntingdonshire, Row C, Grave 22
    - **Memorial:** Find A Grave
2. **Pilot Officer Anthony Drake Coplestone**
    - **Role:** Observer
    - **Personal ID:** 84720
    - **Status:** Killed
    - **Burial:** Boldre (St. John) Churchyard, Row 1, Grave 1
    - **Memorial:** Find A Grave
3. **Sergeant John November**
    - **Role:** Wireless Operator/Air Gunner
    - **Personal ID:** 938877
    - **Status:** Killed
    - **Burial:** Yardley Wood (Christ Church) Churchyard, Sec. F, Grave 110
    - **Memorial:** Find A Grave

Bishopston - Supermarine Spitfire Mk IX PT766

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk IX PT766
- **Type:** Fighter Aircraft
- **Squadron:** No. 595 Squadron
- **RAF Command:** Army Co-operation Unit
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS582888
- **Community:** Bishopston

Incident Description

On March 21, 1946, the Supermarine Spitfire Mk IX PT766 tragically crashed at Bishopston, Glamorgan, after diving into the ground from a cloud. The pilot, Flight Officer James Stuart Abbott, was killed in the crash. The site of the incident was later excavated in March 1975 by the South Wales Historical Aircraft Preservation Society. The engine from the aircraft was subsequently displayed at their museum in Rhoose until the museum disbanded in the 1990s.

The wreckage of the aircraft was further removed by Ian Hodgkiss in 2009. S.H. Jones provides additional details on the crash and excavation in his publication (p. 54).

Historical Context

The Supermarine Spitfire is one of the most iconic British fighter aircraft of World War II. The Mk IX variant was developed as a response to the superior performance of the German Focke-Wulf Fw 190 and was equipped with a more powerful Merlin engine. No. 595 Squadron, part of the Army Co-operation Command, was responsible for tasks such as artillery spotting and reconnaissance.

Flight Crew

- **Flight Officer James Stuart Abbott**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Burial:** Killay (St. Hilary of Poitiers) Churchyard
  - **Memorial:** Find A Grave

Blaenavon - Handley Page Halifax III LK835

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Handley Page Halifax III LK835
- **Type:** Heavy Bomber
- **Squadron:** No. 51 Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Bomber Command
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SO2195910410
- **Community:** Blaenavon

Incident Description

The Handley Page Halifax III LK835 was assigned to No. 51 Squadron, which was based at Snaith in Yorkshire. On May 22, 1944, during a routine cross-country training flight, the aircraft encountered a severe mechanical failure when the starboard inner engine became uncontrollable. Fortunately, the entire crew managed to safely bale out before the aircraft crashed into a peat bog at Waun Afon, near Blaenavon, at an elevation of approximately 420 meters.

The crash site is notable for its substantial amount of remaining wreckage. The area is fenced off to indicate the boundaries of the dangerous peat bog, making it a point of historical and environmental interest.

Historical Context

The Handley Page Halifax was one of the principal heavy bombers used by the Royal Air Force during World War II. The Halifax III variant was equipped with more powerful engines and improved defensive armament, enhancing its performance and survivability. No. 51 Squadron played a significant role in strategic bombing operations and training missions, contributing to the overall air campaign against Axis powers.

Flight Crew

1. **Sergeant A. S. Jones**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Status:** Parachuted safely
2. **Sergeant D. Bibby**
    - **Role:** Navigator
    - **Status:** Parachuted safely
3. **Sergeant E. W. J. Luff**
    - **Role:** Wireless Operator/Air Gunner
    - **Status:** Parachuted safely
4. **Flying Officer G. Gowd**
    - **Role:** Bomb Aimer
    - **Status:** Parachuted safely
5. **Sergeant J. Brown**
    - **Role:** Flight Engineer
    - **Status:** Parachuted safely
6. **Sergeant T. Mills**
    - **Role:** Gunner
    - **Status:** Parachuted safely
7. **Sergeant A. G. Westbrook**
    - **Role:** Gunner
    - **Status:** Parachuted safely

Blaengwrach - Supermarine Spitfire Mk I R7057

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk I R7057
- **Type:** Fighter Aircraft
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (53 OTU), RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SN8904403122
- **Community:** Blaengwrach

Incident Description

The Supermarine Spitfire Mk I R7057 was part of the 53 Operational Training Unit based at RAF Llandow. On August 12, 1941, during a routine exercise, the aircraft tragically crashed into Mynydd Pen-y-Cae, south of Cwmgrach, near Glynneath. The incident occurred in low cloud conditions, which contributed to poor visibility and disorientation, leading to the aircraft's impact with the terrain. The crash resulted in the death of the pilot, Pilot Officer Colin James Day.

Historical Context

The Supermarine Spitfire is renowned as one of the most effective and iconic fighter aircraft of World War II, instrumental in the defence of Britain during the war. The Mk I was the initial production version of the Spitfire, famed for its speed, agility, and innovative design.

The 53 Operational Training Unit was responsible for training new pilots in advanced flying techniques and combat readiness, ensuring they were prepared for front-line service.

Flight Crew

- **Pilot Officer Colin James Day**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Personal ID:** 102080
  - **Status:** Killed in the crash
  - **Burial:** Reading (Henley Road) Cemetery
  - **Memorial:** Find A Grave

Bonvilston - Supermarine Spitfire N3221

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire N3221
- **Type:** Fighter Aircraft
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit, RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** ST06609741374
- **Community:** St Nicholas and Bonvilston

Incident Description

On February 6, 1943, the Supermarine Spitfire N3221, assigned to the 53 Operational Training Unit, suffered a catastrophic failure, and broke up in mid-air over Bonvilston, Glamorgan. The wreckage was scattered across fields below Pendoylan. The accident resulted in the tragic death of the pilot, Flying Officer Neville Alexander Thomas Fleming.

Historical Context

The Supermarine Spitfire played a pivotal role in the Royal Air Force's efforts during World War II, renowned for its versatility and performance in aerial combat. The 53 Operational Training Unit was tasked with preparing pilots for combat by providing advanced flight training and tactical instruction. The Spitfire N3221 was part of this rigorous training program, which was crucial for maintaining a skilled and ready force.

Flight Crew

- **Flying Officer Neville Alexander Thomas Fleming**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Personal ID:** 414217
  - **Status:** Killed in the crash (22/4/1923 - 6/2/1943)
  - **Burial:** Llantwit Major Cemetery, Sec. C, Grave 38
  - **Memorial:** Find A Grave

Commemoration

Flying Officer Neville Alexander Thomas Fleming's bravery and service are honoured at his resting place in Llantwit Major Cemetery. His contribution to the war effort and his ultimate sacrifice are remembered by his squadron and community.

Bristol Channel - Avro Anson Mk I N9535

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Avro Anson Mk I N9535
- **Type:** Multi-role Aircraft
- **Squadron:** No. 321 Squadron RAF
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SR9109272942
- **Community:** Maritime

Incident Description

The Avro Anson Mk I N9535 was constructed by Avro at their Chadderton factory and assigned to 321 Squadron of the Royal Air Force. On February 24, 1941, during an operational mission, the aircraft encountered difficulties that led to it being ditched into the Bristol Channel. The specific circumstances surrounding the ditching are not detailed, but such incidents were commonly attributed to mechanical failures, navigational errors, or adverse weather conditions.

The National Grid Reference (NGR) SR9109272942 places the ditching within the maritime area of the Bristol Channel, an important and strategic body of water during World War II.

Historical Context

The Avro Anson was a versatile aircraft used extensively during World War II for a variety of roles, including coastal patrol, reconnaissance, and crew training. It was one of the first aircraft to be equipped with retractable landing gear and variable-pitch propellers, making it

advanced for its time. No. 321 Squadron RAF, originally formed from Dutch personnel, was tasked with anti-submarine patrols and coastal reconnaissance missions, playing a crucial role in maritime operations during the war.

Pilot and Crew Information

Unfortunately, detailed records of the pilot and crew members aboard Avro Anson Mk I N9535 during this incident are not readily available. The Royal Air Force Archives or related historical aviation records might hold further details about the personnel involved in this mission.

Significance

The ditching of the Avro Anson Mk I N9535 in the Bristol Channel highlights the challenges faced by aircrew during World War II, as they often had to contend with technical limitations and the unpredictable nature of wartime missions. Incidents like these underscores the bravery and resilience of those who served.

Bristol Channel - Boulton Paul Defiant Mk I T4075

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Boulton Paul Defiant Mk I T4075
- **Type:** Two-seat Fighter/Trainer Aircraft
- **Squadron:** No. 7 Air Gunnery School (AGS) RAF
- **Command:** Flight Training Command
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS3050663128
- **Community:** Maritime

Incident Description

The Boulton Paul Defiant Mk I T4075 was assigned to the No. 7 Air Gunnery School (AGS) of the Royal Air Force, which was responsible for training air gunners during World War II. On September 22, 1942, the aircraft crashed into the sea off the Glamorgan coast in the Bristol Channel. The exact circumstances of the crash are not detailed, but such incidents during training exercises were unfortunately not uncommon, often resulting from mechanical failures, pilot error, or adverse weather conditions.

Historical Context

The Boulton Paul Defiant was originally designed as a turret fighter, featuring a powered turret with four machine guns, and was unique among British fighters of its time. However, its operational role shifted primarily to training and night fighting after initial combat experiences highlighted its vulnerabilities in daylight operations against enemy fighters.

No. 7 Air Gunnery School was part of the RAF's extensive training program to prepare aircrew for combat roles, particularly focusing on honing the skills of air gunners who played a vital role in defending bombers from enemy aircraft.

Pilot and Crew Information

Unfortunately, detailed records of the pilot and crew members aboard the Boulton Paul Defiant Mk I T4075 during this incident are not readily available. Access to the Royal Air Force Archives or related historical aviation records might provide further information about the personnel involved.

Significance

The crash of the Boulton Paul Defiant Mk I T4075 underscores the risks and challenges inherent in-flight training during World War II. Such training was crucial for maintaining an effective and well-prepared air force, despite the inherent dangers involved in preparing crews for the complexities of aerial warfare.

Bristol Channel - Bristol Beaufighter X7967

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Bristol Beaufighter X7967
- **Type:** Heavy Fighter
- **Squadron:** No. 125 (Newfoundland) Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS6073074430
- **Community:** Maritime

Incident Description

On January 1, 1943, the Bristol Beaufighter X7967, part of a trio of Beaufighters from No. 125 (Newfoundland) Squadron RAF, took off from RAF Fairwood Common for air tests over the Bristol Channel. During the outward flight, X7967 experienced engine trouble and was forced to return to base on a single engine. Due to the severity of the problem and the rough seas, the aircraft was compelled to ditch approximately 3 miles west of the Scarweather Lightship. Unfortunately, the Beaufighter filled with water within seconds of landing and quickly sank beneath the waves.

Historical Context

The Bristol Beaufighter was a robust and versatile heavy fighter used extensively in various roles, including anti-shipping strikes, night fighting, and ground attack missions. No. 125 (Newfoundland) Squadron was a key unit within Fighter Command, known for its operational effectiveness in various demanding roles. The aircraft's role in air tests and training was vital for ensuring operational readiness and effectiveness during wartime missions.

Flight Crew

1. **Flying Officer Walter Vernon Hall (RCAF)**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Personal ID:** J/6221
    - **Status:** Killed
    - **Memorial:** Runnymede Memorial, Panel 173
    - **Find A Grave:** Walter Vernon Hall
2. **Sergeant George Hewitt**
    - **Role:** Navigator or Radio Operator
    - **Personal ID:** 1509135
    - **Status:** Killed
    - **Memorial:** Runnymede Memorial, Panel 153
    - **Find A Grave:** George Hewitt

Significance

The tragic loss of Bristol Beaufighter X7967 highlights the perils faced by aircrews during routine operations and training exercises. Despite the harsh conditions, the bravery and service of the crew are commemorated through their mentions on the Runnymede Memorial, which honours those who lost their lives in service to their country and have no known grave.

Bristol Channel - Bristol Blenheim Mk I L1408

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Bristol Blenheim Mk I L1408
- **Type:** Medium Bomber
- **Squadron:** No. 25 Operational Training Unit RAF
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS49086164
- **Community:** Maritime

Incident Description

On July 31, 1940, the Bristol Blenheim Mk I L1408, a medium bomber assigned to No. 25 Operational Training Unit RAF, was involved in a tragic mid-air collision with another Blenheim, serial number L5722, during air tests over the Bristol Channel. The collision occurred as part of routine operational training exercises. Both aircraft were conducting manoeuvres when they collided, leading to the loss of both aircraft.

Historical Context

The Bristol Blenheim was one of the RAF's earliest and most widely used medium bombers, known for its speed and versatility. The No. 25 Operational Training Unit was crucial in preparing pilots for combat roles, providing essential training in navigation, bombing, and operational tactics. The incident underscores the inherent risks associated with training exercises during wartime, as pilots and crew members were often tasked with challenging and hazardous manoeuvres.

Additional Information

- **Collision Incident:** The mid-air collision with Blenheim Mk I L5722 was a significant event, reflecting the dangers faced by aircrews during training operations. The exact details of the circumstances leading to the collision are not fully documented, but such incidents were not uncommon during intensive training periods.

Significance

The loss of Bristol Blenheim Mk I L1408 and its crew highlights the perils associated with flight training and the critical importance of safety measures and procedural rigor. These training exercises were vital for ensuring that pilots and crews were prepared for combat operations, despite the inherent risks involved.

Bristol Channel - Bristol Blenheim Mk I L1219

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Bristol Blenheim Mk I L1219
- **Type:** Medium Bomber
- **Squadron:** No. 108 Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Bomber Command
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS5853281832
- **Community:** Maritime

Incident Description

On October 10, 1939, Bristol Blenheim Mk I L1219 was on the returning leg of a cross-country training flight from its base at RAF Bicester. The aircraft was seen flying extremely low over the village of Port Eynon before it tragically dived into the sea off Oxwich Point. The reasons for the ditching remain unclear, but it could have been due to mechanical failure, navigational errors, or adverse weather conditions. Despite the extensive search efforts, the aircraft and its crew were not recovered.

Historical Context

The Bristol Blenheim was one of the RAF's first modern bombers, notable for its speed and innovative design features. No. 108 Squadron RAF was involved in various bombing and

reconnaissance roles during World War II. The training exercises undertaken by the squadron were crucial for preparing aircrews for operational missions. The incident highlights the inherent risks of early wartime training and the challenges faced by pilots and crew in navigating and operating aircraft under demanding conditions.

Flight Crew

1. **Sergeant Frederick George Bryant**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Personal ID:** 580939
    - **Status:** Missing
    - **Memorial:** Runnymede Memorial, Panel 1
    - **Find A Grave:** Frederick George Bryant
2. **Sergeant Phillip Geoffrey Vezey Hemsley**
    - **Role:** Observer or Navigator
    - **Personal ID:** 740112
    - **Status:** Missing
    - **Memorial:** Runnymede Memorial, Panel 2
    - **Find A Grave:** Phillip Geoffrey Vezey Hemsley
3. **Aircraftman Second Class James Shearer**
    - **Role:** Wireless Operator/Air Gunner
    - **Personal ID:** 625176
    - **Status:** Missing
    - **Memorial:** Runnymede Memorial, Panel 3
    - **Find A Grave:** James Shearer

Significance

The loss of Bristol Blenheim Mk I L1219 and its crew underscores the risks faced during training missions and the early days of World War II aviation. The crew's names are commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, which honours those who lost their lives in service and have no known grave.

Bristol Channel - Bristol Blenheim Mk I L6722

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Bristol Blenheim Mk I L6722
- **Type:** Medium Bomber
- **Squadron:** No. 29 Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS49086164
- **Community:** Maritime

Incident Description

On July 31, 1940, the Bristol Blenheim Mk I L6722, assigned to No. 29 Squadron RAF, was engaged in airborne interception (AI) trials over the Bristol Channel. During these experimental radar trials, which were critical for the advancement of night-fighting technology, L6722 was involved in a mid-air collision with another Blenheim, Mk I L1408. The incident occurred while both aircraft were participating in tests designed to refine radar systems for night operations.

The collision highlights the inherent risks associated with early radar technology development and the operational integration of these new systems. Although the exact circumstances of the collision are not fully documented, such incidents were not uncommon during the experimental phases of new aviation technologies.

Historical Context

The Bristol Blenheim Mk I was a pioneering aircraft in terms of speed and armament, used extensively for reconnaissance and bombing missions. The development of airborne radar was a significant technological advancement, enabling aircraft to engage enemy targets effectively during night operations. No. 29 Squadron RAF played a key role in these developments, contributing to the enhancement of the RAF's night-fighting capabilities.

Additional Information

- **Collision Incident:** The mid-air collision with Blenheim Mk I L1408 underscores the challenges and dangers faced during the testing of new technologies. Both aircraft were involved in vital radar trials that were crucial for the RAF's strategic advantage in night fighting.

Significance

The loss of Bristol Blenheim Mk I L6722 and its crew during these experimental trials reflects the sacrifices made during the early stages of radar development. The incident serves as a reminder of the risks associated with advancing military technology and the courage of those involved in pushing the boundaries of aviation and defence.

Bristol Channel - Dornier Do 217 U5+FM

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Dornier Do 217 U5+FM
- **Type:** Medium Bomber
- **Squadron:** 4 Staffel, Kampfgeschwader II (KG 2)
- **Command:** Kampfgeschwader II (KG 2)
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS4779182350
- **Community:** Maritime

Incident Description

On the night of 16.02.1943, around 2200 hours, the Dornier Do 217 U5+FM, assigned to 4 Staffel of Kampfgeschwader II based at Eindhoven, was intercepted over Swansea by Beaufighters from No. 125 Squadron RAF, based at Fairwood Common. The engagement resulted in two Beaufighter pilots, Flight Lieutenant W. Jameson and Pilot Officer H. Newton, claiming to have shot down the Dornier. The aircraft sustained a serious hit to its port engine, which ignited a fire and forced the bomber to crash into the sea off Port Eynon.

The wreckage of the Dornier was discovered in June 1992, but the bodies of three crew members remain missing. The body of Obergefreiter Kurt Brand was recovered and washed up on Rhossili Beach on April 25, 1943, and he was subsequently buried at Cannock Chase German Military Cemetery.

Historical Context

The Dornier Do 217 was a versatile medium bomber used by the Luftwaffe during World War II, capable of performing various roles including bombing and reconnaissance. Kampfgeschwader II (KG 2) was one of the Luftwaffe's prominent bomber units, engaging in

numerous operations over Europe. The night interception by RAF Beaufighters was part of the broader air battle, showcasing the effectiveness of night fighter tactics and radar technology developed by the RAF.

Flight Crew

1. **Unteroffizier Günther Hübenthal**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Status:** Missing
2. **Unteroffizier Karl Hochmuth**
    - **Role:** Wireless Operator/Gunner
    - **Status:** Missing
3. **Gefreiter Hans Krause**
    - **Role:** Flight Engineer
    - **Status:** Missing
4. **Obergefreiter Kurt Brand**
    - **Role:** Observer
    - **Personal ID:** 58213/184
    - **Status:** Killed
    - **Burial:** Cannock Chase German Military Cemetery, Block 7, Grave 198
    - **Find A Grave:** Kurt Brand

Significance

The loss of Dornier Do 217 U5+FM underscores the intense aerial engagements that characterized the night fighting over the Bristol Channel. The recovery of Kurt Brand's body and the discovery of the wreck site decades later highlight the enduring impact of these wartime events and the ongoing efforts to identify and honour those who lost their lives in combat.

Bristol Channel - Gloster Javelin FAW 1 XA546

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Gloster Javelin FAW 1 XA546
- **Type:** All-Weather Fighter
- **Squadron:** 125 (Newfoundland) Squadron RAF
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SR9109272942
- **Community:** Maritime

Incident Description

On October 21, 1954, the Gloster Javelin FAW 1 XA546 was conducting a test flight under the supervision of its manufacturer, Glosters. The aircraft, part of 125 (Newfoundland) Squadron RAF, took off from Moreton Valence, Gloucestershire. The Javelin had been airborne for approximately 11 minutes when the pilot encountered difficulties recovering from a low-level spin. Despite efforts to regain control, the pilot was unable to do so, leading to the aircraft crashing into the Bristol Channel.

This incident occurred during the early stages of the Javelin's operational testing, emphasizing the inherent risks of test flights and the significant challenges faced by test pilots during evaluations. The Gloster Javelin was among the first delta-wing fighters in the RAF, designed as an all-weather interceptor during the Cold War era, and represented a significant technological advancement in aviation.

Historical Context

The Gloster Javelin was a pioneering all-weather interceptor with a distinctive delta wing design, introduced during the Cold War to provide the RAF with improved capabilities in air defence. Its development and testing were part of broader efforts to enhance the United Kingdom's aerial defence capabilities against potential threats. The challenges encountered during test flights like this one were crucial in refining the aircraft's design and operational performance.

Pilot

Unfortunately, specific details about the pilot involved in this test flight have not been documented. Test pilots played a critical role in advancing aviation technology, often facing significant dangers while evaluating new aircraft designs.

Significance

The crash of the Gloster Javelin FAW 1 XA546 highlights the perilous nature of test flights, particularly in the development of innovative aircraft technologies. The incident underscores the bravery and expertise of test pilots who contributed to aviation advancements, ensuring the effectiveness and safety of military aircraft.

Bristol Channel - Hawker Hurricane Z4569

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Hawker Hurricane Z4569
- **Type:** Fighter
- **Squadron:** No. 43 Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Merchant Ship Fighter Unit
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS5237674242
- **Community:** Maritime

Incident Description

On February 10, 1942, Hawker Hurricane Z4569 was launched from a specially modified merchant vessel 12 miles southeast of Worms Head. The aircraft was part of the Merchant Ship Fighter Unit, which employed rocket-launched Hurricanes to provide air cover for convoys crossing the Atlantic Ocean. The innovative approach allowed Hurricanes to be launched from catapults on merchant ships, providing crucial defence against enemy aircraft.

During the mission, Squadron Leader J. E. Sheppard experienced a control malfunction while circling the vessel. The controls jammed, causing the port wing to strike the sea and tear off. Despite the severity of the incident, Squadron Leader Sheppard was saved unharmed from the wreckage.

Historical Context

The Merchant Ship Fighter Unit (MSFU) was established during World War II to enhance the protection of Allied convoys against Luftwaffe attacks. The unit utilized "Hurricats," Hurricanes modified to be launched from catapults on merchant ships. This innovative

method allowed the RAF to extend its reach over the ocean, offering a vital layer of defence for vulnerable merchant vessels carrying essential supplies across the Atlantic.

Flight Crew

- **Squadron Leader J. E. Sheppard**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Personal ID:** J6289
  - **Status:** Survived

Significance

The successful rescue of Squadron Leader Sheppard highlights the bravery and resilience of pilots involved in the Merchant Ship Fighter Unit. The incident underscores the challenges faced by aircrews operating in the demanding conditions of maritime warfare. The MSFU's contribution to convoy defence played a crucial role in maintaining the flow of supplies and materials essential to the Allied war effort.

Bristol Channel - Short Sunderland Mk III DV972

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Short Sunderland Mk III DV972
- **Type:** Flying Boat
- **Squadron:** No. 119 Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Coastal Command (typical for Sunderland aircraft)
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SR91092729424
- **Community:** Maritime

Incident Description

On November 25, 1942, the Short Sunderland Mk III DV972, built by Shorts of Rochester, was assigned to No. 119 Squadron RAF. During an anti-submarine patrol mission over the Bristol Channel, the aircraft encountered an unfortunate incident when one of its own depth charges exploded prematurely. The resulting damage forced the crew to ditch the aircraft into the sea.

The Sunderland, known for its long-range patrol capabilities and robust design, was instrumental in anti-submarine warfare, offering critical support in protecting Allied convoys from German U-boat attacks. This incident highlights the inherent dangers faced by aircrews operating in combat conditions, where technical malfunctions and operational hazards were ever-present.

Historical Context

The Short Sunderland was a cornerstone of RAF Coastal Command during World War II. Known for its distinctive flying boat design, the Sunderland played a pivotal role in maritime patrol and anti-submarine operations. Its capacity to conduct long-range missions over the ocean made it invaluable in safeguarding vital supply routes against the persistent threat of enemy submarines.

Flight Crew

The specifics of the flight crew involved in this incident are not detailed in the available records. Typically, a Sunderland crew consisted of pilots, navigators, wireless operators, engineers, and gunners, working collaboratively to conduct their operations.

Significance

This incident underscores the operational challenges faced by Coastal Command during World War II. The incident with the Sunderland DV972 serves as a testament to the bravery and skill of the RAF personnel tasked with maintaining control of the seas and ensuring the safety of Allied maritime operations. Despite the loss of the aircraft, the efforts of Sunderland crews significantly contributed to the success of Allied convoy operations during the war.

Bristol Channel - Supermarine Spitfire X4263

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire X4263
- **Type:** Fighter Aircraft
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit, RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** ST0670162965
- **Location:** Bristol Channel, near Rhoose Point

Incident Description

On August 26, 1941, the Supermarine Spitfire X4263, operated by No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU) under RAF Fighter Command, crashed into the Bristol Channel near Rhoose Point. The incident occurred during a training mission, highlighting the risks associated with training exercises, particularly those involving high-performance fighter aircraft like the Spitfire.

The Spitfire, renowned for its agility and speed, played a crucial role in the RAF's air defence strategy during World War II. It was a primary aircraft in the Battle of Britain, known for its effectiveness in dogfights and interception missions.

Flight Crew

Details about the specific crew involved in the incident are not provided in the available records. Training flights typically involved both instructors and trainee pilots, focusing on mastering the aircraft's capabilities and combat tactics.

Significance

The loss of Spitfire X4263 serves as a reminder of the inherent dangers of aviation training during wartime. The commitment of the RAF to train pilots on advanced aircraft like the Spitfire was crucial to the Allied war effort. Despite such losses, the Spitfire continued to be a symbol of resilience and effectiveness throughout the war.

Bristol Channel - Supermarine Spitfire BL989

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire BL989
- **Type:** Fighter Aircraft
- **Squadron:** No. 402 Squadron RAF
- **Location:** Bristol Channel, 5 miles west of Helwick Lightship off Worms Head, Wales
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS2478683460
- **Date of Incident:** March 29, 1942

Incident Description

On March 29, 1942, the Supermarine Spitfire BL989, serving with No. 402 Squadron RAF, encountered engine failure while operating over the Bristol Channel. The aircraft was forced to ditch into the sea approximately 5 miles west of the Helwick Lightship off Worms Head, Wales. The sudden engine cut-out illustrates the mechanical challenges and risks faced by pilots during wartime operations.

The Spitfire, a symbol of British engineering prowess, was crucial in air operations during World War II. Known for its excellent performance in combat, the Spitfire played a significant role in maintaining air superiority.

Historical Context

The Spitfire was central to the RAF's success during World War II. Its participation in numerous key operations, including the Battle of Britain, made it a legendary aircraft. The 402 Squadron, part of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) but operating under RAF command, contributed significantly to the war effort, with many pilots honing their skills on the Spitfire.

Flight Crew

The specific details of the pilot or crew involved in this incident are not provided in the available records. Typically, missions like these were flown by a single pilot, given the Spitfire's role as a single-seat fighter aircraft.

Bristol Channel - Supermarine Spitfire Mk I L1054

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk I L1054
- **Type:** Fighter Aircraft
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (53 OTU), RAF
- **Location:** Bristol Channel
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS9599166057
- **Date of Incident:** September 25, 1941

Incident Description

The Supermarine Spitfire Mk I L1054 was engaged in a training exercise with No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU) at RAF Llandow when it crashed into the Bristol Channel shortly after take-off on September 25, 1941. The aircraft had a distinguished service history, having been assigned to 611 and 152 Squadrons before its transfer to 58 and 53 OTUs for training purposes.

This tragic incident highlights the inherent risks faced by pilots, even during training exercises. The Spitfire, known for its outstanding performance in combat, was a challenging

aircraft to master, requiring intensive training to prepare pilots for the rigors of aerial combat during World War II.

Flight Crew

- **Pilot:** Sergeant George Frederick Parker
  - **Status:** Killed in the crash
  - **Personal ID:** R/74748
  - **Burial:** Llantwit Major Cemetery, Section C, Grave 15
  - **Find a Grave Memorial:** George Frederick Parker

Bristol Channel - Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4823

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4823
- **Type:** Fighter Aircraft
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (53 OTU), RAF
- **Location:** Bristol Channel, off Nash Point
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS9057465993
- **Date of Incident:** October 29, 1941

Incident Description

The Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4823 was engaged in a training exercise with No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU) when it collided with another aircraft, P9459 (ACCS187), and crashed into the sea off Nash Point on October 29, 1941. Before joining 53 OTU, X4823 had an extensive service history, having been assigned to several squadrons, including 145, 118, 66, and 501.

The collision occurred during a routine training mission, which highlights the inherent risks involved in the rigorous training programs designed to prepare pilots for combat during World War II. Such training exercises were essential for developing the skills and tactics necessary for successful aerial engagements.

Flight Crew

- **Pilot:** Sergeant Louis Raymond Brunette
  - **Status:** Killed in the crash
  - **Find a Grave Memorial:** Louis Raymond Brunette

Bristol Channel - Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia X4067

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia X4067
- **Type:** Fighter Aircraft
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (53 OTU), RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Location:** Bristol Channel, off St Athan
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS9911163591
- **Date of Incident:** February 15, 1943

Incident Description

The Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia X4067 was constructed by the Castle Bromwich Aircraft Factory and was assigned to the 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU) at RAF Llandow. The aircraft had previously been involved in a collision with another Spitfire, P8396 (ACCS063), but was able to return safely to Llandow, where it underwent repairs.

Unfortunately, on February 15, 1943, during a practice formation flight, Spitfire X4067 collided mid-air with Spitfire Mk II P7822 (ACCS060). The collision occurred over the Bristol Channel, off St Athan, resulting in the aircraft crashing into the sea. Such accidents were not uncommon during the intensive training and formation exercises that were necessary to prepare pilots for combat during World War II.

Bristol Channel - Supermarine Spitfire Mk I P9459

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk I P9459
- **Type:** Fighter Aircraft
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (53 OTU), RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Location:** Bristol Channel, off Nash Point
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS9057465993
- **Date of Incident:** October 29, 1941

Incident Description

The Supermarine Spitfire Mk I P9459 had a distinguished service history, having been assigned to 9 Maintenance Unit (9MU), 603 Squadron, and finally to the 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU). On October 29, 1941, Spitfire P9459 was involved in a mid-air collision with another aircraft, Spitfire X4823 (ACCS177), during training exercises. This collision occurred over the Bristol Channel, off Nash Point, resulting in both aircraft crashing into the sea.

Flight Crew

- **Pilot:** Pilot Officer Joseph Arthur Jodoin
    - **Status:** Killed in Action

Background on Pilot Officer Joseph Arthur Jodoin

Joseph Arthur Jodoin was born on October 20, 1920, in Cornwall, Ontario, Canada. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Jodoin. Arthur Jodoin had a vibrant youth, attending Gonhaga High School, Cornwall Collegiate and Vocational School, and Cornwall Commercial College. He was active in sports, playing hockey for the Collegiate team and Montcalms, and participating in the Senior K. of C. Tennis League.

Jodoin enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in July 1940 and was called to service on October 24, 1940. He received his wings at No. 6 Service Flying Training School in Dunnville on July 27, 1941, and was commissioned as an officer the following day. His arrival in England was confirmed via a cable to his parents on September 13, 1941. Unfortunately, he was reported missing and believed to have lost his life in action on October 29, 1941.

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15256245/joseph-arthur-jodoin

Bristol Channel - Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4854

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4854
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (53 OTU), RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Type:** Aircraft
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS89376780
- **Location:** Bristol Channel, near Whitmore Stairs
- **Date of Incident:** January 2, 1943

Incident Description

The Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4854 was assigned to the 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU) of the Royal Air Force. On January 2, 1943, the aircraft tragically dived into the sea near Whitmore Stairs. The circumstances leading to the crash are not detailed, but such incidents during training flights were often due to factors like mechanical failure, adverse weather conditions, or pilot error.

Bristol Channel - Avro Anson Mk I LV300

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Avro Anson Mk I LV300
- **Squadron No.:** 7 Air Gunnery School (AGS) RAF
- **RAF Command:** Flight Training Command
- **Type:** Aircraft
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS8175473544
- **Location:** Bristol Channel, approximately 1.5 miles off Porthcawl Point
- **Date of Incident:** May 8, 1944

Incident Description

The Avro Anson Mk I LV300, built by Avro at Yeadon in 1943, served with several units, including 4 Air Gunnery School (AGS), 9 Operational Air Ferry Unit (OAFU), and ultimately 7 Air Gunnery School (AGS). On May 8, 1944, during training operations, LV300 was involved in a mid-air collision with another aircraft, identified as MG131 (ACCS156). The collision led to LV300 crashing into the sea, approximately 1.5 miles off Porthcawl Point.

Bryn - Westland Lysander Mk IIIA V9793 🇵🇱

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Westland Lysander Mk IIIA V9793
- **Squadron:** No. 7 Air Gunnery School (AGS)
- **RAF Command:** Flight Training Command
- **Type:** Aircraft
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS8090990304
- **Location:** Bryn, near Cwm Wernderi, Goytre
- **Date of Incident:** April 15, 1942

Incident Description

The Westland Lysander Mk IIIA V9793 was built as a target tug and was assigned to No. 7 Air Gunnery School (AGS) RAF Stormy Down. On April 15, 1942, the aircraft tragically hit 30,000-volt high-tension wires at Cwm Wernderi, Goytre, and crashed into the Blue Pool valley. Both crew members were killed in the accident.

Flight Crew

- **Sergeant W. Bluczynski**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/180516372/witold-bluczynski

-
- **Aircraftman First Class David Hocknull**
  - **Role:** Wireless Operator/Air Gunner
  - **Personal ID:** 1119809
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Burial:** Glasgow (Craigton) Cemetery, Sec. H.H., Grave 734
  - **Findagrave Link:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/98124677/david-hocknull

Burry Holmes - Bristol Blenheim Mk IV Z6242 🇮🇩

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Bristol Blenheim Mk IV Z6242
- **Squadron:** No. 1 Air Gunnery School RAF
- **Form:** Aircraft/Wreck
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS3985194225
- **Location:** 1 mile north of Burry Holms, off the coast
- **Date of Incident:** Possible August 1, 1941

Incident Description

Blenheim Z6242 was on an air gunnery exercise with No. 1 Air Gunnery School based at Pembrey. During the exercise, the aircraft was observed diving out of the clouds into the sea, approximately 1 mile north of Burry Holms. The crash resulted in the deaths of three crew members, with two others reported missing. The exact date of the crash is uncertain but is believed to be around August 1, 1941.

Flight Crew

1. **Sergeant Witold Bystrzynski**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Status:** Missing
    - **Memorial:** Polish Airmen Memorial, Middlesex
2. **A. E. Lee**
    - **Status:** Missing

3. **W. L. Morris**
    - **Role:** Leading Aircraftman (LAC)
    - **Status:** Missing
4. **A. Mackay SN-1060814**
    - **Role:** Leading Airman (LAC)
    - **Wireless Operator/Air Gunner**
    - **Status:** Killed
    - **Findagrave Link:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/183006190/alexander-mackay

Burry Holmes - Hawker Hurricane P3264

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Hawker Hurricane P3264
- **Squadron:** No. 79 Squadron RAF
- **Form:** Aircraft/Wreck
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS3825092717
- **Location:** Off Burry Holmes, at sea
- **Date of Incident:** April 27, 1941

Incident Description

Hawker Hurricane P3264 was engaged in a convoy patrol mission when it was lost at sea off Burry Holmes. The aircraft encountered difficulties and the pilot, Pilot Officer Walters, was forced to ditch the aircraft in the sea. Despite his efforts, he succumbed to exposure and died.

Flight Crew

- **Pilot Officer Walters**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Status:** Died from exposure
  -

Cardiff - De Havilland Vampire DH 100 F1 VF265

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** De Havilland Vampire DH 100 F1 VF265
- **Squadron:** No. 208 Advanced Flying School
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** ST182762
- **Location:** Cardiff
- **Date of Incident:** July 14, 1952

Incident Description

On July 14, 1952, De Havilland Vampire DH 100 F1 VF265 was involved in a mid-air collision with another aircraft, TG297, at an altitude of 30,000 feet over Cardiff. The collision resulted in large pieces of VF265 crashing into a Cardiff hotel. Tragically, the impact killed a civilian, Mrs. Georgina Ethel Evans, a 53-year-old chambermaid, who was working in a third-storey bedroom at the time. The debris from the collision eventually ended up in the basement of the hotel. The pilot, Pilot Officer G.H. Patterson, managed to parachute to safety and landed at Cardiff airport (Pengam Moor).

Flight Crew

- **Pilot Officer G.H. Patterson**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Status:** Parachuted to safety

Casualties

- **Mrs. Georgina Ethel Evans**
  - **Status:** Killed

Cardiff - Westland Lysander TT Mk III T1588

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Westland Lysander TT Mk III T1588
- **Squadron:** No. 7 Air Gunnery School
- **Command:** Flight Training Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS8306278706
- **Location:** Near Porthcawl
- **Date of Incident:** September 13, 1942

Incident Description:- On September 13, 1942, Westland Lysander TT Mk III T1588 of No. 7 Air Gunnery School, RAF Stormy Down, collided with an Avro Anson LT888. The collision occurred near Porthcawl, resulting in the crash of T1588. Both the pilot and the gunner were killed in the incident.

Flight Crew

1. **Sergeant William Burrell Routledge**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Personal ID:** 1040042
    - **Status:** Killed
    - **Burial:** Chilton Cemetery, Sec. A, Grave 496
    - **Findagrave:** William Burrell Routledge
2. **Aircraftman First Class Reginald Tarling**
    - **Role:** Gunner
    - **Personal ID:** 1119875
    - **Status:** Killed
    - **Burial:** Port Talbot (Goytre) Cemetery, Plot 4, Row S, Grave 14
    - **Findagrave:** Reginald Tarling

Carreg Goch – Wellington MF 509

Aircraft Details

- **Type of Aircraft:** Wellington
- **Designation:** MF 509
- **Date of Crash:** 20th November 1944
- **Location of Crash:** Carreg Goch, approximately 520 meters elevation
- **Reason for Flight:** Cross-country night exercise
- **Reason for Crash:** Engine trouble due to ice forming on the port engine.

Incident Description

The Wellington bomber MF 509, with a Canadian crew, was on a night navigation exercise from RAF Stratford when it encountered engine trouble. Wireless Operator Sergeant Burke had requested permission to descend below the cloud base due to issues with the starboard engine. The pilot's intentions were unclear—he might have been attempting to melt ice by descending or seeking a landing site. Unfortunately, the bomber crashed into the hillside at Carreg Goch. All six crew members were killed in the crash. The wreckage remains on site, and a small memorial has been erected.

Wreckage Notes

- Wreckage remains on site.
- A small plinth with a stainless-steel plate inscribed with the names of the six crew members has been erected.

Crew Members

1. **Sergeant Charles Hamel** (Pilot)
    - **Age:** 21
    - **Findagrave:** Charles Hamel
2. **Sergeant Jules Robert Rene Villeneuve** (Navigator)
    - **Age:** 22
    - **Findagrave:** Jules Robert Rene Villeneuve
3. **Flying Officer William Joseph Allison** (Bomb Aimer)
    - **Age:** 28
    - **Findagrave:** William Joseph Allison
4. **Sergeant Joseph Paul Ernest Burke** (Wireless Operator / Air Gunner)
    - **Age:** 20
    - **Findagrave:** Joseph Paul Ernest Burke
5. **Sergeant Arthur Grouix** (Air Gunner)
    - **Age:** 22
    - **Findagrave:** Arthur Grouix
6. **Sergeant Gerard Dusablon** (Air Gunner)
    - **Age:** 20
    - **Findagrave:** Gerard Dusablon

Cilybebyll - Gloster Gladiator N5637

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Gloster Gladiator N5637
- **Squadron:** No. 263 Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SN7386002607
- **Community:** Cilybebyll

Incident Description

On January 2, 1940, three Gloster Gladiators from RAF Filton embarked on a night patrol. As they flew north up the Severn Estuary, they encountered thick fog, lost radio contact, and became disoriented. At daylight, the formation identified a suitable field and all three aircraft landed safely at Pen Pound Farm, near Rhos, between Neath and Pontardawe.

When attempting to take off for Stormy Down to refuel, N5637's tail wheel clipped a barbed wire fence. This caused the aircraft to cross the main road, lose height, and crash into a disused colliery tip. The Gladiator remained embedded in the tip for three weeks before being removed.

Flight Crew

- **Pilot Officer Peter Wyatt-Smith**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Status:** Safe

Coedffranc - Boulton Paul Defiant Mk I T3985

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Boulton Paul Defiant Mk I T3985
- **Squadron:** No. 125 (Newfoundland) Squadron, RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS7137197428 (Coordinates for location)
- **Community:** Coedffranc

Incident Description

The Defiant T3985 was assigned to 409/125 Squadron. On October 25, 1941, during a night patrol, the aircraft struck a barrage balloon cable. Both crew members managed to abandon the aircraft before it crashed into the ground at Skewen, Glamorgan. Unfortunately, the pilot's parachute did not open in time, and he was found 200 yards north of the crash site. The crash site location is identified as Park Crescent, Skewen.

Flight Crew

- **Sergeant Clive Alan Gillions Dale**
  - **Role:** RNZAF Pilot
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Personal ID:** 402170
  - **Burial:** Killay (St. Hilary of Poitiers) Churchyard, Grave 143
  - Find A Grave Memorial
- **Sergeant G. Bayliss**
  - **Role:** Rear Gunner
  - **Status:** Injured

Colwinston - Supermarine Spitfire P9383

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire P9383
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS9425274850
- **Community:** Colwinston

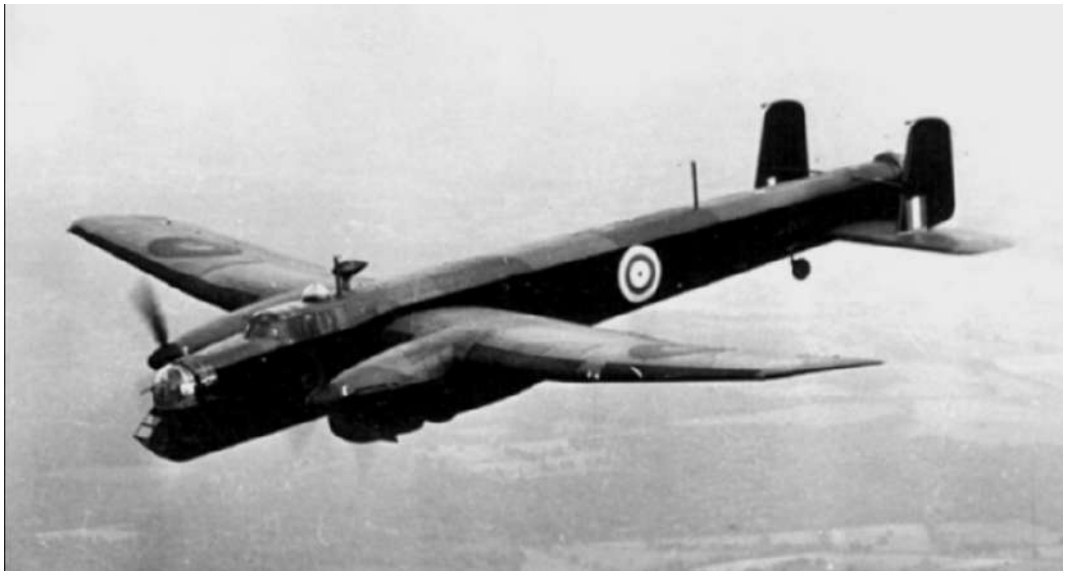
Incident Description

On July 9, 1941, Spitfire P9383 was engaged in a training exercise over Wales, specifically a dogfight simulation. During this exercise, it collided with another Spitfire, N3230, from the same unit. P9383 crashed into a field opposite Llan Lane and was destroyed by fire. The pilot managed to bail out and escape uninjured. Unfortunately, Sergeant Frederick George Thomas McGahey, who was piloting the other Spitfire, crashed into a field at Tydraw Farm, Colwinston, Glamorgan, Wales, and did not manage to bail out. He was killed in the crash, and he was only 19 years old.

Flight Crew

- **Sergeant Frederick George Thomas McGahey**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Personal ID:** 1062375
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Burial:** Drumbeg (St. Patrick) Church Of Ireland Churchyard, Sec. G.2, Grave 8

Cornelly - Armstrong Whitworth Whitley Mk V T4163



Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Armstrong Whitworth Whitley Mk V T4163
- **Squadron:** 7 Bomber Gunnery School (BGS) RAF
- **RAF Command:** Flight Training Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS7805581331
- **Community:** Cornelly

Incident Description

On June 15, 1941, the Armstrong Whitworth Whitley Mk V T4163, assigned to 7 Bomber Gunnery School (BGS) of the Royal Air Force, crashed shortly after take-off from Stormy Down. The aircraft went down at Kenfig Sands, approximately 0.5 miles northeast of Sker Point. The crash site is described as intertidal, indicating it was situated between high and low tide marks.

Flight Crew

- **Pilot Officer Gardener** - Safe
- **Leading Aircraftman Carter** - Safe
- **Leading Aircraftman Covis** - Safe
- **Leading Aircraftman Harris** - Safe
- **Leading Aircraftman Corner** - Safe
- **Leading Aircraftman Carpenter** - Safe

All crew members survived the incident. Training accidents were unfortunately common during wartime due to various factors such as mechanical issues, pilot error, or adverse weather conditions.

Cornelly - Avro Anson Mk I LT888

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Avro Anson Mk I LT888
- **Squadron:** No. 7 Air Gunnery School (7 AGS), RAF
- **Command:** Flight Training Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS834813
- **Community:** Cornelly

Incident Description

The Avro Anson Mk I LT888 was assigned to 7 AGS at RAF Stormy Down. On September 21, 1943, it collided with a Westland Lysander TT Mk III T1588. The collision occurred approximately one mile to the north-northwest of Stormy Down, resulting in the crash of both aircraft. Tragically, all crew members of the Anson were killed in the accident.

Flight Crew

- **Sergeant Piotr Olgierd Strycharek**: PAF Pilot, killed.
  - **Personal ID:** 794514
- **Sergeant Donald Arthur Brundell**: Wireless Operator/Air Gunner, killed.
  - **Personal ID:** 1208264
  - **Burial:** Diss Cemetery, Section N, Grave 370
  - https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/92634296/donald-arthur-brundell

- **Aircraftman Second Class William Sydney Penfold**: Killed.
  - **Personal ID:** 1880171
  - **Burial:** Porthcawl Cemetery, Block 4, Row H, Grave 7
  - Find A Grave
- **Aircraftman Second Class Jack Eric Price**: Killed.
  - **Personal ID:** 1852089
  - **Burial:** Swindon (Whitworth Road) Cemetery, Section F, Grave 346
  - Find A Grave
- **Aircraftman Second Class Walter John Ralph**: Killed.
  - **Personal ID:** 1851537
  - **Burial:** Islington Cemetery and Crematorium, Section M, Block 8, Grave 20973P
  - Find A Grave

Cowbridge - Airspeed Oxford Mk I M420

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Airspeed Oxford Mk I M420
- **Squadron No.:** 9 Pilot Advanced Flying Unit (PAFU)
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS9927274474
- **Community:** Cowbridge with Llanblethian

Incident Description

The Airspeed Oxford Mk I M420 was assigned to the 9 Pilot Advanced Flying Unit (PAFU) of the Royal Air Force. On September 12, 1943, during a training flight, the pilot of M420 became disoriented and lost. Faced with this situation, the pilot decided to abandon the aircraft, leading to its crash landing near Cowbridge. Fortunately, the pilot was able to bail out safely. This incident reflects the challenges and risks faced by trainee pilots during World War II, especially during navigation exercises under challenging conditions.

Cowbridge - Supermarine Spitfire

Aircraft Details

- **Aircraft:** Supermarine Spitfire (Registration Unknown, Possibly K9958)
- **Squadron:** Unknown
- **Command:** Unknown
- **Location:** Glamorganshire, Wales (Specific location unreported, based on entry ST0119771090)
- **Date:** November 15th, 1941

Incident Description

On November 15th, 1941, a Supermarine Spitfire crashed in Glamorganshire, Wales. The incident was reported by the Glamorganshire Police. The main wreckage was recovered by crane on November 19th, 1941. Details regarding the squadron and command to which the aircraft belonged are unknown. The report is based on the Glamorganshire Police reports for the years 1939-1941.

Coychurch Higher - Lockheed Hudson Mk III T9442 KZS

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Lockheed Hudson Mk III T9442 KZS
- **Squadron:** No. 233 Squadron RAF
- **NGR:** SS9554685926
- **Community:** Coychurch Higher

Incident Description

In the early hours of 20th August 1941, Lockheed Hudson Mk III T9442 KZS was engaged in coastal command duties from RAF St. Eval, Cornwall, when it became disoriented and crashed into the top of Mynydd-y-Gaer Mountain. The aircraft initially struck the top of the mountain, continuing down the hillside into a hollow, ripping off its engines, which were found several yards away. Glamorganshire Police reports for 1939-1941 identify the location as Argoed Mountain. Three crew members were killed, and one was injured but later succumbed to his injuries.

Flight Crew

1. **Flight Sergeant David John Muir**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Personal ID:** 580184
    - **Status:** Killed
    - Find a Grave Memorial
2. **Flight Sergeant John Michael Wheatley**

    - **Role:** Navigator
    - **Personal ID:** 746836
    - **Status:** Killed
    - Find a Grave Memorial
3. **Sergeant Pilot Cyril George Burchardt**
    - **Personal ID:** 754231
    - **Status:** Killed
    - Find a Grave Memorial
4. **Sergeant George Edward Buckley**
    - **Personal ID:** 973940
    - **Status:** Thrown from the aircraft and later died of his injuries
    - Find a Grave Memorial

Cwmavon - Bristol Blenheim Mk IV L9172

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Bristol Blenheim Mk IV L9172
- **Squadron:** No. 17 Operational Training Unit, RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS7797692184
- **Community:** Cwmavon

Incident Description

Blenheim Mk IV L9172 served in assignments to 90/17 OTU RAF Upwood. On 12th June 1940, during a navigation exercise from RAF Upwood to Lundy Island and Exmouth, the aircraft faced adverse conditions. At 12:23 hours, while flying at 20,000 feet, the pilot radioed "breaking up." Eyewitnesses observed the Blenheim entering a series of uneven rolls and slowly disintegrating before crashing into the ground at Cwmafan, Afan Valley, Glamorgan. The pilot survived, but tragically, both other members of the flight crew lost their lives.

Flight Crew

1. **Sergeant Victor Albert Bain**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Outcome:** Parachute descent
    - **Personal ID:** 196750

2. **Sergeant William Hubert Wheeler**
    - **Role:** Observer
    - **Outcome:** Killed
    - **Personal ID:** 747805
    - **Burial:** Bushey (St. James) Churchyard, Sec. R, Grave 21
    - Find a Grave Memorial
3. **Aircraftman Second Class Sidney Boulton**
    - **Role:** Wireless Operator/Air Gunner
    - **Outcome:** Killed
    - **Personal ID:** 636888
    - **Burial:** Hatfield (Woodhouse) Cemetery, Row L, Grave 48
    - Find a Grave Memorial

Cwmavon - Miles Martinet Mk I MS525

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Miles Martinet Mk I MS525
- **Squadron:** No. 7 Air Gunnery School, RAF
- **Command:** Flight Training Command
- **NGR:** SS7837793350
- **Community:** Cwmavon

Incident Description

On 31st January 1944, Martinet MS525 was en route to RAF Stormy Down when it crashed into Foel Fynyddau, located 3 miles northwest of Port Talbot, amidst poor visibility conditions. There is some discrepancy in reports regarding the crash site, with mentions of both Pen-y-Cae and Foel Fynyddau, but Foel Fynyddau is noted to be northwest of the town, contrary to some records indicating northeast.

Flight Crew

1. **Pilot Officer John Ruddell, RCAF**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Outcome:** Killed
    - **Personal ID:** J/87640
    - **Burial:** Porthcawl Cemetery, Block 4, Row H, Grave 8
    - Find a Grave Memorial

Dyffryn Clydach - Miles Martinet TT1 NR614

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Miles Martinet TT1 NR614
- **Squadron:** No. 587 Squadron RAF
- **NGR:** SS7208699222
- **Community:** Dyffryn Clydach

Incident Description

On August 11, 1944, Miles Martinet TT1 NR614, assigned to 587 Squadron RAF, crashed into Drummau Mountain near Llansamlet in foggy conditions. The pilot, Warrant Officer Adrian Rees, who was originally from the Pontardawe area, tragically lost his life in the crash.

Flight Crew

- **Warrant Officer John Adrian Prytherch Rees**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Outcome:** Killed in the crash
  - **Burial:** Coed Gwilym Cemetery
  - Find a Grave Memorial

Fairwood - Bristol Beaufighter X7890

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Bristol Beaufighter X7890
- **Squadron:** No. 125 (Newfoundland) Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS5763891003
- **Community:** Fairwood

Incident Description

On February 26, 1943, Bristol Beaufighter X7890 crashed at Werganrows Farm, just outside the perimeter of RAF Fairwood Common. The pilot, Sergeant Vivian Rex Taylor, was on a solo flight test and was killed in the ensuing fire. Sergeant Taylor originally worked at the Bristol Aircraft factory in Filton.

Flight Crew

- **Sergeant Vivian Rex Taylor**
  - **Personal ID:** 1316758
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Outcome:** Killed in the crash
  - **Burial:** Bristol (Canford) Cemetery, Sec. FF. Grave 462
  - Find a Grave Memorial

Fairwood - Hawker Hurricane Z3466 Mk. IIB

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Hawker Hurricane Z3466 Mk. IIB
- **Squadron:** No. 79 Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS5700692548
- **Community:** Fairwood

Incident Description

On 25th October 1941, Hurricane IIB Z3466 of 79 Squadron was in circuit at RAF Fairwood when the aircraft's engine cut out at 700 feet, resulting in a crash landing close to the North Gower Road. A small depression in a field at Fairwood Corner Farm marks the crash site. Pilot Sergeant Gerald Anthony Willats succumbed to his injuries two days later at St Athan Hospital.

Flight Crew

- **Sergeant Gerald Anthony Willats**
  - **Personal ID:** 796456
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Outcome:** Killed due to crash injuries
  - **Burial:** Killay (St. Hilary of Poitiers) Churchyard, Grave 181
  - Find a Grave Memorial

Garw Valley - Supermarine Spitfire Mk Vb BM575

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk Vb BM575
- **Squadron:** No. 421 Squadron RCAF
- **RAF Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS885901
- **Community:** Garw Valley

Incident Description

On September 29, 1942, the Supermarine Spitfire Mk Vb BM575, assigned to 421 Squadron of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and based at RAF Fairwood Common, was lost during a flight in adverse weather conditions. The aircraft, piloted by an inexperienced pilot, was separated from its lead aircraft and encountered a rain squall, resulting in an unintended collision with Lletty Brongu Mountain.

Lletty Brongu is a small hamlet located at the foot of Moel Cynhordy near Maesteg, Glamorgan. The incident highlights the dangers faced by pilots during training and operational flights, particularly in challenging weather conditions, and tragically resulted in the loss of both the aircraft and likely the pilot's life.

Gilfach Goch - Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIA P7607

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIA P7607
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit
- **RAF Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS9680389551
- **Community:** Gilfach Goch

Incident Description

On April 23, 1943, Spitfire P7607 (Mk IIA), assigned to 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU) at RAF Llandow, crashed while attempting to recover from a dive ½ mile west of Abercerdin School in Gilfach Goch, Glamorgan. The aircraft was destroyed by the ensuing fire. Tragically, the Norwegian pilot, Sergeant John Martin Hals, was killed in the crash.

Flight Crew

- **Sergeant John Martin Hals:** Pilot (killed)
  - **Burial:** Bergen Solheim Cemetery
  - Find a Grave Memorial

Glynneath - Vickers Wellington L44256

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Vickers Wellington L44256
- **Squadron:** No. 75 Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Bomber Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SN8940007400
- **Community:** Glynneath

Incident Description

On September 19, 1939, Vickers Wellington L44256, assigned to No. 75 Squadron RAF at Harwell, was undertaking a cross-country night flying exercise. The aircraft encountered adverse weather conditions, leading to a loss of radio contact. As dawn approached and with fuel running low, the crew abandoned the aircraft. It subsequently crashed into a small copse above Pontneddfechan, at an elevation of approximately 140 meters. All crew members parachuted to safety. HER records indicate that small pieces of wreckage are still visible in and around the tree roots, with one engine found in a crater and another approximately 70 meters away.

Flight Crew

- **Flight Lieutenant A. H. Smythe:** Pilot
  - **Status:** Parachuted safely
- **Flight Officer P. J. R. Kitchin:** Pilot
  - **Status:** Parachuted safely
- **Sergeant Moss:** Navigator
  - **Status:** Parachuted safely
- **John Hollingsworth:** Wireless Operator
  - **Status:** Parachuted safely

Graig - Avro Anson N9545

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Avro Anson N9545
- **Squadron:** No. 1 Ferry Pilots Pool
- **Command:** Air Transport Auxiliary
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** ST2252088760
- **Community:** Graig

Incident Description

On March 30, 1940, Avro Anson N9545, assigned to a Ferry Unit, was en route from RAF St Athan to Sealand. The pilot flew the aircraft low over his parent's home before tragically hitting high ground near Machen. The crash resulted in the death of the pilot.

Flight Crew

- **Sergeant Hubert James Lewis Harris**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Personal ID:** 566343
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Burial:** Michaelston-Y-Vedw (Tirzah) Baptist Churchyard, Row 1, Grave 5
  - Find A Grave Memorial

Hirwaun - De Havilland Hornet PX273

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** De Havilland DH103 Hornet PX273
- **Squadron:** No. 30 (or possibly 32) MU RAF
- **Command:** -
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SN976090
- **Community:** Hirwaun

Incident Description

On September 30, 1946, De Havilland Hornet PX273 took off from RAF Fairwood Common with its destination set for RAF West Raynham. The pilot, Wing Commander Peter Bond, encountered difficulties and the aircraft crashed into Mynydd-y-Glog at approximately 380 meters altitude. Only a few small, scattered pieces of the aircraft remain at the site.

Flight Crew

- **Wing Commander Peter Bond**
  - **Role:** Pilot

Hirwaun - North American P-51 Mustang KH499

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** North American P-51 Mustang KH499
- **Squadron:** No. 118 Squadron
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SN969086
- **Community:** Hirwaun

Incident Description

On September 7, 1945, North American P-51 Mustang KH499, assigned to No. 118 Squadron, was conducting air gunnery practice when it encountered mechanical difficulties. The pilot, Pilot Officer Arund, attempted an emergency landing on Mynydd-y-Glog at approximately 340 meters. The aircraft crashed and burst into flames upon impact. Fortunately, Pilot Officer Arund escaped unhurt. A few small pieces of the wreckage remain at the crash site.

Flight Crew

- **Pilot Officer Arund**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Status:** Safe

Ilston - Bristol Beaufighter II R2318

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Bristol Beaufighter II R2318
- **Squadron:** No. 125 (Newfoundland) Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS5494790446
- **Community:** Ilston

Incident Description

In May 1942, Bristol Beaufighter II R2318 was engaged in interception practice with another aircraft. During the exercise, the aircraft entered a high-speed spin and crashed within a triangular area of land formed by Ilston, Lunnon, and Furzehill Farm. The impact resulted in the deaths of both crew members.

Flight Crew

- **Pilot Officer Philip Gruchy**
  - **Personal ID:** 122929
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Burial:** Killay (St. Hilary of Poictiers) Churchyard, Grave 181
  - Find a Grave Profile
- **Sergeant Francis Whyte**
  - **Personal ID:** 1175879
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Burial:** Liverpool (Ford) Roman Catholic Cemetery, Sec. A.H. Grave 72
  - Find a Grave Profile

Ilston - Fairey Battle Mk I L5069

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Fairey Battle Mk I L5069
- **Squadron:** 7 Bombing and Gunnery School
- **Command:** Flight Training Command
- **Location:** Fairwood Common, near North Gower Road, Ilston, Wales
- **NGR:** SS5727692713
- **Date:** May 26th, 1940

Incident Description

On May 26, 1940, the Fairey Battle Mk I L5069, assigned to the 7 Bombing and Gunnery School, was forced to land at Fairwood Common near North Gower Road. The aircraft made a forced landing, but it was likely recovered in its entirety shortly after the incident. The circumstances leading to the forced landing are not specified in the records, but such incidents were not uncommon during training operations.

Additional Notes

The specific details of the recovery and any subsequent handling of the aircraft are not well-documented, but the fact that the aircraft was likely recovered suggests that there were no significant casualties or extensive damage that prevented its retrieval.

Ilston - Supermarine Spitfire BL231

Aircraft Details

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire BL231
- **Squadron:** No. 312 (Czechoslovak) Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS5422591083
- **Community:** Ilston
- **Date:** May 2, 1942

Incident Description

On May 2, 1942, Supermarine Spitfire BL231 collided with another Spitfire, BL470, during a training exercise. The collision resulted in the tail of BL470 being severed. BL231, which suffered damage to its wooden propeller, was forced to glide to a forced landing in a field at Furzeland Farm, near Lunnon. Despite the significant damage, the pilot managed to safely land the aircraft.

Aftermath

The aircraft was salvaged following the incident. However, the compass from BL231 was left behind at Furzeland Farm. The specifics of the salvage operation and the condition of the aircraft after the crash are not detailed, but the recovery suggests that the aircraft was largely recovered.

Ilston - Vickers Wellington LP341

Aircraft: Vickers Wellington LP341
Squadron: No. 26 Operational Training Unit, Bomber Command, RAF
Location: Ilston (Community: SS5633092535), Wales
Date: August 2nd, 1944

Description:
On August 2nd, 1944, Vickers Wellington LP341 from No. 26 OTU experienced an engine fire while in flight. Thanks to the skillful handling by Sergeant Dawson (RAAF) and his crew, they managed to perform an emergency landing at Ilston, ensuring no injuries. The aircraft, a British twin-engine medium bomber, is notable for its high aspect ratio tapered wings, deep fuselage, and tall single fin tail unit.

Key Features:

- **High Aspect Ratio Tapered Wings:** Designed to improve aerodynamic efficiency.
- **Deep Fuselage:** Provided ample space for crew and equipment.
- **Tall Single Fin Tail Unit:** Enhanced stability during flight.

Flight Crew:

- **Sergeant Dawson (RAAF):** Pilot, safe.

It's always encouraging to hear stories where the crew managed to avoid disaster, especially during challenging situations like an engine fire.

Kenfig - Fairey Battle Mk I L5072

Aircraft: Fairey Battle Mk I L5072
Squadron: 7 Bomber Gunnery School (BGS) / 7 Air Observer School (AOS) RAF
RAF Command: -
Location: Kenfig (Community: Cynffig)
NGR: SS8022082280
Date: April 20, 1941

Description:
On April 20, 1941, the Fairey Battle Mk I L5072, assigned to both the 7 Bomber Gunnery School and the 7 Air Observer School, crashed into the ground 1/2 mile north of Kenfig. The accident occurred under tragic circumstances, resulting in the death of the pilot, Sergeant Karol Dindorf. The aircraft's dive into the ground led to its complete loss, and Sergeant Dindorf's death was a significant loss.

Flight Crew:

- **Sergeant Karol Dindorf**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Personal ID:** 780966
  - **Burial:** Find A Grave - Karol Dindorf

Langland Bay - Miles Queen Martinet M.50 RH123

Name: Miles Queen Martinet M.50 RH123
Squadron: 773 Squadron RAF
Command: Flight Training Command
Form: Aircraft/Wreck
Location: Langland Bay (Community: Maritime)
NGR: SS6100285347
Date: December 19, 1945

Description:
On December 19, 1945, the Miles Queen Martinet M.50 RH123, a radio-controlled target drone derivative of the Miles M.25 Martinet, experienced a fuel problem during a ferry flight from Reading to Manorbier. As a result, the aircraft ditched off Langland Bay. The Queen Martinet was an unmanned variant of the Martinet designed for target practice, featuring a solid nose cone to house radio control equipment, a reinforced fuselage, and an antenna for receiving control signals.

Key Features of Miles Queen Martinet M.50:

- **Solid Nose:** Replacing the pilot's cockpit and observer's transparent enclosure.
- **Radio Equipment:** Antenna for receiving radio control signals.
- **Reinforced Fuselage:** Designed to withstand unmanned flight stresses and potential crash landings.

Additional Information:
The Queen Martinet was part of a classified project during World War II, and detailed information or images of the aircraft are scarce. The general appearance of the Queen Martinet is like the standard Miles M.25 Martinet, with modifications for unmanned operation.

Llancarfan - Hawker Tempest NV787

Name: Hawker Tempest NV787
Date: February 16, 1946
Location: Llancadle Farm, Aberthaw, Wales (NGR: ST0354568400) - Near a wooded slope bordering Aberthaw power station
Incident: Crash

Pilot: Wing Commander Anthony Eyre DFC (RAuxAF, Pilot ID: 90408)
Status: Killed in Action
Burial: St. Cennyd's Churchyard, Llangennith
Find A Grave Memorial

Description:
On February 16, 1946, Wing Commander Anthony Eyre DFC was piloting the Hawker Tempest NV787 during a routine training mission when the aircraft crashed into an oak tree at Llancadle Farm. The impact resulted in the tragic death of Wing Commander Eyre.

Llandenny - Westland Whirlwind L6845

Name: Westland Whirlwind L6845
Squadron: No. 263 Squadron, RAF
Date: June 11, 1941
Location: Llandenny, Monmouthshire, Wales (NGR: SO4036403178)
Form: Aircraft

Description:
Westland Whirlwind L6845, one of the two prototypes delivered to the RAF under contract 555965/36, was assigned to both 25 Squadron and 263 Squadron. On June 11, 1941, the aircraft suffered an engine failure during flight. The pilot attempted a forced landing but undershot the intended area and struck trees in Llandenny, resulting in the aircraft's destruction and the pilot's death.

Flight Crew:

- **Sergeant Reginald Gunn Pascoe**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Outcome:** Killed
  - **Personal ID:** 927360
  - **Burial:** Swanscombe Cemetery, Grave 3162
    Find A Grave Memorial

Llanover - Handley Page Halifax

Name: Handley Page Halifax
Squadron: -
Command: -
Date: May 22, 1945
Location: Llanover, Wales (NGR: SO32191051)
Form: Aircraft

Description:
On May 22, 1945, a Handley Page Halifax crashed into a bog near the Pwll Du Opencast in the Llanover area. The aircraft ended up in a marshy area, and specific details about the incident or the crew are not provided. The Halifax was a British four-engine heavy bomber used extensively during World War II.

Llandow - De Havilland Vampire VT820

Aircraft: De Havilland Vampire VT820
Squadron: No. 4 CAACU
Command:
Location: Llandow, Wales
NGR: SS9582071911
Date: July 16, 1954

Description:
On July 16, 1954, De Havilland Vampire VT820, operated by No. 4 Combined Air Armaments Course Unit (CAACU), crashed at Llandow Airfield. The incident occurred as the aircraft approached in a shallow dive at an altitude of approximately 300-400 feet and high speed. Witnesses reported that the port wingtip bent upwards, followed by the entire wing breaking off and striking the tailplane, which also fractured. The aircraft then rolled to starboard and impacted the ground, resulting in the death of Flying Officer John Ogilvie Fisher.

Flight Crew:
Flying Officer John Ogilvie Fisher

- **Role:** Pilot
- **Status:** Killed

Llandow - Supermarine Spitfire N3230

Aircraft: Supermarine Spitfire N3230
Squadron: No. 53 Operational Training Unit RAF
Command: Fighter Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS9390671678
Community: Llandow
Date: July 9, 1941

Description:
On July 9, 1941, Supermarine Spitfire N3230 from No. 53 Operational Training Unit RAF collided with aircraft P9383 (ACCS026) near RAF Llandow. N3230 crashed in a field opposite Llan Lane and was completely destroyed by fire. The pilot successfully bailed out and escaped uninjured. The second aircraft, P9383, crashed into a field at Tydraw Farm, Colwinston.

Flight Crew:
Sergeant W. Saunders

- **Role:** Pilot
- **Status:** Parachute descent, Uninjured

Llandow - Supermarine Spitfire X4988

Aircraft: Supermarine Spitfire X4988
Squadron: No. 53 Operational Training Unit RAF
Command: Fighter Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS9338870115
Community: Llandow
Date: July 10, 1941

Description:
On July 10, 1941, Supermarine Spitfire X4988 stalled during a practice dogfight and spun into the ground in a field adjoining Llan Lane, Marcross, Vale of Glamorgan.

Flight Crew:
Sergeant Marion Arthur Plomteaux (Personal ID R/54382)

- **Role:** Pilot
- **Status:** Killed
- **Burial:** Llantwit Major Cemetery, Sec. C, Grave 11 Find A Grave

Llandow - Supermarine Spitfire L1027

Aircraft: Supermarine Spitfire L1027
Squadron: No. 57 Operational Training Unit (OTU) RAF
Command: Fighter Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: 51.435120, -3.498039
Community: Llandow
Date: September 13, 1941

Description:
The Supermarine Spitfire L1027 was one of 97 Spitfires delivered to the Royal Air Force (RAF) between June and September 1939.

Throughout its service life, it was assigned to various units, including 611 Squadron, 616 Squadron, and 57 Operational Training Unit (OTU). On September 13, 1941, the aircraft experienced a crash while landing at Llandow.

The exact circumstances leading to the crash are not detailed, but such incidents were not uncommon during operational training due to mechanical failure, pilot error, or adverse landing conditions.

Llangennech - English Electric Canberra WE117

Aircraft: English Electric Canberra WE117
Squadron: No. 32 MU, RAF Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS5655801288
Community: Llangennech
Date: January 13, 1958

Description:
On January 13, 1958, English Electric Canberra WE117 crashed into marshland near Llangennech Railway Station. The incident resulted in the death of the pilot, Flight Lieutenant James Turnbull Wallace, AFC. He is buried at Llantwit Major Cemetery.

Flight Crew:

1. **Flight Lieutenant James Turnbull Wallace, AFC**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Personal ID:** 171761
    - **Outcome:** Killed
    - **Buried:** Llantwit Major Cemetery

Llangennith - Bristol Blenheim Z6253

Aircraft: Bristol Blenheim Z6253
Squadron: No. 1 Air Gunnery School, RAF
Location: Opposite Kenfigstone Farm, Llangennith, Gower (NGR: SS4499691627), Wales
Date: April 15, 1942

Description:
On April 15, 1942, Bristol Blenheim Z6253, from No. 1 Air Gunnery School, was forced to land due to engine failure. The aircraft made a controlled forced landing opposite Kenfigstone Farm.

The Blenheim, a twin-engine monoplane, was known for its high-performance design. With its distinctive blunt nose, streamlined fuselage, and twin rudders, the aircraft was powered by two Bristol Mercury VIII radial engines. It had a crew of three and was equipped with four forward-firing Browning machine guns and could carry bombs.

The landing was managed relatively well despite the engine failure.

Key Features of the Bristol Blenheim:

- **Engines:** Two Bristol Mercury VIII air-cooled radial engines.
- **Crew:** Three (pilot, navigator, gunner).
- **Armament:** Four forward-firing Browning machine guns; capable of carrying bombs.
- **Variants:** Various, including modifications for bombing, reconnaissance, and training.

Llangennith - Fairey Battle Mk I L5728

Aircraft: Fairey Battle Mk I, L5728
Squadron: No. 1 Air Gunnery School, RAF, Flight Training Command
Location: Llangennith Beach, near Burry Holms (NGR: SS4009392210), Wales
Date: August 8, 1941

Description:
On August 8, 1941, Fairey Battle Mk I L5728 from No. 1 Air Gunnery School made a forced landing at Llangennith Beach due to engine failure. The aircraft, with its relatively clean design and slim oval-shaped fuselage, was powered by a Rolls-Royce Merlin engine and had a crew of three.

Despite its obsolescence by the start of World War II, the Fairey Battle was used extensively in the early stages of the war, including the Battle of France and the Battle of Britain. The aircraft was armed with four forward-firing Browning machine guns and could carry up to 1,000 pounds of bombs. It suffered heavy losses during the war due to its lack of armor and self-sealing fuel tanks.

Key Features of the Fairey Battle Mk I:

- **Engine:** Rolls-Royce Merlin.
- **Crew:** Three.
- **Armament:** Four forward-firing Browning machine guns; capable of carrying up to 1,000 pounds of bombs.
- **Design:** Slim oval-shaped fuselage.

Llangennith - Hawker Typhoon Mk IB MN492

Aircraft: Hawker Typhoon Mk IB, MN492
Squadron: No. 257 Squadron RAF
Command: Fighter Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS4033091728
Community: Llangennith, Llanmadoc, and Cheriton

Description:
On August 23, 1944, Hawker Typhoon Mk IB MN492, built by the Gloster Aircraft Company and assigned to No. 257 Squadron RAF, encountered an emergency during a mission when the aircraft's windscreen became obscured by oil, severely impairing the pilot's visibility.

To avoid further complications and to ensure a safe landing, the pilot performed a forced belly landing on the beach at Llangennith, Glamorgan. Although the landing was executed successfully, the aircraft was left stranded on the beach. The incoming tide eventually overtook the stranded Typhoon, making it irrecoverable.

Key Features of the Hawker Typhoon Mk IB:

- **Engine:** Napier Sabre.
- **Crew:** One.
- **Armament:** Four 20mm Hispano cannons; capable of carrying rockets or bombs.
- **Design:** Known for its robust airframe and powerful engine, the Typhoon was used extensively in ground-attack roles during the later stages of World War II.

Llangennith – Hawker Typhoon JR384

Aircraft: Hawker Typhoon JR384
Squadron: No. 198 Squadron RAF
Command: Fighter Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS4100690829
Community: Llangennith

Description:
On September 14, 1944, Pilot Officer H.F.R. Goblet of No. 198 Squadron RAF made an emergency wheels-up landing on Llangennith beach. The incident occurred just three weeks after another Typhoon, MN492, also made a forced landing on the same beach.

During rocket firing practice over the ranges, Pilot Officer Goblet was partially overcome by carbon monoxide fumes, necessitating the emergency landing. Although the landing was successful, the aircraft was subsequently overtaken by the incoming tide and may not have been recovered.

Flight Crew:

1. **Pilot Officer H.F.R. Goblet**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Personal ID:** 1299888
    - **Outcome:** Survived

Additional Notes:
The Hawker Typhoon, a rugged single-seat fighter-bomber, was highly effective in ground-attack roles. Known for its powerful Napier Sabre engine and potent armament, it played a significant role in the Allied air operations during the latter part of World War II.

Llanrhidian Lower - Curtiss Tomahawk P-40 Mk I AH810

Aircraft: Curtiss Tomahawk P-40 Mk I AH810
Squadron: No. 400 (City of Toronto) Squadron RCAF
Command: Army Co-operation Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS4779092022
Community: Llanrhidian Lower

Description:
The aircraft, based on the Curtiss P-40 Warhawk, was flying from Odiham when it crashed during a forced landing in bad weather on the Gower Peninsula on May 22, 1941. There is some speculation that this aircraft may have been a Curtiss Kitehawk rather than a Tomahawk. SH Jones notes the crash location as fields close to the main road from Llanrhidian to Llangennith. The aircraft stalled while attempting the forced landing, and it was found that AH810 had unexplained 20mm cannon holes.

Flight Crew:

1. **Flight Lieutenant William Albert Rider**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Personal ID:** C/852
    - **Outcome:** Killed
    - **Burial:** Brookwood Military Cemetery, 30. F. 1
    - Find a Grave Memorial

Llanrhidian Lower - Supermarine Spitfire BM589

Aircraft: Supermarine Spitfire BM589
Squadron: No. 421 Squadron RCAF
Command: Fighter Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS5108790914
Community: Llanrhidian Lower

Description:
On August 23, 1942, Supermarine Spitfire BM589 dived into the ground at Cefn Bryn Common from a height of 6,000 feet. Despite the severe impact, the aircraft remained largely intact.

Flight Crew:

1. **Pilot Officer Donald Munro Iverach**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Personal ID:** J/7768
    - **Outcome:** Killed
    - **Burial:** Killay (St. Hilary of Poictiers) Churchyard, Grave 182
    - Find a Grave Memorial

Llansamlett - Boulton Paul Defiant AA632

Aircraft: Boulton Paul Defiant AA632
Squadron: No. 268 Squadron RAF
Command: Army Co-operation Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS6969596235
Community: Llansamlett

Description:
On November 18, 1942, Boulton Paul Defiant AA632, a turretless variant used for target towing, was conducting dummy attacks on an anti-aircraft gun emplacement below Talywendda Farm. During the exercise, it crashed into the adjoining hillside. Both the pilot and the passenger were injured.

Flight Crew:

1. **Flight Sergeant Muirhead**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Outcome:** Injured
2. **Sergeant Wilde**
    - **Outcome:** Injured

Llantilio Pertholey - Supermarine Spitfire L1014

Aircraft: Supermarine Spitfire L1014
Squadron: No. 53 Operational Training Unit RAF
Command: Fighter Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SO324175
Community: Llantilio Pertholey

Description:
The Supermarine Spitfire L1014 was assigned to the 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU) at RAF Llandow. On March 3, 1942, the aircraft, piloted by Sergeant Thomas Crowe, was observed diving out of a cloud in a spin, reversing direction, and then hitting the ground. The pilot was killed in the crash.

Flight Crew:

1. **Sergeant Thomas Alfred Reginald Crowe**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Personal ID:** 527339
    - **Status:** Killed
    - **Burial:** Wallasey (Rake Lane) Cemetery

Find a Grave Memorial

Llantwit Major - Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIA P8133

Name: Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIA P8133
Squadron: No. 53 Operational Training Unit
RAF Command: Fighter Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS9732667896
Community: Llantwit Major

Description:
On April 25, 1942, the Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIA P8133 spun into the ground at Ham House, located 1 mile south of Llantwit Major, Glamorgan.

Flight Crew:

- **Pilot Officer George Hepburn Morrice, RAFVR**
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Burial:** Edinburgh (Warriston) Cemetery

Find a Grave Memorial

Llantwit Major - Supermarine Spitfire Mk I P9509

Name: Supermarine Spitfire Mk I P9509
Squadron No.: 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU)
RAF Command: Fighter Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS9592470131
Community: Llantwit Major

Description:
The Supermarine Spitfire Mk I P9509 served with several units during its service life, including 19 OTU, 152 OTU, 58 OTU, and finally 53 OTU under Fighter Command.

On April 2, 1942, while on approach, P9509 experienced fuel exhaustion and was forced to crash-land approximately 1 mile south of Llandow. This incident typically occurred when the aircraft consumed its fuel reserves faster than anticipated, often due to extended flight times or navigational issues.

Llantwit Major - Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4255

Name: Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4255
Squadron No.: 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU)
RAF Command: Fighter Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS8175473544
Community: Llantwit Major

Description:
The Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4255 was initially assigned to 266 Squadron, then to 66 Squadron, and finally to 53 OTU under Fighter Command. On June 15, 1942, the aircraft was involved in a forced landing approximately 1 mile west of Llantwit Major, Glamorgan. Forced landings typically occur due to mechanical issues, engine failure, or other critical failures that necessitate an emergency landing.

Llanvair - De Havilland Queen Bee P5743

Name: De Havilland Queen Bee P5743
Squadron: Pilotless Aircraft Unit
Command: Flight Training Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: ST0183472889
Community: Llanvair

Description:
The De Havilland Queen Bee P5743, originally a radio-controlled target drone variant of the DH.82 Tiger Moth, was piloted at the time of the accident. On January 2, 1941, the aircraft dived into the ground in a field at West Farm, St. Hilary, approximately 3 miles north of St Athan.

Although designed as a pilotless aircraft, the Queen Bee retained much of the Tiger Moth's structure but featured modifications to accommodate radio control equipment. The nose was redesigned to house this equipment, and the cockpit was removed.

Key Features of the Queen Bee:

- **Nose Design:** Modified to house radio control equipment.
- **Fuselage and Wings:** Retained from the DH.82 Tiger Moth.
- **Cockpit:** Eliminated in favour of radio control systems.

Margam - Fairey Battle Mk I V1211 🇵🇱

Name: Fairey Battle Mk I V1211
Squadron No.: 9 Bomber Gunnery School (BGS) RAF
RAF Command: Flight Training Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS8112680767
Community: Margam

Description:
The Fairey Battle Mk I V1211, assigned to 9 Bomber Gunnery School (BGS), crashed on May 2, 1941, while approaching the drogue dropping area at Sker.

The crash occurred in a field near Pen-y-mynydd Farm, Kenfig. The drogue dropping area was used for training exercises, where aircraft practiced aerial gunnery by targeting a drogue towed behind another aircraft.

Flight Crew:

- **Pilot:** Pilot Officer Josef Pukle (Polish Air Force) - Killed
- **Crew Member:** Edward John Williams - Killed
  Findagrave: Edward John Williams

Margam - Supermarine Spitfire

Aircraft: Supermarine Spitfire (Possibly Mk I, X4722)
Squadron: No. 53 Operational Training Unit, Fighter Command
Location: Rear of Byass Street, Margam (Community: SS782872), Wales
Date: December 27th, 1941 (Based on Spitfire Production List)

Description:
According to the Spitfire Production List, the aircraft dived into the ground out of cloud cover.

Glamorganshire Police reports (1939-1941) mention the crash site location but lack a specific date. This tragic event resulted in the loss of the aircraft and the pilot.

Flight Crew:

- **Pilot Officer James Edward Manners Dixon (RAAF)** - Killed in action.
  Buried at Llantwit Major Cemetery, Sec. C, Grave 21.
  Findagrave: James Edward Manners Dixon

Margam - Westland Lysander Mk II P1719

Aircraft: Westland Lysander Mk II P1719
Squadron: No. 7 Air Gunnery School (7 AGS)
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS8444083720 (Coordinates for location)
Community: Margam

Description:
The Lysander P1719 was among 70 delivered to the RAF by Westlands, Yeovil, under contract 611814/37 between September and December 1939. Converted to target towing (TT.III), it was assigned to 7 AGS at RAF Stormy Down. On February 12, 1942, the aircraft crashed into the ground at Point Fairwood, 800 yards northeast of Kenfig Hill, Glamorgan.

Flight Crew:

- **Sergeant Alfred Victor Roffey:** Pilot, killed in the crash.
  Personal ID: R/85664
  Burial: Porthcawl Cemetery, Block 1, Row H, Grave 15.
  Findagrave: Alfred Victor Roffey

Margam Moors - Martin B-26 Marauder 42-96192 🇺🇸

Name: Martin B-26 Marauder 42-96192
Squadron: 9th Air Force Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS7711484601
Community: Margam Moors

Description:
On March 10, 1944, at 12:30 Zulu time, the B-26-B-55 Marauder, a replacement aircraft assigned to the 9th Air Force Command at Station 8 CAR-ATC, Homestead, Florida, encountered navigational difficulties during a flight from Marrakech.

Approximately an hour and a half into the flight, the crew attempted to pick up the radio homing beacon for St. Mawgan but suspected a malfunctioning radio compass. Despite sending SOS signals to ground control stations, no responses were received. With fuel critically low—only 20 gallons remaining—the pilot decided to make an emergency landing on Margam Beach.

The aircraft belly-landed at the edge of the water, avoiding coastal structures, and coming to rest in about 2 feet of water. The crew escaped without injuries. The incident report includes photographs of the aircraft's dismantling, tow trucks, and the flatbed trailer used to transport the fuselage.

Flight Crew:

- **Second Lieutenant Julius L Loy**
  Role: Pilot
  Status: No injuries

- **Second Lieutenant Robert E Lavey**
  Role: Co-pilot
  Status: No injuries
- **Second Lieutenant Richard B Halloran**
  Role: Navigator
  Status: No injuries
- **Sergeant Bob (NMI) Karup**
  Role: Engineer Status: No injuries

Magor - Hawker Hind Trainer L7238

Name: Hawker Hind Trainer L7238
Squadron No.: 613 (City of Manchester) Squadron RAF
Form: Aircraft
NGR: ST419872
Community: Magor

Description:
On September 3, 1939, the Hawker Hind Trainer L7238, assigned to 613 (City of Manchester) Squadron RAF, encountered issues that necessitated a forced landing at Magor, Monmouthshire. During this emergency landing, the aircraft crashed. Forced landings during this period were often caused by mechanical failures or adverse weather conditions, leading to significant damage to the aircraft.

Merthyr Vale - Supermarine Spitfire X4024

Name: Supermarine Spitfire X4024
Squadron: No. 53 Operational Training Unit RAF
Command: Fighter Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: ST0788098621
Community: Merthyr Vale

On an unspecified date, Supermarine Spitfire X4024 from No. 53 OTU collided with Spitfire X4607 (ACC024) over Mount Pleasant.

The collision caused X4024 to crash into a house at South View, Mount Pleasant, Merthyr Vale, resulting in the death of the Canadian pilot, Sergeant Gerald Fenwick Manuel, and three civilians on the ground: Alice Cox and her two daughters, Doreen, and Phyllis.

Flight Crew:

- **Sergeant Gerald Fenwick Manuel** (Personal ID R/69888) - Pilot, Killed
  Buried: Merthyr Tydfil (Ffrwd) Cemetery, Penderyn Row A.1. Unconsecrated Grave 3
- Find a Grave

Nantyglo and Blaina - Airspeed Oxford HM784

Name: Airspeed Oxford I HM784
Squadron: No. 3 Reserve Flying School
Command: Flight Training Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SO1882408365
Community: Nantyglo and Blaina

Assigned to 3 RAF Reserve Flying School, HM784 hit the summit of Ebbw Vale Mountain in fog on December 6, 1953.

The aircraft had taken off from Filton Airfield, Bristol, intending to fly to Cardiff Airport. One crewman survived the accident.

Flight Crew:

- **Flight Lieutenant Daniel J. Hurley**
  Role: RAFVR
  Status: Survived

New Inn - Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIA P7372 ‘Hyderabad’

Name: Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIA P7372 ‘Hyderabad’
Squadron: No. 53 Operational Training Unit
RAF Command: Fighter Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: ST3039695273
Community: New Inn

On November 9, 1942, Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIA P7372, a presentation aircraft named 'Hyderabad,' collided with Spitfire P8193 and crashed at Race Farm, Panteg, near Pontypool, Monmouthshire.

Presentation Spitfires were named in honour of donors, though the names were not always displayed due to camouflage requirements. The collision resulted in the death of the pilot.

Flight Crew:

- **Sergeant Llewellyn Evans**
  Status: Pilot, killed
  Burial: Leeds (Lawnswood) Cemetery Find A Grave

New Inn - Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIB P8527

Name: Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIB P8527
Squadron: No. 53 Operational Training Unit
RAF Command: Fighter Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: ST3161398789
Community: New Inn

Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIB P8527 was among 1,000 Spitfires delivered to the RAF by Castle Bromwich Aircraft Factory under contract 981687/39 between June and July 1941.

Throughout its service, it was assigned to multiple squadrons, including 610, 616, 315, 266, 124, and finally 53 OTU. On August 24, 1942, P8527 dived into the ground approximately 1 mile south of Pontypool Road, Glamorgan.

Flight Crew:

- **Sergeant Trevor Anthony Tate**
  Status: Killed
  Personal ID: 1023722
  Burial: Morecambe and Heysham (Hale Carr) Cemetery, Plot Blue 'D', Grave 55
  Find A Grave

Newport - Miles Magister R1838 🇵🇱

Name: Miles Magister, serial R1838
Squadron: Polish 316 Squadron
Command: RAF Command
Form: Aircraft
Community: Newport

On June 2, 1941, the aircraft, a Miles Magister R1838 from Polish 316 Squadron, tragically collided with a barrage balloon cable near Malpas, Newport, Gwent. The collision proved fatal for the pilot, Bohdan Anders, marking a heart-breaking end to his promising career.

Polish 316 Squadron was a unit of the Royal Air Force composed primarily of Polish pilots who had fled their homeland during World War II. Established in 1940, the squadron played a significant role in the Battle of Britain and continued to operate as a fighter squadron throughout the war, contributing to various RAF missions.

Flight Crew:

- **Bohdan Anders**
  Status: Killed
  Burial: Find A Grave

Ogmore Vale - Lockheed Hudson Mk I N7256

Name: Lockheed Hudson Mk I N7256
Squadron: 233 Squadron RAF Coastal Command
Location: Crashed on Mynydd Maendy near Nant-y-Moel, Ogmore Vale
Date: January 7, 1940

Description: On January 7, 1940, Lockheed Hudson N7256/ZS-L took off from RAF St Athan for a test flight following the installation of new ASV radar equipment. The aircraft deviated from its intended course and, around 2:30 pm, crashed during a forced landing on Mynydd Maendy. Tragically, all five people onboard perished, including three RAF crew members and two civilian contractors.

Casualties:

- **Flight Crew (Killed):**
  - **Sergeant Francis Frederick Bousfield, Pilot**
    Burial: Oldham Cemetery
  - **Sergeant Frank Foster Hallam, Navigator**
    Burial: Loxley Chapelyard
  - **Leading Aircraftman Arthur Wilfred Smith, WOp AG**
    Burial: Hessle Cemetery
- **Civilian Casualties (Killed):**
  - **Robert Kyd Beattie, Special Operator**
    Burial: No burial information available
    Find a Grave: Robert Kyd Beattie
  - **Peter Ingleby, Special Operator**
    Burial: No burial information available
    Find a Grave: Peter Ingleby

Ogmore Valley - Hawker Hurricane

Name: Hawker Hurricane Mk I (revised) L2074
Squadron: 11 Group Pool
Command: Fighter Command
NGR: SS9525492472
Community: Ogmore Valley

On the morning of January 7, 1940, just after midday, Hawker Hurricane Mk I (revised) L2074 from RAF St Athan, piloted by Pilot Officer Alan Harry Maguire, crashed into Mynydd William Meyrick, high above the Ogmore Valley, killing the pilot instantly.

This version of the Hurricane, of which only 500 were built, featured an all-metal design and a three-bladed, variable-pitch, constant-speed propeller designed by Hamilton Standard of the US and license-built in Britain by de Havilland. There are no visible remains of the aircraft on the mountain, but a memorial stone for the lost pilot is in the Berwyn Centre, Nantymoel.

Flight Crew:

- **Pilot Officer Alan Harry Maguire**
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Personal ID:** 42015
  - **Burial:** Llantwit Major Cemetery, Sec. C. Grave 3

Pant - Armstrong Whitworth Whitley Mk II K7246

- **Name:** Armstrong Whitworth Whitley Mk II K7246
- **Squadron:** No. 9 Air Gunnery School RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SO0693010810
- **Community:** Pant

Description:

The Armstrong Whitworth Whitley Mk II K7246 was assigned to No. 9 Air Gunnery School. On January 4, 1942, the aircraft suffered an engine failure, necessitating an emergency landing on Gwynion Mountain/Dowlais. Fortunately, all crew members survived the forced landing. Specific details about the crew members are not provided.

Pengam Moor - Hawker Hind Trainer L7239

- **Name:** Hawker Hind Trainer L7239
- **Squadron No.:** 614 Squadron RAF
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** ST214768
- **Community:** Pengam Moor

Description:

The Hawker Hind Trainer L7239 was assigned to No. 614 Squadron RAF. On August 3, 1939, the aircraft experienced an engine failure, necessitating a forced landing at Pengam Moor, Cardiff.

During the landing, the aircraft encountered soft ground, which caused it to overturn. Fortunately, forced landings, while dangerous, often resulted in minimal injury to the crew if managed well.

Penllyn - Supermarine Spitfire K9930 🇦🇺

- **Aircraft Identification:** Supermarine Spitfire K9930
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit, RAF Fighter Command
- **Location:** Penllyn, Wales
- **Date of Incident:** September 11th, 1941

Description:

Spitfire K9930, assigned to No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU) of RAF Fighter Command, was abandoned on September 11th, 1941, after the controls jammed.

The pilot, Sergeant A.N. Cresswell of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), was unable to recover from the jammed controls and bailed out of the aircraft. The cause of the jamming is not known.

Flight Crew:

- **Pilot:** Sergeant A.N. Cresswell, RAAF

Outcome: Pilot made a parachute descent

Pennard - Boulton Paul Defiant T3940

Name: BOULTON PAUL DEFIANT T3940
Squadron: No. 125 Squadron RAF Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS5628687595
Community: Pennard

Description: On an unspecified date, the Boulton Paul Defiant T3940, part of No. 125 Squadron RAF Command, made a forced landing at Hunts Farm, Gower, in the community of Pennard.

The incident resulted in minimal damage to the aircraft, making it unlikely for any visible remains to be present at the site today. The Defiant was a unique British fighter aircraft used during World War II, known for its turret-mounted guns which were operated by a gunner, allowing it to engage enemy aircraft from a rearward position.

The aircraft was primarily used in night-fighting roles after proving less effective in daytime operations.

Pennard - Bristol Beaufighter V8594

Name: Bristol Beaufighter V8594
Squadron: No. 68 Squadron, RAF
Command: Fighter Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS5602089480
Community: Pennard

Description: On May 28, 1944, Bristol Beaufighter V8594 was involved in a gun camera exercise with Beaufighter V8742. During the exercise, V8742 accidentally fired its machine guns at V8594, causing substantial damage. Flight Lieutenant Bernard David Wills successfully force-landed the damaged aircraft in a field at Kilvough Farm. Both he and his navigator, Flying Officer Gerald Arthur Ledeboer, sustained severe injuries but managed to escape before the aircraft caught fire. Unfortunately, Flying Officer Ledeboer later died from his injuries. An inquiry attributed the accident to an electrical fault.

Flight Crew:

1. **Flight Lieutenant Bernard David Wills**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Personal ID:** 115997
    - **Outcome:** Survived
2. **Flying Officer Gerald Arthur Ledeboer**
    - **Role:** Observer
    - **Personal ID:** 128676
    - **Outcome:** Injured (later succumbed to injuries)
    - Find a Grave Memorial for Gerald Arthur Ledeboer

Pennard - Bristol Beaufighter Mk VIF X7933

Name: Bristol Beaufighter Mk VIF X7933
Squadron: No. 125 (Newfoundland) Squadron RAF
Command: Fighter Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS5484487799
Community: Pennard

Description: On October 10, 1942, the Bristol Beaufighter Mk VIF X7933, assigned to No. 125 (Newfoundland) Squadron RAF, crashed two miles south of Fairwood Common.

The aircraft spun into the ground in a field behind Great Southgate Farm near Pennard on the Gower Peninsula. This crash occurred during a training exercise, which was a common practice to prepare for night-time operations. Unfortunately, both crew members were killed in the accident.

Flight Crew:

1. **Sergeant Stanley Albin**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Personal ID:** 900892
    - **Status:** Killed
    - **Burial:** Staines (London Road) Cemetery, Block F, Grave 434
    - Find a Grave Memorial for Stanley Albin
2. **Sergeant Frank Ernest George Hall**
    - **Personal ID:** 657538
    - **Status:** Killed
    - **Burial:** Englefield Green Cemetery, Plot 10, Grave 866
    - Find a Grave Memorial for Frank Ernest George Hall

Pennard - Consolidated B-24D Liberator 41-11591 Lorraine aka Queen Bee

CONSOLIDATED B-24D LIBERATOR 41-11591 "Lorraine" aka "Queen Bee"

- **Squadron**: 721 Bomb Squadron
- **USAF Command**: 450 Bomb Group
- **Form**: Aircraft
- **NGR**: SS5712190764
- **Community**: Pennard

Description
B-24D Liberator 41-11591, nicknamed "Lorraine" and known as "Queen Bee," was assigned to the 721 Bomb Squadron, 450 Bomb Group, stationed at Manduria in Italy.

On April 27, 1944, the aircraft was on a mission to collect radar equipment from RAF St Mawgan and had departed from Casablanca. Upon arrival, St Mawgan was shrouded in fog, necessitating a diversion to Fairwood Common, which was also fog-bound.

With fuel running low, the pilot, Harvey Helmberger, instructed the crew to bail out at 500 feet. However, the flight engineer, Sergeant. Walsh, refused to jump. Consequently, the pilot attempted an emergency landing, bringing the plane down just off the airfield, where it was halted by a hedgerow.

While the pilot and other crew members survived the landing, the flight engineer, who had not fastened his seat belt, was ejected through the windscreen, and succumbed to his injuries three days later.

Pennard - Handley Page Halifax Mk II W7927 'Pink Lady'

Name: HANDLEY PAGE HALIFAX Mk II W7927 'Pink Lady'
Squadron: No. 513 Bomb Squadron
Command: 376th Bomb Group
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS5712189709
Community: Pennard

Description:
On the night of April 9, 1944, the Handley Page Halifax Mk II W7927, known as 'Pink Lady', was attempting to land at Fairwood Common after departing from RAF Riccal near Selby in North Yorkshire.

The aircraft was on approach when two of its outer engines failed, causing it to come in too low. As a result, it crashed onto WAAF (Women's Auxiliary Air Force) quarters at Upper Killay, injuring 16 WAAFs. Sadly, Leading Aircraftwoman Dorothy Evans later succumbed to her wounds.

Fortunately, all the aircrew survived the crash uninjured.

Pennard-Miles Magister T9907

Aircraft Name: Miles Magister T9907
Squadron: Squadron Command
Form: Aircraft
NGR: SS5628687595
Community: Pennard

Description: On October 5, 1940, the Miles Magister T9907 was on a flight from Shrewsbury to Exeter when it encountered dense fog, leading the pilot to lose his way.

The aircraft made a successful emergency landing at Heale Farm, near Southgate.

During the subsequent take-off attempt, T9907 clipped a hedge and overturned into an adjoining field. Fortunately, the pilot emerged unharmed.

Flight Crew:

- **Corporal J. Andrezejewski** - Pilot (Safe)

Pennard - De Havilland Mosquito Mk II DD644 🇵🇱

- **Name:** De Havilland Mosquito Mk II DD644
- **Squadron:** No. 307 (Lwowskich Puchaczy) Squadron PAF
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS5667588144
- **Community:** Pennard
- **Description:** The aircraft crashed at Fair Acres Farm, Pennard, Gower. The location was provided and visited by SH Jones, along with the daughter of the engine mechanic, Flight Sergeant Waclaw Oyrzanowski, who died in the crash alongside pilot Flight Lieutenant Roman Grzanka.

Flight Crew:

Flight Lieutenant Roman Grzanka

- **Role:** Pilot
- **Personal ID:** P.0191
- **Status:** Killed
- **Burial:** St Illtyd's Churchyard, Pembrey
- **Biography:** Born on February 8, 1903, in Ujma Duża, Poland. Grzanka exhibited a strong sense of duty and adventure from a young age, leading him to join the Polish Air Force. He quickly earned a reputation as a skilled and determined pilot.
    - Find A Grave Memorial

Flight Sergeant Waclaw Oyrzanowski

- **Role:** Observer
- **Personal ID:** P.793495
- **Status:** Died of Injuries
- **Burial:** St Illtyd's Churchyard, Pembrey

- **Biography:** Born on September 18, 1903, in Zawady, Poland. Oyrzanowski's early dedication to his country led him to join the Polish Air Force. His service continued across Europe during World War II, marked by unwavering commitment despite the challenges he faced.
    - Find A Grave Memorial

Pennard - Supermarine Spitfire

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire BL470
- **Squadron:** No. 312 (Czechoslovak) Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS5599689478
- **Community:** Pennard

Description: On May 2, 1942, Supermarine Spitfire BL470 from No. 312 (Czechoslovak) Squadron collided with Spitfire BL231 (see ACCS018), resulting in BL231's tail being severed. Spitfire BL470 then crashed into Kilvrough Farmyard on South Gower Road.

Flight Crew:

- **Pilot Officer J. Janebo**
  - **Status:** Killed

Pentre - Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4381

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4381
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit
- **RAF Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS9641394174
- **Community:** Pentre

Description: Spitfire X4381 was assigned to No. 152 Squadron, No. 501 Squadron, and No. 53 OTU at RAF Llandow. On the day of the incident, the aircraft dove out of a cloud, lost a wing, and crashed into Taran Felen Uchaf, Ton Pentre, near Pontypridd, resulting in the pilot's death. The aircraft was struck off charge on August 21, 1941, and sent to the Crash Investigation Unit at Farnborough on January 30, 1942. It was subsequently reallocated as GIA 3546M at 12 SoTT Melksham before being scrapped on June 14, 1945.

Flight Crew:

- **Flight Lieutenant Maurice Arthur Goodwin**
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Personal ID:** 39254
  - **Burial:** Swalecliffe (St. John the Baptist) Churchyard, Whitstable
  - Find A Grave Memorial

Porthcawl - Boulton Paul Defiant K8620

- **Name:** Boulton Paul Defiant K8620
- **Squadron No.:** 5 Operational Training Unit (OTU)
- **RAF Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS8179577401
- **Community:** Porthcawl

Description: The Boulton Paul Defiant K8620 was the second prototype of its type and was initially assigned to the Aircraft and Armament Experimental Establishment (AAEE) before being transferred to No. 5 OTU under Fighter Command. On July 13, 1940, while in operational service, K8620 crashed at Porthcawl.

The precise circumstances of the crash are not detailed, but such incidents during the early stages of aircraft development and operational training were not uncommon due to factors such as mechanical issues, pilot error, or adverse weather conditions.

Porthcawl - Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4720

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4720
- **Squadron No.:** 53 Operational Training Unit
- **RAF Command:** Fighter Command
- **Location (NGR):** SS8027978985, Community Porthcawl

Description: Assigned to No. 66 Squadron, No. 501 Squadron, and No. 53 OTU, Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4720 crashed during a forced landing at Porthcawl Golf Course on July 25, 1941.

Porthcawl - Westland Lysander TT Mk III T1588

- **Name:** Westland Lysander TT Mk III T1588
- **Squadron:** No. 7 Air Gunnery School
- **Command:** Flight Training Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS8306278706
- **Community:** Porthcawl

Description: Westland Lysander TT Mk III T1588 was assigned to No. 7 Air Gunnery School based at RAF Stormy Down. On September 21, 1941, the aircraft collided with an Anson aircraft, LT888, and subsequently crashed near Porthcawl. The collision resulted in the deaths of both the pilot and the gunner.

Flight Crew:

- **Sergeant William Burrell Routledge**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Personal ID:** 1040042
  - **Burial:** Chilton Cemetery, Sec. A, Grave 496
  - Find A Grave Memorial
- **Aircraftman First Class Reginald Tarling**
  - **Role:** Gunner
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Personal ID:** 1119875
  - **Burial:** Port Talbot (Goytre) Cemetery, Plot 4, Row S, Grave 14
  - Find A Grave Memorial

Port Talbot - Supermarine Spitfire MK986 🇵🇱

- **Service Number:** P/2583
- **Rank:** Kapral
- **Unit:** Polish Air Force, 317 Squadron
- **Age:** 24 years
- **Date of Birth:** 1920
- **Date of Death:** December 8, 1944

Incident Description: Kapral Leon Jan Watorowski of the Polish Air Force, serving with No. 317 Squadron, tragically died at the age of 24 on December 8, 1944.

He was piloting a Supermarine Spitfire LF.IX, serial number MK986, during a training flight when he was involved in a mid-air collision over Port Talbot, which led to his death.

- Find A Grave Memorial

Resolven - Supermarine Spitfire P8380 'Black Velvet'

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire P8380 'Black Velvet'
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit
- **RAF Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SN8583900442
- **Community:** Resolven

Description: On August 15, 1942, the Spitfire P8380 'Black Velvet' crashed into the ground in bad weather at Llwyfnffnan Farm, Glyn-Neath, Glamorganshire. The pilot, 20-year-old Sergeant Alan Fisher (RAFVR), was killed.

Spitfires presented to the nation were often named by donors as part of wartime fundraising efforts. The name "Black Velvet" likely symbolized elegance or personal significance to the donor, though its exact meaning is unknown.

These names were marked according to official instructions in four-inch yellow characters on the engine cowling, although this marking was sometimes omitted to avoid compromising camouflage.

Flight Crew:

- **Sergeant Alan Fisher**
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Personal ID:** 1128865
  - **Burial:** Peel Green Cemetery, Sec. G, Grave 17964
  - Find A Grave Memorial

Rhoose - Supermarine Spitfire Mk I R6969

- **Aircraft:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk I R6969
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (53 OTU), RAF
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** ST0324067660
- **Community:** Rhoose

Description:
This Spitfire was assigned to 53 OTU. On December 7, 1941, during an aerobatics display, the aircraft spun into the ground near Aberthaw.

According to Glamorganshire Police reports for 1939-41, the crash site was located 60 yards from a roadway near the 'crushing house' within the Aberthaw cement works.

The pilot, Sergeant Peter Dennis Lambert, was killed in the accident.

Flight Crew:

- **Sergeant Peter Dennis Lambert**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Personal ID:** 778556
  - **Burial:** Llantwit Major Cemetery, Section C, Grave 19
  - Find A Grave Memorial

Rhoose - Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4679

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4679
- **Squadron No.:** 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU)
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** ST055669
- **Community:** Rhoose

Description:
The Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4679 served in several units during its operational life, including 610 Squadron, 602 Squadron, 122 Squadron, and finally 53 OTU.

On April 3, 1942, while operating with 53 OTU, the aircraft was involved in a forced landing near Rhoose. Forced landings typically occur due to mechanical failure, fuel exhaustion, or other unforeseen circumstances necessitating an emergency landing.

The exact cause of this incident is not specified in the available description.

Rhossili - Avro Anson Mk I N9890

- **Name:** Avro Anson Mk I N9890
- **Squadron:** No. 217 Squadron
- **RAF Command:** Coastal Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS4120589130
- **Community:** Rhossili

Description:
The Avro Anson Mk I N9890 was built by Avro at Chadderton and served in various assignments, including 11 AONS and finally 217 Squadron.

On September 29, 1940, the aircraft was crewed by Flight Lieutenant Arnold, Pilot Officer Kerr, Sergeant Grenivier, and Sergeant W.B. Miflin. It took off from St Eval at 00:05 for a strike on shipping in Cherbourg Harbour.

Despite sustaining slight flak damage to the fuselage and port engine manifold, the aircraft was forced to make a belly landing on Rhossili beach due to running short on fuel.

Rhossili - Avro Anson Mk I N5086

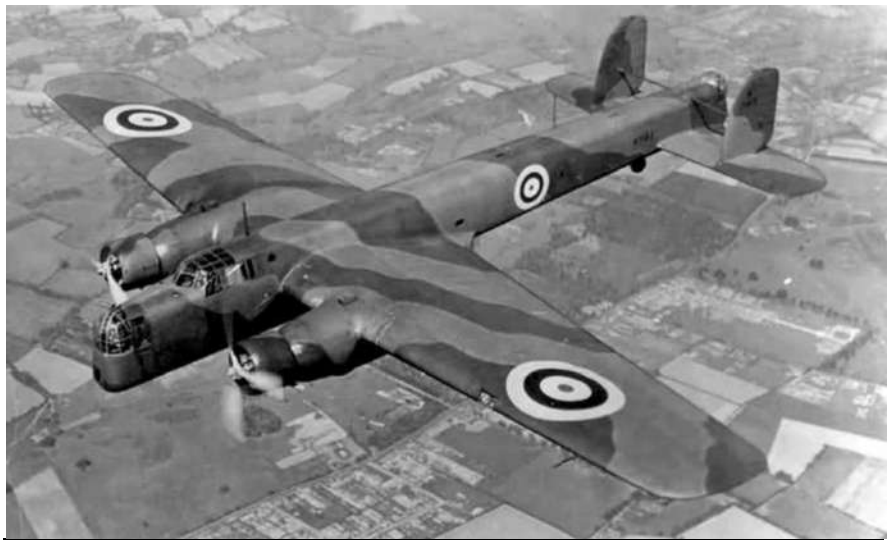
- **Aircraft:** Avro Anson Mk I N5086
- **Squadron:** School of Air Navigation
- **Command:** Flight Training Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS4194488895
- **Community:** Rhossili

Description:
On February 23, 1940, Avro Anson Mk I N5086 was involved in a navigation exercise when it tragically flew into high ground in poor visibility at Rhossili Hill, Glamorgan. A recovered small brass plate indicates the crash site as high ground above the Old Parsonage, Rhossili Down.

Flight Crew:

- **Flight Sergeant William Charles Parkes**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Personal ID:** 562843
  - **Burial:** Stretton-Cum-Wetmoor (St. Mary) Churchyard, south of church, Row 1, Grave 4
  - Find A Grave Memorial
- **Leading Aircraftman Andrew Roberts Sutcliffe**
  - **Personal ID:** 746751
  - **Burial:** Brampton (St. Martin) Old Churchyard, Grave 90
  - Find A Grave Memorial
- **Leading Aircraftman Frederic Arthur Webster**
  - **Personal ID:** 759344
  - **Burial:** South Shoebury (St. Andrew) Churchyard, Collective grave 614
  - Find A Grave Memorial

Rhymney - Armstrong Whitworth Whitley Mk V T4232



- **Name:** Armstrong Whitworth Whitley Mk V T4232
- **Squadron:** No. 10 Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Bomber Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS6177591694
- **Community:** Rhymney

Description:

The Armstrong Whitworth Whitley Mk V T4232, identified as ZA-W, was assigned to No. 10 Squadron. On November 13, 1940, the aircraft hit the summit of Rhymney Hill while off course in cloud cover. The Whitley was based at RAF Leeming and was tasked with attacking U-boat pens at Lorient. Weather conditions were poor, with a risk of icing. At 0142 hours, the aircraft struck the summit of Rhymney Hill near Tredegar. The impact tore off the undercarriage and damaged one engine, causing the aircraft to slide down the mountain slope into a pond. Four crewmen survived the crash, but one was killed.

Flight Crew:

- **Flying Officer Peter Wellwood Fortune Landale**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Personal ID:** 70379
  - **Status:** Injured
- **Sergeant Peter Dickens Goldsmith**
  - **Role:** Pilot 2 / Co-Pilot
  - **Personal ID:** 745580
  - **Status:** Died of injuries
  - **Burial:** Farnborough (St. Giles the Abbot) Churchyard, Grave 40
- **Pilot Officer F. R. Goddard**
  - **Role:** Observer

    - **Status:** Injured
- **Sergeant George Christie**
    - **Role:** Wireless Operator/Air Gunner
    - **Personal ID:** 971579
    - **Status:** Injured
- **Sergeant Ernest Philip Lewis**
    - **Role:** Gunner
    - **Personal ID:** 970467
    - **Status:** Injured

Rhymney - De Havilland Vampire VV618

- **Name:** De Havilland Vampire VV618
- **Squadron:** No. 208 Advanced Flying School, RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Aircraft Type:** De Havilland Vampire
- **Location:** Near Rhymney, Wales
- **Date of Incident:** October 27, 1953

Description:
De Havilland Vampire VV618 was assigned to No. 208 Advanced Flying School of the RAF. On October 27, 1953, during a cross-country training flight from RAF Merryfield, the aircraft refuelled at RAF Valley. Approximately 30 minutes after departing from RAF Valley, VV618 encountered difficulties over Rhymney. The aircraft descended from the clouds, and one of its external fuel drop tanks detached, striking the railings of a vicarage. The aircraft attempted a steep climbing turn to re-enter the cloud cover but emerged in a shallow dive shortly after, impacting the ground at the head of the valley at 16:25 hours.

Flight Crew:

- **Pilot Officer Derek Victor Reypert**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Personal ID:** 607359
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Burial:** Ilton Cemetery
  - Find A Grave Memorial

Rudry - Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4772

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4772
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** ST1532585574
- **Community:** Rudry
- **Siting:** Terrestrial

Description:
The Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4772, a key aircraft of the Second World War, was assigned to No. 53 Operational Training Unit RAF. Originally part of 152 Squadron before being reassigned to 53 OTU, this Spitfire played a crucial role in training pilots for combat operations.

On November 7, 1941, during a training exercise, the aircraft encountered severe weather conditions. It entered dense cloud cover, leading to spatial disorientation.

Unable to recover, the aircraft spun out of control and tragically crashed into the ground at Caerphilly Common, near Rudry.

Severn Bridge - Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIA P7676 🇨🇦

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIA P7676
- **Squadron:** No. 52 Operational Training Unit
- **RAF Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** ST5345489132
- **Community:** Maritime

Description:
Built by the Castle Bromwich Aircraft Factory, Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIA P7676 was assigned to No. 52 Operational Training Unit (OTU) at the time of its loss. On September 11, 1942, the aircraft struck the water while low flying over the Severn, resulting in its loss.

Flight Crew:

- **Sergeant Kenneth Maxwell Grant, RCAF**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Personal ID:** R/88238
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Burial:** Cirencester Cemetery
  - Find A Grave Memorial

Sketty - Airspeed Oxford Mk I W6590 🇨🇦

- **Aircraft:** Airspeed Oxford Mk I, W6590
- **Squadron:** 116 Squadron RAF, Army Co-operation Command
- **Location:** Sketty (Community: SS6155891992), Wales
- **Date:** May 14, 1943

Description:
On May 14, 1943, Airspeed Oxford Mk I W6590, assigned to 116 Squadron RAF, was involved in a tragic incident.

The aircraft reportedly dived vertically into Turner's Farm (formerly known as Morris Farm).

Flight Crew:

- **Flight Sergeant Donald Douglas Maclean, RCAF**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Status:** Killed in action
  - **Service Number:** R/88440
  - **Burial:** Killay (St. Hilary of Poictiers) Churchyard, Grave 222
  - Find A Grave Memorial

Sketty - Bristol Beaufighter IIF T3149

- **Name:** Bristol Beaufighter IIF T3149
- **Squadron:** No. 125 (Newfoundland) Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS6177591694
- **Community:** Sketty

Description:
In May 1942, Bristol Beaufighter IIF T3149 was on a training flight when its port engine failed. The situation deteriorated further when the starboard engine caught fire, prompting Pilot Officer Turnbull to make an emergency landing near the lane (now Saunders Way) leading up to Morris Farm, Sketty.

Fortunately, Turnbull escaped unhurt, and his navigator, Sergeant Fowler, sustained only minor injuries. Morris Farm no longer exists, and the crash site is now covered by modern housing.

The aircraft came to rest near the junction of Warwick Road and Saunders Way, Derwen Fawr.

Sketty - Bristol Beaufighter Mk VI X8258

- **Name:** Bristol Beaufighter Mk VI X8258
- **Squadron:** No. 125 (Newfoundland) Squadron RAF
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS6151191621
- **Community:** Sketty

Description:
Bristol Beaufighter Mk VI X8258 was assigned to various squadrons, including 600, 125, 141, and 125 again. On January 11, 1943, while performing an air test before night operations, the aircraft tragically dived into the ground near Sketty, Swansea.

Flight Crew:

- **Sergeant James Gladstone Crummey**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Personal ID:** 798633
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Burial:** Killay (St. Hilary of Poictiers) Churchyard, Grave 221
  - Find A Grave Memorial
- **Sergeant Norman Hurst**
  - **Personal ID:** 1116265
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Burial:** Peel (St. Paul) Churchyard, Grave 274
  - Find A Grave Memorial

St Athan - North American Mustang Mk I AG637

- **Aircraft:** North American Mustang Mk I AG637
- **Squadron:** No. 26 Operational Training Unit (26 OTU), RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** ST0040268662
- **Community:** St Athan

Description:
North American Mustang Mk I AG637 was assigned to No. 26 Operational Training Unit (OTU) and later to No. 38 Maintenance Unit (MU).

On August 8, 1944, while conducting a routine circuit training flight at RAF St Athan, the aircraft suffered an engine failure. This mechanical issue led to a crash, but no specific details about the crew or pilot are available in the provided description.

It is unclear whether there were any fatalities or significant injuries, or if such details were simply not documented.

St Athan - Supermarine Spitfire K9976 🇨🇦

- **Aircraft Identification:** Supermarine Spitfire K9976
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU), RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Aircraft Type:** Spitfire
- **Location:** Ty-draw (Newydd) Farm, New Barn, near Pickeston, Flemingstone, Glamorgan
- **Date of Incident:** September 18th, 1941

Description:
Supermarine Spitfire K9976 was assigned to No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU) under RAF Fighter Command. On September 18th, 1941, the aircraft tragically crashed near Ty-draw (Newydd) Farm, close to Pickeston, Flemingstone, in Glamorgan.

The crash was caused by an engine failure, which led to the aircraft spinning into the ground.

The pilot, Sergeant Richard Edward McMurray, was a Canadian who worked as a sales clerk before enlisting in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF).

He joined the RCAF on October 15th, 1940, in Kingston, Ontario, and was serving with the RAF at the time of the crash.

Flight Crew:

- **Pilot:** Sergeant Richard Edward McMurray
  - **Outcome:** Pilot killed
  - **Personal ID:** R/67226
  - **Burial:** Llantwit Major Cemetery, Section C, Grave 13
    Find a Grave Memorial

St. Brides Minor - Percival Proctor Mk II P6140

- **Aircraft Identification:** Percival Proctor Mk II P6140
- **Squadron:** No. 755 Squadron, Fleet Air Arm (FAA)
- **Command:** Fleet Air Arm
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **Location (NGR):** SS9358082745
- **Community:** St. Brides Minor

Description:
The Percival Proctor Mk II, designated P6140, was part of No. 755 Squadron, Fleet Air Arm. On the day of the incident, the aircraft crashed in Bridgend and subsequently burned out, resulting in the death of the pilot and serious injuries to the observer. This aircraft was part of a small batch delivered directly to the Admiralty.

Flight Crew:

- **David Edgar Welbury**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Burial:** Coity (St. Mary) Churchyard
    Find a Grave Memorial
- **Unknown Observer**
  - **Status:** Injured

St Donats - Supermarine Spitfire P7504

- **Aircraft Identification:** Supermarine Spitfire P7504
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU) RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **Location (NGR):** ST0480174960
- **Community:** Welsh St Donats

Incident Description:
On July 5, 1942, Supermarine Spitfire P7504, a Mk II from No. 53 OTU, piloted by Sergeant Philip Raymond Swan, was involved in a mid-air collision with Spitfire P8592.

The collision caused P7504 to crash near Welsh St Donats. Sergeant Swan's body was found some yards from the wreckage, indicating that he had attempted to bail out but was too low for his parachute to open fully.

The remains of the aircraft were later removed by the North Gwent Aviation Group.

Flight Crew:

1. **Sergeant Philip Raymond Swan**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Personal ID:** 1387580
    - **Status:** Killed
    - **Burial:** Rotherfield Peppard (All Saints) New Churchyard, Grave 72
      Find a Grave Memorial

St. Georges-super-Ely - Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4773

- **Aircraft Identification:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4773
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit, RAF
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **Location (NGR):** ST1052276502
- **Community:** St. Georges-super-Ely

Incident Description:
Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4773 had been assigned to several units throughout its service, including 609 Squadron, 57 OTU, 131 Squadron, 350 Squadron, 52 OTU, and finally 53 OTU. On the day of the incident, Sergeant Douglas George White, RAF Volunteer Reserve (RAFVR), aged 22, was piloting the aircraft on a flight from Llandow.

Witnesses observed the Spitfire dive out of formation from a high altitude and crash into the ground near the Greendown Inn, St Georges-super-Ely, near Cardiff. It was presumed that Sergeant White had experienced oxygen failure, leading to unconsciousness.

The aircraft was excavated in 2005.

Flight Crew:

1. **Sergeant Douglas George White, RAFVR**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Outcome:** Killed
    - **Burial:** Paignton Cemetery, Plot Uncons. Sec. Grave 5551
      Find a Grave Memorial

Stow Hill - Heinkel He 111P

Stow Hill - Heinkel He 111P

- **Aircraft Identification:** Heinkel He 111P 1G+DS
- **Squadron:** 8 Staffel, III. Gruppe, Kampfgeschwader 27
- **Command:** Kampfgeschwader III
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **Location (NGR):** ST3048187337
- **Community:** Stow Hill

Incident Description:
On 13 September 1940, the Heinkel He 111P, assigned to 8 Staffel, took off from Rennes as part of a bombing mission involving nine Heinkels aimed at targeting dockyards in Bristol, Plymouth, Merseyside, Swansea, and Cardiff.

After successfully bombing Ellesmere Port, the aircraft turned south to bomb Cardiff. Relying solely on instruments due to deteriorating weather conditions, the crew followed a railway line, which inadvertently led them into a barrage balloon cable.

This resulted in the starboard wing breaking off, causing the plane to crash into 32 Stow Park Avenue, Newport. The tragic crash led to the deaths of two children and injuries to their parents.

Flight Crew:

1. **Oberleutnant Harry Wappler**
   - **Role:** Pilot
   - **Outcome:** Survived, parachuted, and became a prisoner of war.
2. **Unteroffizier Fritz Berndt**
   - **Role:** Navigator
   - **Outcome:** Killed in the crash

- **Personal ID:** 62693-23
- **Burial:** Cannock Chase German Military Cemetery, grave 7.295
  Find a Grave Memorial

3. **Oberfeldwebel Johannes Elster**
   - **Role:** Wireless Operator/Gunner
   - **Outcome:** Killed in the crash
   - **Burial:** Cannock Chase German Military Cemetery, grave 7.294
     Find a Grave Memorial
4. **Unteroffizier Herbert Okuneck** (Corrected Name: Herbert Okulock)
   - **Role:** Bomb Aimer
   - **Outcome:** Killed in the crash
   - **Personal ID:** 62693-95
   - **Burial:** Cannock Chase German Military Cemetery, grave 7.296
     Find a Grave Memorial

Swansea Bay - Bristol Beaufighter Mk IIF T3146

- **Aircraft Type:** Bristol Beaufighter Mk IIF
- **Squadron:** No. 125 (Newfoundland) Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Location:** SS6718991096, Community Maritime, Swansea Bay

Incident Description: The Bristol Beaufighter Mk IIF T3146, serving under the 125 (Newfoundland) Squadron of the Royal Air Force, was actively engaged in defense and interception operations during World War II. On May 26, 1942, while performing its duties, the aircraft faced unforeseen difficulties which necessitated an emergency landing. This incident occurred near Swansea Bay. Despite the successful emergency landing, the Beaufighter sustained significant damage, impacting its operational status.

Swansea Bay - Supermarine Spitfire SM355

- **Aircraft Type:** Supermarine Spitfire
- **Squadron:** No. 66 Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Location:** 4.5 miles off Mumbles Head (Community: SS7017384073), Swansea Bay, Wales
- **Date:** March 5th, 1945

Incident Description: The Supermarine Spitfire SM355, operated by 66 Squadron of the RAF's Fighter Command, was involved in a critical incident during a flight on March 5, 1945. The aircraft was forced to ditch in the sea approximately 4.5 miles off Mumbles Head in Swansea Bay.

Following the ditching, Sergeant Elliot, the pilot, was reported missing. The circumstances surrounding the ditching and the subsequent disappearance of Sergeant. Elliot remain pivotal moments in the operational history of the squadron.

Swansea Bay - Vickers Wellington Mk VIII 'Leigh Light' HX482

- **Aircraft Type:** Vickers Wellington Mk VIII 'Leigh Light'
- **Squadron:** No. 172 Squadron RAF
- **Command:** Coastal Command
- **Location:** 800 yards northwest of Scarweather Lightship, Swansea Bay (Community: SS6952186128)
- **Date:** August 19th, 1942

Incident Description: Constructed by Vickers Armstrong at Weybridge, the Wellington Mk VIII 'Leigh Light' aircraft, HX482, was an integral part of 172 Squadron, based in Chivenor under RAF Coastal Command. On August 19, 1942, during a routine training flight, a tragic event occurred when the aircraft was mistakenly shot down by friendly fire from the USS Gulf of Mexico, an American oil tanker. The incident led to the aircraft crashing into the sea near the Scarweather lightship. The "Leigh Light" technology onboard was specifically designed for enhanced targeting during nocturnal or low-visibility operations, which makes this incident particularly poignant.

Flight Crew:

1. **Pilot Officer Gordon Cave Vincent Jamieson**
   - Role: Pilot
   - Status: Killed
   - Burial: Bristol (Canford) Cemetery, Sec. NN, Grave 56
   - Find a Grave Memorial
2. **Sergeant Edwin Thomas Arthur Deacon**
   - Role: Crew member
   - Status: Killed
   - Burial: Killay (St. Hilary of Poictiers) Churchyard, Grave 202
   - Find a Grave Memorial

3. **Pilot Officer Ross Pringle Fahrni**
    - Role: Crew member
    - Status: Killed
    - Burial: Killay (St. Hilary of Poictiers) Churchyard, Grave 201
    - Find a Grave Memorial
4. **Sergeant Edgar Harold Dawe**
    - Role: Crew member
    - Status: Killed
    - Burial: Killay (St. Hilary of Poictiers) Churchyard, Grave 183
    - Find a Grave Memorial
5. **Sergeant Jack Mullins**
    - Role: Crew member
    - Status: Killed
    - Burial: Macclesfield Cemetery, Plot H, Grave 6418
    - Find a Grave Memorial

Tawe-Uchaf - Vickers Wellington B1697

- **Aircraft Type:** Vickers Wellington
- **Squadron:** No. 12 Operational Training Unit (12 OTU), RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Location:** Fan Hir, near Brecon to Swansea Road (NGR: SN8350014500)
- **Date:** September 25, 1942

Incident Description: Assigned to the 12 OTU of the RAF, the Vickers Wellington B1697 met with a tragic fate on September 25, 1942. During a routine cross-country training flight at night, the aircraft encountered adverse conditions and ultimately crashed into the rugged terrain of Fan Hir. The incident resulted in a significant fire, which was visible from nearby locations, prompting immediate local response.

Crew and Casualties: The Wellington carried five crew members, experiencing varying fates due to the crash:

1. **Flight Sergeant Bird** (Pilot) - Suffered severe injuries and later succumbed in Neath hospital.
2. **Sergeant W. Barr** - Endured serious injuries requiring extensive plastic surgery, leading to his discharge from service in March 1944.
3. **Sergeant Fairweather** - Details of injuries or status not specified.
4. **Sergeant Troughbridge** - Details of injuries or status not specified.
5. **Sergeant Head** - Suffered slight injuries.

Rescue and Salvage Operations: The aftermath of the crash saw a swift local response initiated by the sighting of the fire by the landlady of the Gwynne Arms in Glyntawe. The injured were promptly transported to Neath hospital for urgent medical care. Salvage operations involved 78 Maintenance Unit (MU) and local farmers, who utilized horses and carts to retrieve the wreckage. Despite thorough efforts to clear the site, remnants of the Wellington still pepper the landscape near the crash site, serving as a sombre reminder of the event.

Trefil - Avro Anson R9611

- **Aircraft Type:** Avro Anson
-
- **Squadron:** No. 21 Operational Training Unit, RAF
- **Location:** Outskirts of Trefil, Brecon Beacons National Park (NGR: SO122121)
- **Date:** April 26, 1941

Incident Overview: During a routine cross-country training exercise, the Avro Anson R9611 encountered a mechanical fault, compounded by adverse weather conditions, leading to a critical situation. The decision was made for the crew to abandon the aircraft, utilizing their parachutes to descend safely to the ground.

Source of Information: This incident is catalogued in the Brecon Beacons National Park's 1995 Identification Guide to Aircraft Crashes in the National Park, providing detailed insights into the events surrounding this crash.

Crew Details: The aircraft was manned by a crew of five, all of whom successfully executed parachute descents to escape the faltering aircraft:

1. **Pilot Officer Jack Harold Wetherly** - Pilot, managed a successful parachute descent. (Personal ID: 82716)
2. **Pilot Officer J.G. Brown** - Also made a safe parachute descent.
3. **Pilot Officer Garth Campbell Frew** - Served as the Observer, parachuted safely from the aircraft. (Personal ID: 63087)
4. **Sergeant Butler** - Successfully parachuted to safety.
5. **Sergeant Tuckwell** - Also parachuted safely.

Site and Salvage: The Anson came to rest on the outskirts of Trefil, within the scenic confines of the Brecon Beacons National Park. The exact site and condition of the wreckage post-event are not specified in the provided details but would typically be subjected to recovery and safety procedures by RAF and local authorities.

Treharris - Supermarine Spitfire X4607 🇨🇦

- **Aircraft Type:** Supermarine Spitfire
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit RAF
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Location:** Quakers Yard, near Treharris (NGR: ST0843696449)
- **Community:** Treharris

Incident Overview: The Supermarine Spitfire X4607, operating under the 53 Operational Training Unit of the RAF Fighter Command, was involved in a mid-air collision with another Spitfire, X4024 (ACCS023).

This unfortunate event occurred over Mount Pleasant. Following the collision, Spitfire X4607 descended uncontrollably and crashed into a field at Quakers Yard, near Treharris.

Flight Crew: The aircraft was piloted by Sergeant Louis Goldberg, who tragically lost his life in the incident:

- **Role:** Pilot
- **Status:** Killed
- **Personal ID:** R/56185
- **Burial:** Merthyr Tydfil (Cefn) Jewish Cemetery, Row 2, Grave 4. Find a Grave Memorial

Site Details: The crash site is in a field within the vicinity of Quakers Yard, marking a poignant reminder of the perils faced by RAF personnel during their training missions in wartime Britain.

Welsh St Donats - Supermarine Spitfire P8592

Aircraft Details:

- **Type:** Supermarine Spitfire
- **Serial Number:** P8592
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit, RAF

Incident:

- **Description:** Collision with Spitfire P7504 (ACCS022)
- **Location:** NGR Multiple ST0319775976 (ST046725 or ST022762)

Flight Crew:

- **Pilot:** Sergeant Russell Stanley Pearce
- **Status:** Killed
- **Personal ID:** 413117
- **Date of Birth:** 19/11/1921
- **Date of Death:** 5/7/1942
- **Burial:** Llantwit Major Cemetery, Sec. C, Grave 27

This tragic collision led to the loss of Sergeant Russell Stanley Pearce. His sacrifice is commemorated at his final resting place in Llantwit Major Cemetery. Find A Grave Memorial

Wick - Consolidated B-24H Liberator 42-52135 🇺🇸

Aircraft Details:

- **Name:** Consolidated B-24H Liberator 42-52135
- **Squadron:** No. 713 Squadron USAF
- **Command:** 448th Bombardment Group (Heavy)
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS9293272382
- **Community:** Wick

Description: On December 8, 1943, Consolidated B-24H Liberator 42-52135, assigned to the 8th Air Force, 448th Bombardment Group, 713th Squadron, was involved in an accident at Wick, Glamorgan. The aircraft was en route to a new permanent station. Due to limited visibility, low fuel, and failure to establish radio contact, the plane was forced to make a belly landing.

The aircraft, part of a squadron movement from the US to the UK, had originated from Morrison Airfield in Florida and had passed through Marrakech. After departing Marrakech at 02:15, the crew initially flew on instruments. Encountering severe weather, they attempted to climb above the icing level but faced a frozen de-icer handle. With no radio contact before reaching the coastline, they flew up the coast at 800 feet for 1.5 hours before receiving a position fix from Plympton.

Upon sighting Llandow Airfield, the low ceiling caused them to lose visual contact. Attempts to reach the ground station via command radio and VHF were unsuccessful. With limited options, the pilot chose to land in a field. The aircraft skidded and veered to starboard upon landing. The crew, who had prepared for a ditching scenario, were uninjured and were transported to Llandow by the RAF, where they were having tea 1.5 hours later. Investigators praised the pilot and the discipline of the crew.

Flight Crew:

- **Second Lieutenant Lawrence T. Crepeau** – Pilot: No injuries
- **Second Lieutenant Robert E. Lehman** – Co-pilot: Minor injuries
- **Second Lieutenant William F. New** – Navigator: No injuries
- **Second Lieutenant Otto Ciavardon** – Bomber: No injuries
- **Sergeant Dearl Whitaker** – Engineer: No injuries
- **Sergeant Basham B. Weide** – Assistant Engineer: No injuries
- **Sergeant Joseph R. Morrison** – Radio Operator: No injuries
- **Sergeant Jon W. Jones** – Assistant Engineer: No injuries
- **Sergeant Jesse W. Carroll** – Air Gunner: No injuries
- **Sergeant Raymond M. Arnold** – Air Gunner: No injuries
- **Sergeant Merle S. Morris** – No injuries
- **Sergeant Dale K. Black** – No injuries

Gilfach Goch - Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIA P7607

Aircraft Details:

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIA P7607
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit
- **Command:** Fighter Command, RAF
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **NGR:** SS9680389551
- **Community:** Gilfach Goch

- **Description:** On April 23, 1943, Spitfire P7607 (Mk IIA), assigned to 53 OTU RAF Llandow, crashed while attempting to recover from a dive. The incident occurred approximately ½ mile west of Abercerdin School, Gilfach Goch, Glamorgan. The aircraft was destroyed by fire, and the Norwegian pilot, Sergeant John Martin Hals, was tragically killed. **Sergeant John Martin Hals** – Pilot: Killed & Buried at Bergen Solheim Cemetery

West & North Sites

Aberporth - Consolidated B-24D Liberator 41-23808 🇺🇸

Aircraft Details:

- **Name:** Consolidated B-24D Liberator 41-23808
- **Type:** Air Crash Site
- **NGR:** SN2448
- **Community:** Aberporth
- **County:** Ceredigion

Mission and Incident: Consolidated B-24D Liberator 41-23808 was assigned to the 66th Bomb Squadron, 44th Bomb Group, 8th Air Force.

On the day of the incident, the aircraft was part of a large formation of 13 Liberators and Fortresses from Shipdham, tasked with bombing the U-boat pens at St. Nazaire.

While eight of the Liberators successfully reached the target, the return journey proved challenging.

During the return flight, the formation leader, uncertain of their position, decided to head towards the Pembrokeshire coast.

As the aircraft and their companions were running low on fuel, they struggled to find a suitable place to land.

Consolidated B-24D Liberator 41-23808 ultimately ran out of fuel and crash-landed in a field near Aberporth. Remarkably, the crew survived the incident without injury.

Unfortunately, no US Air Force Accident report for this event has survived.

Aberporth - Hawker Henley I L3441

Aircraft Details:

- **Name:** Hawker Henley I L3441
- **Type:** Air Crash Site
- **NGR:** SN2551
- **Community:** Aberporth
- **County:** Ceredigion

Description: Hawker Henley I L3441 was one of 200 aircraft delivered to the RAF by Gloster Aircraft Company, Hucclecote, under contract 540805/36, between November 1938 and September 1940.

The aircraft was assigned to the 1st Anti-Aircraft Co-operation Unit.

On May 26, 1942, while on a routine mission, the engine of Hawker Henley I L3441 cut out, causing the aircraft to stall and spin uncontrollably.

It crashed into the ground near Aberporth. Unfortunately, the incident resulted in the loss of the aircraft.

Aberystwyth - Avro Anson I EF823

Aircraft Details:

- **Name:** Avro Anson I EF823
- **Type:** Air Crash Site
- **NGR:** SN745939
- **Community:** Aberystwyth
- **County:** Ceredigion

Description: Avro Anson I EF823 was one of 600 Ansons delivered to the RAF between July 1942 and January 1943 by Avro at Yeadon.

It was assigned to No. 9 Operational Aircrew Training Unit (OAFU).On April 29, 1943, during a night navigational exercise, EF823 tragically collided with high ground in cloud cover at Pen Creigiau'r Llan, near Aberystwyth.

Despite the severity of the crash, all four crew members aboard survived the incident.

Aberystwyth - Hawker Hunter F.6 XJ602

Name: Hawker Hunter F.6 XJ602
Type: Air Crash Site
NGR: SN6281
Community: Aberystwyth
County: Ceredigion

The Hawker Hunter F.6 XJ602 was one of 45 units delivered between January and May 1957 by Hawker Aircraft at Kingston, allocated to No. 6 Aircraft Repair and Servicing Unit.

During its operational history, XJ602 was assigned to:

- No. 93 Squadron, specializing in Combat Vehicle Fighter Ground Attack
- No. 9 Squadron, 54th Tactical Weapons Unit

On 4 May 1976, the aircraft was abandoned after losing control in cloud cover approximately 2 miles east of Aberystwyth.

Amroth - Bristol Blenheim V6518

Date of Incident: August 13, 1943
Location: Vicinity of Caldey Island, Wales
Aircraft: Bristol Blenheim V6518
Mission: Air-to-sea firing session over Carmarthen Bay

Incident Overview:

On August 13, 1943, Bristol Blenheim V6518, an aircraft from an Air Gunnery School, was lost during a training exercise in the vicinity of Caldey Island. The Blenheim was engaged in an air-to-sea firing session over Carmarthen Bay.

Details of the Incident:

- **Time of Loss:** The aircraft was believed to have gone down between 12:40 and 13:40 hours.
- **Activity:** The Blenheim was conducting a routine firing exercise when it failed to return.
- **Outcome:** Despite a thorough aerial and surface search, neither the aircraft nor its crew was initially found.

Aftermath:

- **Recovery of Bodies:** One week later, the bodies of Sgt. Hugh Graham Montgomery and AC2 Ronald Stanley Pearson were discovered washed ashore on Marros Beach.
- **Missing Crew:** AC2 Clarke AJ and AC2 Watson RB were not recovered and remain missing.

Crew List:

- **Sgt. Hugh Graham Montgomery** - Pilot, Killed
  Find A Grave: Hugh Graham Montgomery
- **AC2 Ronald Stanley Pearson** - Air Gunner under training, Killed
  Find A Grave: Ronald Stanley Pearson
- **AC2 Clarke AJ** - Air Gunner under training, Missing
- **AC Watson RB** - Air Gunner under training, Missing

Subsequent Findings:

- **Recovered Propeller:** In 2002, a complete propeller assembly from a British-built radial engine was accidentally recovered by a whelk fishing boat off the east coast of Caldey Island. The boat's skipper identified the location as deep water.
- **Possible Origin:** Given that both the Bristol Martinet HP380 and Blenheim V6518 used the Bristol Mercury radial engine, the recovered propeller could have originated from either aircraft.

Exhibit Information:

- **Current Display:** The recovered propeller is now exhibited at the restored Control Tower Museum at the former RAF airfield in Carew.

Summary:

The loss of Bristol Blenheim V6518 during a wartime training mission highlights the dangers faced by aircrews during the Second World War. While the recovery of Sergeant. Montgomery and AC2 Pearson's bodies provided some closure, the fates of AC2 Clarke and AC Watson remain unresolved. The recovered propeller serves as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by these airmen.

Angle - Vickers Wellington XII MP638

Name: Vickers Wellington XII MP638
Type: Air Crash Site
NGR: SR882997
Community: Angle
County: Pembrokeshire

Aircraft Overview:

The Vickers Wellington XII MP638 was one of 250 Wellington aircraft (Xs, XIs, XIIs, XIIIs, and XIVs) delivered to the RAF by Vickers-Armstrong, Weybridge, between December 1942 and April 1943.

Service History:

MP638 served with both No. 612 Squadron and the Coastal Command Development Unit during its operational career.

Incident Details:

- **Date:** April 9, 1944
- **Location:** Beach at Freshwater Bay, Angle
- **Event:** While conducting radar trials, the aircraft's engine failed, leading to an emergency belly-landing on the beach.

Current Status:

- **Archaeological Remains:** There are no confirmed archaeological remains associated with the crash at this specific location. However, it is possible that remnants of the aircraft may be present in the surrounding area.

Arenig Fawr - Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress 🇺🇸

Date of Crash: August 4, 1943
Aircraft: Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress
Location: Slopes of Arenig Fawr, North Wales, UK
Fatalities: Eight American crew members

Incident Overview:

On the night of August 4, 1943, a Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress departed from RAF Molesworth in England for a night training mission. Tragically, the aircraft crashed into the slopes of Arenig Fawr, a prominent mountain in North Wales. The crash was catastrophic, resulting in the loss of all eight crew members on board.

Crew Members:

1. **2nd Lt. Leland L. Sorensen** - Pilot
2. **2nd Lt. Arthur R. Jelinek** - Co-Pilot
3. **2nd Lt. John W. Murphy** - Navigator
4. **2nd Lt. James L. Barbaresi** - Bombardier
5. **T/Sgt. Harry L. Raymond** - Engineer/Top Turret Gunner
6. **T/Sgt. Samuel S. Falk** - Radio Operator
7. **S/Sgt. Richard J. Lacy** - Ball Turret Gunner
8. **S/Sgt. Carl D. Lockett** - Tail Gunner

For more information, see the 501st Combat Support Wing article.

Blaenrheidol - Fairey Battle K7589

Name: Fairey Battle K7589
Type: Air Crash Site
NGR: SN7987
Community: Blaenrheidol
County: Ceredigion

Aircraft Overview:

The Fairey Battle K7589 was delivered to No. 226 Squadron on October 24, 1937.

Incident Details:

- **Date:** October 6, 1938
- **Event:** During a navigation exercise, the aircraft flew into high ground in cloud cover.
- **Location:** Plynlimon, approximately 8 miles west of Llanidloes.

Current Status:

The crash site is in the Blaenrheidol community within Ceredigion.

Blaenrheidol - F-5E Lockheed Lightning 44-24229

Name: F-5E Lockheed Lightning 44-24229
Type: Air Crash Site
NGR: SN79358664
Community: Blaenrheidol
County: Ceredigion

Incident Overview:

On September 11, 1945, the Lockheed Lightning 44-24229 from the 27th Photographic Reconnaissance Unit crashed into the high slopes of Plynlimon. The accident resulted in the loss of the pilot.

Details of the Incident:

- **Event:** The pilot, disoriented and uncertain of his position, temporarily lost control of the aircraft. Striking the ground at excessive airspeed, the aircraft disintegrated over approximately 1 mile.
- **Current Status:** Remnants of the aircraft, including parts of the propeller shaft and an aluminium casing marked with 'KHADDLETON VI7I - 030 54018 7064,' have been found at the crash site. It is reported that some parts were dismantled and removed sometime between 2003 and 2004 (A. Pyper, March 2013).

Blaenrheidol - Hunting Jet Provost T.4 XP564

Name: Hunting Jet Provost T.4 XP564
Type: Air Crash Site
NGR: SN7687
Community: Blaenrheidol
County: Ceredigion

Aircraft Overview:

- **Manufacture and Delivery:** The Hunting Jet Provost T.4 XP564 was one of 100 aircraft delivered between October 1961 and December 1962 under contract KC/E/041.
- **Service History:** The aircraft served with several units, including:
  - Royal Air Force College
  - 3 Flying Training School
  - Central Air Traffic Control School
  - 6 Flying Training School
  - 1 Tactical Weapons Unit

Incident Details:

- **Date:** April 22, 1982
- **Location:** Nant-y-Moch Reservoir
- **Cause:** The engine lost power due to a disconnected throttle linkage, prompting the pilot to abandon the aircraft.
- **Outcome:** The aircraft was abandoned before crashing into the reservoir, resulting in no loss of life.

Blaenrheidol - Lockheed Hudson V9127 🇦🇺

Name: Lockheed Hudson V9127
Type: Air Crash Site
NGR: SN79438265
Community: Blaenrheidol
County: Pembrokeshire
Siting: Terrestrial

Incident Overview:

On February 10, 1942, the Lockheed Hudson V9127 was on a fuel consumption test flight when it crashed near Ponterwyd due to technical issues.

Crew:

- **Flight Officer:** From the Royal Australian Air Force
- **Two RAF Airmen:** From 1 FTU (Ferry Training Unit), RAF Honeybourne

All crew members perished in the accident.

Designation:

The remains of the aircraft are designated as a Protected Place under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986.

Although the precise location of the wreckage is not known, it is legally protected.

Borth - Supermarine Spitfire VB BL905

Name: Supermarine Spitfire VB BL905
Type: Air Crash Site
NGR: SN6080
Community: Borth
County: Ceredigion

Aircraft Overview:

The Supermarine Spitfire VB BL905 was among 1,000 Spitfires delivered to the RAF between November 1941 and November 1942.

The aircraft served with several squadrons during its operational career, including:

- No. 154 Squadron
- No. 340 Squadron
- No. 41 Squadron
- No. 302 Squadron
- No. 306 Squadron

Incident Details:

- **Date:** December 28, 1943
- **Event:** The aircraft's engine failed due to a glycol leak.
- **Location:** BL905 belly-landed approximately 2 miles south of Borth.

Burton - Hawker Henley I L3387

Name: Hawker Henley I L3387
Type: Air Crash Site
NGR: SM981055
Community: Burton
County: Pembrokeshire

Aircraft Overview:

The Hawker Henley I L3387 was one of 200 Henleys delivered to the RAF by Glosters, Hucclecote, under contract 540805/36 between November 1938 and September 1940.

During its service, the aircraft was assigned to several units, including:

- 5 Air Observers School
- 1 Anti-Aircraft Co-operation Unit
- 1609 Flight
- 595 Squadron

Incident Details:

- **Date:** June 6, 1944
- **Event:** The aircraft experienced an engine failure, leading to a belly-landing.
- **Location:** The belly-landing occurred at Burton, Pembrokeshire.

Brawdy - De Havilland Mosquito HR495

Name: De Havilland Mosquito HR495
Type: Air Crash Site
NGR: SM865251
Community: Brawdy
County: Pembrokeshire

Incident Overview:

De Havilland Mosquito HR495, assigned to No. 8 Operational Training Unit, experienced critical issues on April 9, 1945.

Details of the Incident:

- **Date:** April 9, 1945
- **Event:** The aircraft overshot its intended landing at Brawdy aerodrome, lost power, and was forced to land approximately one mile from the aerodrome.
- **Aftermath:** Upon landing, the aircraft caught fire, resulting in the tragic loss of both crew members.

Brawdy - De Havilland Sea Vampire XA106

Name: De Havilland Sea Vampire XA106
Type: Air Crash Site
NGR: SM8525
Community: Brawdy
County: Pembrokeshire

Incident Overview:

On July 5, 1958, a De Havilland Sea Vampire (Mark 22, Serial Number XA106) from No. 727 Squadron, stationed at Brawdy airfield, crashed due to a loss of height during a roll manoeuvre.

Details of the Incident:

- **Date:** July 5, 1958
- **Event:** The aircraft lost altitude while performing a roll, leading to a crash into the ground.
- **Outcome:** The pilot tragically lost their life in the accident.

Crash Location:

- **Location:** The crash occurred at Brawdy, Pembrokeshire. Specific details regarding the exact crash site are not available.

Brawdy - Hawker Hunter T.7 XL583

Name: Hawker Hunter T.7 XL583
Type: Air Crash Site
NGR: SM8328
Community: Brawdy
County: Pembrokeshire

Aircraft Overview:

The Hawker Hunter T.7 XL583 was one of 55 Hunter aircraft delivered between December 1957 and February 1958 by Hawkers at Kingston to 6/Aircraft/12626. The aircraft served with the following units:

- 229 Operational Conversion Unit
- 1 Tactical Weapons Unit

Incident Details:

- **Date:** December 1, 1981
- **Event:** The aircraft experienced a loss of engine power during its approach. The pilot abandoned the aircraft, which subsequently crashed 1.5 miles north of Brawdy.

Current Status:

- **Location:** The crash site is located approximately 1.5 miles north of Brawdy.

Brawdy - Westland Whirlwind HAS 7 XK939

Name: Westland Whirlwind HAS 7 XK939
Type: Air Crash Site
NGR: SM8725
Community: Brawdy
County: Pembrokeshire
Siting: Terrestrial

Incident Overview:

On July 24, 1963, a Westland Whirlwind HAS 7 XK939, operating from HMS Goldcrest (Brawdy) on a Search and Rescue test flight, encountered heavy cloud conditions and crashed approximately 1 nautical mile east of Brawdy, near Treffgarne Owen. The crash resulted in the tragic loss of all three crew members on board.

Crew Members:

- **Lt. Cdr. Peter John O'Callaghan, Royal Navy** – Pilot
- **Lt. David Michael Provan, Royal Navy** – Observer
- **Leading Airman John Henry Boyes, Royal Navy** – Aircrewman

Their names are commemorated in recognition of their service and sacrifice during this Search and Rescue test flight near Brawdy, Pembrokeshire.

Burry Port - Miles Martinet HP366

Aircraft: Miles Martinet HP366
Date: November 20, 1943

Incident Overview:

- **Location:** Ty Newydd Farm, just north of Burry Port, Wales
- **Mission:** Simulated air gunnery practice

Details of the Collision:

- **Time:** Approximately 09:35 hrs
- **Activity:** The area above Ty Newydd Farm, situated on Mynydd Pembrey, was frequently used for air gunnery exercises due to its sparse habitation and suitability for training.
- **Sequence of Events:**
    - Glyn and Irfon Davies, working under the supervision of their grandfather Tom at the farm, heard two aircraft circling in close formation.
    - A sudden, distinctive thud indicated a mid-air collision.
    - They witnessed Martinet HP366 spinning and falling.
    - The aircraft crashed into a hedge near the farmhouse and caught fire.

Aftermath:

- **Rescue Efforts:** Tom Davies attempted to break open the Martinet's canopy with a billhook but was forced to retreat due to the intense heat. Emergency services arrived promptly but could not save the crew.
- **Observations:** The crash site is marked by stunted undergrowth along an otherwise undamaged hedge. Pieces of molten aluminium are scattered at the site where HP366 burned out. The distinctive chimney stacks of the now-demolished Carmarthen Bay Power Station are visible nearby.

Crew List:

- **Sgt. Richard Williamson Rigby** – Pilot
  Find A Grave
- **LAC Harold "Lal" Egerton** – Tow Operator
  Find A Grave

Caldy Island - Miles Martinet HP380

Incident Overview:

- **Date:** July 25, 1943
- **Location:** Near Caldey Island, Wales
- **Aircraft Involved:** Miles Martinet HP380 and Blenheim N3536
- **Mission:** Target firing exercise over Carmarthen Bay

Details of the Collision:

- **Time:** Approximately 08:50 hrs
- **Activity:** During a target firing exercise, the Martinet HP380 was towing a target for the Blenheim N3536, which was used for gunnery practice. Both aircraft were from a local RAF station, potentially RAF Haverfordwest.

Sequence of Events:

- For reasons unknown, the Martinet HP380 and Blenheim N3536 collided mid-air.
- **Blenheim N3536:**
  - **Pilot:** Sgt. Weiss
  - Despite sustaining damage, Sgt. Weiss managed to return the Blenheim safely to base.
- **Martinet HP380:**
  - **Crew:**
    - **Pilot:** Sgt. Anthony Agar (Canadian)
    - **Tow-Operator:** AC John Hendrick
  - The Martinet crashed into the sea approximately one mile east of Caldey Island.

Aftermath:

- An RAF air-sea rescue launch from Tenby responded promptly.
- The body of AC John Hendrick and the Martinet's tail section were recovered.

- Sgt. Anthony Agar's body was not found, and he is presumed to have perished in the crash.

Subsequent Findings:

- In 2002, a propeller assembly from a radial engine was trawled up off Caldey Island. The reduction gear suggested it could belong to one of the aircraft involved in the 1943 collision.

Summary:

This tragic incident underscores the risks faced by RAF crews during World War II training exercises. The recovery of AC John Hendrick's body offered some closure, but Sgt. Anthony Agar's fate remains a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by airmen during the war.

Martinet HP380 Crew:

- **Pilot:** Sgt. Anthony Agar (Canadian)
  Find A Grave
- **Tow-Operator:** AC John Hendrick
  Find A Grave

Blenheim N3536:

- **Pilot:** Sgt. Weiss

Carew - Beaufighter TT10 RD806

Name: Beaufighter TT10 RD806
Type: Air Crash Site
NGR: SN063032
Community: Carew
County: Pembrokeshire

Incident Overview:

- **Date:** August 7, 1951
- **Aircraft Involved:** Beaufighter TT10 RD806
- **Assigned To:** Squadron 5

Details of the Incident:

- **Event:** During a sortie, approximately 80 minutes into the exercise, the pilot contacted Manorbier base to report that he was returning. Shortly thereafter, the aircraft changed direction and began to circle, likely attempting a forced landing at Carew Cheriton.
- **Witness Report:** The aircraft was observed flying on one engine and losing altitude. It made a sharp turn, collided with trees, and broke up, scattering debris across the field.
- **Cause:** The crash was attributed to water in the engine carburettor, which caused the engine to cut out.

Aftermath:

- **Casualties:** Both crew members on board were killed in the accident.

Summary:

The crash of Beaufighter TT10 RD806 on August 7, 1951, highlights the challenges and risks associated with forced landings and engine failures. Despite the pilot's efforts to safely return to base, the presence of water in the carburettor led to a tragic outcome. The site of the crash remains a sombre reminder of the sacrifices made by those who served.

Carew - Bristol Blenheim IV T1806

Name: Bristol Blenheim IV T1806
Type: Air Crash Site
NGR: SN0502
Community: Carew
County: Pembrokeshire

Incident Overview:

- **Date:** March 25, 1941
- **Aircraft Involved:** Bristol Blenheim IV T1806
- **Assigned To:** 236 Squadron
- **Mission:** The aircraft was on approach to Carew Cheriton when the crash occurred.

Details of the Incident:

- **Event:** Bristol Blenheim T1806, one of 400 Blenheim IVs delivered between June and October 1940, crashed while attempting to land at Carew Cheriton. The precise cause of the crash is not detailed, but such incidents often involved issues with navigation, engine trouble, or adverse weather conditions.

Crew Information:

- A Blenheim IV typically had a crew of three:
  - **Pilot:** Responsible for flying the aircraft.
  - **Observer/Navigator:** Responsible for navigation and bomb aiming.
  - **Wireless Operator/Air Gunner:** Responsible for communications and operating the defensive armament.

Summary:

The crash of Bristol Blenheim IV T1806 on March 25, 1941, serves as a reminder of the risks faced by RAF crews during World War II. The specific circumstances leading to the crash remain unclear, but the standard crew of the Blenheim IV would have included a pilot, navigator, and wireless operator/air gunner. The site of the crash remains a poignant memorial to those who served and the challenges they faced.

Carew Cheriton - Hawker Hurricane N2728

Name: Hawker Hurricane N2728
Type: Air Crash Site
Location: Near Carew Cheriton, Pembrokeshire
Date: October 25, 1940

Incident Overview:

- **Pilot:** Flying Officer Stanisław Piątkowski
- **Squadron:** 308 (Polish) Squadron
- **Mission:** Routine patrol over Linney Head
- **Event:** While returning from a routine patrol, the Hurricane N2728 piloted by Flying Officer Stanisław Piątkowski tragically crashed near Carew Cheriton.

Details of the Crash:

- **Circumstances:** The exact circumstances leading to the crash are not detailed, but it highlights the inherent dangers faced by pilots during routine operations. Such accidents could be caused by mechanical failure, poor weather conditions, or pilot error.
- **Outcome:** The crash resulted in the death of Flying Officer Piątkowski, marking a significant loss to his squadron and the RAF.

Aftermath:

- **Significance:** The death of Flying Officer Stanisław Piątkowski was deeply felt by the 308 (Polish) Squadron and the broader war effort. His service and sacrifice

are remembered as part of the collective effort of Polish pilots who played a crucial role in the RAF during World War II.

Memorial:

- **Commemoration:** Piątkowski is buried and memorialized for his bravery and service. His contributions, along with those of many Polish pilots, are recognized as vital to the Allied victory in World War II. More about his life and sacrifice can be found on his Find a Grave memorial page.

Carew - Fairey Battle K9472

Name: Fairey Battle K9472
Type: Air Crash Site
Location: Near Carew Cheriton, Pembrokeshire
Date: October 29, 1939

Incident Overview:

- **Aircraft:** Fairey Battle K9472
- **Squadron:** 35 Squadron, RAF Cranfield
- **Mission:** Air gunnery practice
- **Event:** Fairey Battle K9472 was one of four Battles detached to Carew Cheriton for air gunnery practice. During the exercise, the aircraft was seen circling and possibly on fire before crashing into a cliff face.

Details of the Crash:

- **Circumstances:** The aircraft turned crosswind after take-off and then turned left downwind towards the airfield. It lost height and flew into the cliff face. The possibility of an onboard fire could have contributed to the aircraft's loss of control.
- **Outcome:** All three crew members aboard were killed in the crash. The aircraft was deemed irreparable and was officially struck off charge on December 19, 1939.

Crew:

- Unfortunately, the specific names and roles of the crew members who perished in the crash are not provided in the details. Typically, a Fairey Battle would have a crew of three: a pilot, an observer/navigator, and an air gunner.

Aftermath:

- **Significance:** The loss of Fairey Battle K9472 and its crew highlights the risks associated with training exercises, especially in the early years of World War II. Such incidents underscore the challenging conditions and the potential for mechanical failure or other unforeseen issues during flight.

Carew - Wellington I L4232

- **Name:** Wellington I L4232
- **Type:** Air Crash Site
- **Location:** Carew Cheriton, Pembrokeshire
- **Date:** September 19, 1939

Incident Overview:

- **Aircraft:** Vickers Wellington I, Serial Number L4232
- **Squadron:** 99 Squadron, Royal Air Force
- **Mission:** The aircraft was being prepared for a sortie.

Details of the Crash:

- **Conflicting Accounts:**
  - **Collision Account:** One account suggests that Wellington L4232 collided with a Hawker Henley during landing at Carew Cheriton.
  - **Operational Record Book Account:** The Operational Record Book of 99 Squadron does not mention a collision. Instead, it reports that Wellington L4232 crashed on take-off due to an engine failure.
- **Outcome:** The aircraft was written off following the crash. The four crew members sustained injuries but survived the incident.

Aftermath:

- **Aircraft Recovery:** Parts of the wreck were salvaged and recycled for use on other Wellington aircraft. The remaining unusable parts were scrapped.

- **Significance:** The incident underscores the challenges faced by RAF crews during the early days of World War II. Engine failures and mechanical issues were not uncommon and often led to accidents.

Summary:

The crash of Wellington I L4232 at Carew Cheriton on September 19, 1939, illustrates the hazards encountered by RAF personnel during training and operational preparations. Despite the conflicting accounts of the circumstances leading to the crash, the incident resulted in injuries to the crew but thankfully no fatalities. The recovery and recycling of parts from the wreckage highlight the resourcefulness required during wartime aviation operations.

Carew - Wellington I L4232

- **Name:** Wellington I L4232
- **Type:** Air Crash Site
- **Location:** Carew Cheriton (Carew Airfield), Pembrokeshire, Wales
- **Date:** Night of 17/18 December 1940
- **Unit:** No. 12 Operational Training Unit (OTU), Royal Air Force

Incident Overview:

- **Aircraft:** Vickers Wellington I, Serial Number L4232
- **Mission:** Training mission with No. 12 OTU

Details of the Crash:

- **Events Leading to the Crash:**
  Wellington I L4232 was engaged in a training exercise with No. 12 Operational Training Unit when it crashed at Carew Airfield. The specific circumstances leading to the crash, such as the cause, exact timing, and any contributing factors, are typically documented in military records or historical accounts of RAF operations during World War II. However, exact details of these events are often scarce and may require access to specific historical archives or documentation.

Aftermath:

- **Casualties:** Information on casualties is typically documented in official records. Details about injuries or fatalities, if any, would have been recorded in military accident reports.

- **Significance:** The crash reflects the inherent dangers of training missions during wartime, where crews were often placed in challenging situations to prepare for operational sorties.

Summary:

The crash of Wellington I L4232 on the night of 17/18 December 1940 at Carew Airfield highlights the risks associated with training operations during World War II. As part of No. 12 OTU, the aircraft was involved in preparing crews for combat missions. While specific details of the crash may be sparse, such incidents were not uncommon as aircrews honed their skills under wartime conditions. The incident underscores the importance of thorough training and the perils faced by RAF personnel during their preparations for active service.

Carnedd Llywelyn - Avro Lincoln Bomber

Date of Crash: 15 March 1950
Aircraft: Avro Lincoln Bomber
Location: Carnedd Llewelyn, Snowdonia, North Wales, UK
Fatalities: Six crew members

Incident Overview

On 15 March 1950, an Avro Lincoln bomber from RAF Scampton, Lincolnshire, was conducting a routine training flight. Due to poor weather conditions, the aircraft was redirected to RAF Valley on Anglesey. Tragically, the bomber crashed into the mountainous region of Carnedd Llewelyn, resulting in the deaths of all six crew members on board. Witnesses reported seeing a "ball of fire in the valley," indicating the violent nature of the crash.

Aircraft Details

- **Avro Lincoln Bomber:**
  The Avro Lincoln was a British four-engine heavy bomber developed by Avro as an evolution of the Avro Lancaster. It served primarily in the post-war period and was used for various roles, including bombing and maritime patrol.

Crew Members

The six crew members who lost their lives in the crash were aged between 22 and 32. Here are the details of each crew member:

1. **Squadron Leader John Talbot Lovell Shore, 32:**
   - Had more than a decade of flying experience.
   - In 1941, his Wellington bomber was shot down, and he was imprisoned in the German POW camp, Stalag Luft 1.

    - He famously escaped from the camp by digging a 25-foot tunnel with another prisoner using pocketknives.
    - Find A Grave Memorial for John Talbot Lovell Shore
2. **Flight Lieutenant Cyril Alfred Lindsay, 26:**
    - Had married less than a year before the crash.
    - His wife was heavily pregnant with their son at the time of the crash.
    - Find A Grave Memorial for Cyril Alfred Lindsay
3. **Engineer Ronald Albert Forsdyke, 29:**
    - Received the Distinguished Flying Cross after a tour of duty with Bomber Command No 61 Squadron during World War II.
    - Buried with full military honours in Maeshyfryd Cemetery, Holyhead.
4. **Gunner Robert Henry Wood, 27:**
    - Worked as a bus driver in Sunderland after demobilization in 1946.
    - Married with a seven-month-old daughter, he re-enlisted in the RAF three months before the crash.
5. **Gunner Godfrey L. Cundy, 27:**
    - Came from a strong RAF family.
    - Originally served as a rear gunner in a Lancaster squadron during the war.
    - Employed as a production manager after demobilization but re-enlisted five months before the crash due to his love for flying.
6. **Signaller Harold H. Charman, 22:**
    - From Surrey, he was the youngest crew member and the only one who had not seen wartime action.
    - Buried with full military honours in Maeshyfryd Cemetery, Holyhead.

Aftermath and Significance

The crash of the Avro Lincoln bomber near Carnedd Llewelyn underscores the hazards faced by RAF crews even during routine training missions, exacerbated by poor weather conditions. The tragic loss of the crew members, many of whom had distinguished wartime service records, is a sombre reminder of the continued sacrifices made by military personnel in the post-war period. The incident is remembered for the heroism and dedication of those who served in the Royal Air Force.

Carmarthen - De Havilland Sea Vampire FB5 VZ309

Date of Crash: 5th July 1958
Aircraft: De Havilland Sea Vampire FB5 VZ309
Location: Near Carmarthen, Wales
Fatalities: Pilot

Incident Overview

On 5th July 1958, a De Havilland Sea Vampire FB5, serial number VZ309, crashed near Carmarthen, Wales. The aircraft was performing a routine flight when it experienced a loss of height during a roll manoeuvre, leading to a crash. The pilot was tragically killed in the accident.

Aircraft Details

- **De Havilland Sea Vampire FB5:**
  The De Havilland Sea Vampire was a British jet fighter developed from the Vampire, adapted for carrier operations. It was one of the first jet fighters to enter service with the Royal Navy, known for its distinctive twin-boom design and straight wings.

Circumstances of the Crash

- **Loss of Height:**
  During a roll manoeuvre, the aircraft lost height and subsequently crashed. The reasons for the loss of height and the specifics of the manoeuvre are not detailed in the available accounts.
- **Pilot:**
  The identity of the pilot has not been detailed in the given context. However, it is noted that the pilot was tragically killed in the crash.

Aftermath and Significance

The crash of the De Havilland Sea Vampire FB5 VZ309 highlights the inherent risks of jet aircraft operations during the early years of jet propulsion technology. The incident serves as a reminder of the challenges faced by pilots transitioning from propeller-driven aircraft to jets, particularly in terms of handling and manoeuvrability. This tragic accident underscores the ongoing sacrifices made by military personnel during peacetime operations and training exercises.

Carmarthen - Hawker Hunter T.7 XL593

Date of Crash: 5th August 1982
Aircraft: Hawker Hunter T.7 XL593
Location: 4.5 miles northwest of Carmarthen, Carmarthenshire, Wales
Type: Air crash site

Incident Overview

On 5th August 1982, the Hawker Hunter T.7 XL593, a British jet trainer and fighter aircraft, experienced an in-flight engine failure while flying northwest of Carmarthen, Wales. The aircraft was abandoned, and the crew ejected safely, but the plane was destroyed on impact with the ground.

Aircraft Details

- **Hawker Hunter T.7 XL593:**
  The Hawker Hunter T.7 was a two-seat trainer version of the renowned Hawker Hunter fighter jet. The T.7 was used extensively for training pilots transitioning to jet fighters due to its excellent handling and performance characteristics.
- **Serial Number:** XL593

Service History

The Hawker Hunter T.7 XL593 was delivered between December 1957 and February 1958 and served with several units, including:

- **Fighter Control School:**
  The school was responsible for training personnel in air defense and fighter control operations.

- **229 Operational Conversion Unit:**
  This unit provided advanced training for pilots converting to the Hunter aircraft, focusing on tactics and operational procedures.

Circumstances of the Crash

- **Engine Failure:**
  A compressor blade detached during the flight, leading to a catastrophic engine failure. This resulted in a complete loss of power, rendering the aircraft unable to continue flying.
- **Abandonment:**
  The crew safely ejected from the aircraft following the engine failure. The aircraft subsequently crashed 4.5 miles northwest of Carmarthen, but no injuries were reported.

Aftermath and Significance

The crash of the Hawker Hunter T.7 XL593 underscores the challenges faced in maintaining jet aircraft, particularly as they age. The incident highlights the importance of rigorous maintenance and inspection routines to ensure the safety and reliability of high-performance military aircraft. Despite the loss of the aircraft, the successful ejection of the crew is a testament to the effectiveness of the emergency systems and training provided to military aviators.

Castlemartin - Miles Martinet I MS529

- **Name**: Miles Martinet I MS529
- **Type**: Air crash site
- **NGR**: SR9295
- **Community**: Castlemartin
- **County**: Pembrokeshire

Aircraft Overview:

- **Fleet**: MS529 was part of a fleet of 355 aircraft delivered to the Royal Air Force by Philips & Powis of Reading between July and November 1943.
- **Design Purpose**: The Martinet was designed primarily as a target tug.
- **Service History**: During its service, MS529 was assigned to 287, 567, and 595 Squadrons.

Incident Details:

- **Date**: 31 August 1944
- **Squadron**: 595 Squadron
- **Mission Type**: Training mission to provide aerial targets for anti-aircraft gunnery practice and other training exercises.

Crash Circumstances:

- **Conditions**: The mission involved flying in conditions that required precise handling and navigation, potentially in poor weather and cloud cover.
- **Incident**: MS529 encountered difficulties during the mission and spun out of the cloud.

Cefn Sidan - Hawker Hurricane Z2324

- **Name**: Hawker Hurricane Z2324
- **Date of Crash**: May 8, 1941
- **Location**: Cefn Sidan Beach, Wales

Incident Overview:

- **Mission**: Target practice
- **Pilot**: Olech Antoni Kawczyński

Circumstances:

- **Details**: During a routine target practice session over Cefn Sidan Beach, the Hawker Hurricane Z2324 crashed, leading to the death of its pilot, Olech Antoni Kawczyński. The exact circumstances of the crash remain unknown, but it serves as a stark reminder of the risks faced by pilots during World War II.

Pilot Background:

- **Name**: Olech Antoni Kawczyński
- **Date of Birth**: February 20, 1916
- **Place of Birth**: Wudzyn, Poland
- **Military Service**: Before joining the Royal Air Force, Kawczyński served in the Polish Army, where he achieved the rank of Lieutenant. His service in the RAF was marked by a strong sense of duty and patriotism.

Legacy:

- **Memorial**: Olech Antoni Kawczyński on Find A Grave

The tragic loss of Olech Antoni Kawczyński in this accident highlights the bravery and sacrifice of those who served during the war. His early life and service in both the Polish and British forces reflect his dedication to the cause of freedom.

Cefn Sidan - Hawker Hurricane Mk1 P3122

- **Aircraft**: Hawker Hurricane Mk1 P3122
- **Date of Crash**: February 24, 1941
- **Location**: Cefn Sidan Beach, Wales

Incident Overview:

- **Mission**: Air-to-ground strafing practice
- **Pilot**: Sgt. Charles Albert Venn

Circumstances:

- **Details**: During a strafing practice session over Cefn Sidan Beach, Sgt. Venn, a relatively inexperienced pilot with only 12 hours of flight time on Hurricanes, descended too low and fired his guns for an extended period. This misjudgement led him to collide with an obstruction on the beach, likely an anti-invasion pole, causing the aircraft to crash into the sea.

Pilot Background:

- **Name**: Sgt. Charles Albert Venn
- **Age at Time of Crash**: 26
- **Service History**: Sgt. Venn had earned his wings in November 1940, and despite his limited experience, he was engaged in critical training exercises.

Cause of Accident:

- **Determined Cause**: The crash was attributed to Sgt. Venn's misjudgement during the strafing dive, which led to his failure to avoid the obstruction.

Legacy:

- **Memorial**: Charles Albert Venn on Find A Grave

The tragic loss of Sgt. Venn underscores the challenges and risks faced by pilots during their training. His accident at Cefn Sidan serves as a reminder of the crucial importance of skill and caution in aviation practice.

Cefn Sidan - Hurricane Z2324

- **Aircraft**: Hurricane Z2324
- **Date of Crash**: May 8, 1941
- **Location**: Cefn Sidan Beach, Carmarthenshire, Wales
- **NGR**: SN3504
- **Siting**: Terrestrial

Incident Overview:

- **Mission**: Air-to-ground firing exercise
- **Unit**: 32 Squadron

Circumstances:

- **Details**: During a training exercise involving air-to-ground firing practice, Hurricane Z2324 failed to pull up in time and crashed on Cefn Sidan beach. The aircraft was performing low-level strafing runs when it encountered difficulties.

Pilot:

- **Name**: Sergeant Colin John Preston
- **Service Number**: 1163865
- **Burial**: Pembrey (St. Illtyd) Churchyard

Cause of Accident:

- **Determined Cause**: The crash was attributed to the pilot's failure to pull up during the firing exercise, which led to the aircraft impacting the beach.

Legacy:

- **Memorial**: Sergeant Colin John Preston is commemorated in Pembrey (St. Illtyd) Churchyard.

Cefn Sidan - Spitfire BM211

- **Name**: Spitfire BM211
- **Type**: Air crash site
- **NGR**: SN3805
- **Community**: Cefn Sidan
- **County**: Carmarthenshire

Incident Overview:

- **Date**: April 25, 1945
- **Location**: Gwendraeth Marshes, Cefn Sidan

Details:

- **Aircraft**: Spitfire BM211
- **Unit**: 1 Air Gunnery School
- **Mission**: The Spitfire was involved in gunnery training exercises at the time of the crash.

Circumstances:

- **Cause**: The precise cause of the crash is not known.
- **Crash Site**: The aircraft crashed into Gwendraeth Marshes.

Legacy:

- The crash site remains a historical point of interest, highlighting the training activities conducted in the area during World War II. The loss of Spitfire BM211

underscores the risks associated with gunnery training and the broader wartime efforts of the Royal Air Force.

The absence of detailed information on the cause of the crash adds to the historical intrigue of this incident, reflecting the often-incomplete records of such events.

Cefn Sidan - Spitfire TB988

- **Name**: Spitfire TB988
- **Type**: Air crash site
- **NGR**: SN3805
- **Community**: Cefn Sidan
- **County**: Carmarthenshire

Incident Overview:

- **Date**: June 17, 1949
- **Location**: Gwendraeth Marshes, Cefn Sidan

Details:

- **Aircraft**: Spitfire TB988
- **Unit**: Squadron 5
- **Mission**: The aircraft was on a routine or training flight at the time of the crash.

Circumstances:

- **Cause**: The precise cause of the crash is not known.
- **Outcome**: Tragically, the pilot of Spitfire TB988 lost their life in the accident.

Legacy:

- The crash site in Gwendraeth Marshes serves as a sombre reminder of the risks faced by pilots in the post-war period. The lack of detailed information about the cause of the crash adds to the historical significance of the site, reflecting the sometimes-incomplete nature of historical aviation records.

The incident highlights the continued challenges and dangers of aviation even after World War II, emphasizing the sacrifices made by service members during their training and operational duties.

Cefn Sidan - Vickers Wellington X LN553

- **Name**: Vickers Wellington X LN553
- **Type**: Air crash site
- **NGR**: SN3777005440
- **Community**: Cefn Sidan
- **County**: Carmarthenshire

Incident Overview:

- **Date**: January 6, 1945
- **Location**: Kidwelly Marshes, near Pembrey airfield

Details:

- **Aircraft**: Vickers Wellington X LN553
- **Unit**: No. 1 Air Gunnery School

Circumstances:

- **Cause**: The aircraft stalled and dived into the marshes.
- **Outcome**: Tragically, six of the seven crew members lost their lives in the crash. The only survivor was the rear gunner.

Wreckage and Recovery:

- **Location**: The wreckage is situated just north of Pembrey airfield, within the Pembrey weapons range, at the edge of a large creek.
- **Condition**: The Wellington bomber was heavily damaged during the crash. Over time, locals have removed engines and other parts from the wreckage. The starboard side of the aircraft is partially buried in the salt marsh.

Access:

- **Permission Required**: Access to the crash site requires authorization from the RAF due to its location within a military range area.

The site of Vickers Wellington X LN553 serves as a poignant reminder of the risks faced by aircrews during World War II training missions. The preservation of the site and its history is essential for honouring those who perished and understanding the challenges of wartime aviation.

Cenarth - Vickers Wellington JA453

Name: Vickers Wellington JA453
Type: Air crash site
NGR: SN265414
Community: Cenarth
County: Ceredigion

Description:

Vickers Wellington JA453, assigned to the 83 Operational Training Unit, was one of the 337 Wellington Xs and XIIIs delivered to the RAF between June and December 1943. On the night of August 23, 1944, at approximately 10 minutes before midnight, the aircraft suffered engine failure. The crew attempted an emergency landing across Argoed meadows but tragically crashed into the River Teifi.

The aircraft came to rest in a quarry on the riverbank. Out of the six crew members on board, four lost their lives in the crash.

Crew Members:

While the exact names of the crew members are not detailed typical crew members for a Wellington bomber included:

1. **Pilot**
2. **Navigator/Bomb Aimer**
3. **Wireless Operator/Air Gunner**
4. **Rear Gunner**
5. **Front Gunner (if applicable)**
6. **Flight Engineer (if applicable)**

The site of the crash is known for its challenging terrain, and the aircraft wreckage remains a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by the crew during World War II.

The area around the crash site, including the River Teifi and the quarry, has likely undergone changes over the years, but the crash remains a significant historical event in the region.

Conwy - Avro Anson Mk I N5130

Date: February 15, 1944
Aircraft: Avro Anson Mk I (N5130)
Location: Near Marl Woods, Llandudno Junction, North Wales, UK
Time of Crash: Approximately 15:35
Fatalities: All five members of the crew

Incident Overview:

On February 15, 1944, Avro Anson Mk I N5130 encountered a catastrophic mechanical failure while flying over Llandudno Junction. The aircraft crashed into a field known as Cae Erw, located north of Marl Woods and near Bodysgallen Hall Hotel. Tragically, all five crew members aboard the aircraft perished in the crash.

Crew Members:

- **Flight Sergeant Melville Owen Samuels** (aged 23)
  Grave Information
- The names of the other four crew members are not detailed here but were also tragically lost.

The crash of Avro Anson Mk I N5130 serves as a poignant reminder of the dangers faced by aircrew during World War II. Flight Sergeant Melville Owen Samuels and his fellow crew members are remembered for their service and sacrifice.

Craig Fan Ddu - Supermarine Spitfire X548

- **Type of Aircraft:** Supermarine Spitfire
- **Designation:** X548
- **Date of Crash:** 23rd May 1942
- **Location of Crash:** Craig Fan Ddu, approximately 5 km south of Pen y Fan, Corn Ddu, and the main peaks in the centre of the Brecon Beacons National Park (grid reference roughly SO0118)
- **Period:** WWII
- **Reason for Flight:** Not specified.
- **Reason for Crash:** Bad weather and navigational error
- **Fate of the Aircrew:** Sgt. Donald Perry Carruthers, aged 20, was killed.
- **Wreckage Notes:** The wreckage is minimal and scattered around a small cairn, marked with a Perspex plaque inscribed with details of Sgt. Donald Perry Carruthers and the aircraft.

Description:

One of the most intriguing WWII crash sites in the Brecon Beacons is located at Craig Fan Ddu, approximately 5 km south of the main peaks like Pen y Fan and Corn Ddu. The wreckage of Supermarine Spitfire X548 is found at grid reference SO0118 and is minimal compared to other sites. It is only recognizable by being gathered around a small cairn, which is marked with a Perspex plaque reading: “Sgt. Donald Perry Carruthers crashed Spitfire X548, 23rd May 1942 aged 20. R100418 RCAF.”

The crash was attributed to bad weather and navigational errors. Over the years, many pieces of the Spitfire have been removed, making the site harder to find. It is best approached as part of a walk on the peaks, starting from either the Storey Arms Centre to the west or the Taf Fechan Forest to the south-east.

The Spitfire X548 remains a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by young pilots like Sergeant Donald Perry Carruthers.

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/112776565/donald-perry-carruthers

Crychan Forest - Republic P-47D Thunderbolt 42-26256 🇺🇸

- **Name:** Republic P-47D Thunderbolt 42-26256
- **Type:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SN8438
- **Community:** Llanfair-ar-y-bryn
- **County:** Carmarthenshire

Incident Overview:

The Republic P-47D Thunderbolt, serial number 42-26256, was assigned to the VIII Fighter Command and the 8th Fighter Group, 78th Fighter Squadron. The incident occurred on June 8, 1944, approximately 4 miles northeast of Llandovery, between 17:00 and 18:00.

Details:

- **Flight:** The pilot, who had accumulated 893 flying hours (402 on the P-47D), was on a reconnaissance mission to assess the flight path and terrain near St. David's. He was expected back by 18:00.
- **Weather:** The weather forecast predicted low ceilings and obscured visibility due to rain clouds.
- **Takeoff:** The aircraft took off at 16:15.
- **Incident:** After the fuel limit was exceeded and the aircraft failed to return, a search was initiated. The wreckage was discovered at 10:00 the following morning by a pilot on a similar route. The P-47D had collided with a ridge, missing a clearance by just 3 feet, and then plunged into a ravine, scattering debris across a wide area.

Fate of the Pilot:

The pilot was tragically killed in the crash.

Cwmffrwd - Supermarine Spitfire I K9904

Name: Supermarine Spitfire I K9904
Type: Air crash site
NGR: SN4217
Community: Cwmffrwd
County: Carmarthenshire

Description:
The Supermarine Spitfire I K9904 was a remarkable aircraft, being one of the 310 Spitfires produced in the first production batch. Delivered to No. 65 Squadron on 22 March 1939, this aircraft played a role in the early years of World War II, participating in the Battle of Britain, a critical air campaign that helped to secure the UK against German invasion.

Throughout its service, K9904 was reassigned multiple times. On 31 May 1940, it was assigned to 43 Group, followed by a brief assignment to 1 CRU on 29 May 1940, reflecting the aircraft's constant use and the shifting needs of the RAF during the war. By 15 August 1940, it was sent to 24 Maintenance Unit, where it likely underwent repairs or modifications to ensure its continued effectiveness in battle.

The Spitfire returned to 65 Squadron on 19 August 1940 and continued to serve valiantly during the Battle of Britain. Later, it was assigned to 65/53 Operational Training Unit, where it contributed to training new pilots on the highly respected Spitfire platform.

Tragically, on 3 September 1941, the aircraft was involved in an incident that resulted in a forced landing near Cwmffrwd, Carmarthen. The forced landing caused significant damage to the aircraft, leading to it being struck off charge. The Spitfire was dismantled on site, with any undamaged parts salvaged for future use, reflecting the ongoing resourcefulness and resilience of wartime operations.

Cwmystwyth - Hawker Hunter F.6 XE649

Name: Hawker Hunter F.6 XE649
Type: Air crash site
NGR: SN7973
Community: Aberystwyth
County: Ceredigion

Description:
The Hawker Hunter F.6 XE649 was one of 100 aircraft delivered by Hawkers at Kingston between February 1956 and February 1957 under contract 6/Aircraft/9629. Known for its exceptional performance and design, the Hunter F.6 served in various capacities throughout its operational life.

Service History

Throughout its service, XE649 was assigned to numerous units, highlighting its versatility and the trust placed in it by the Royal Air Force:

- **66/92 Combat Vehicle Fighter Ground Attack:** Played a key role in ground attack missions and training.
- **9/8/43/208/229 Operational Conversion Unit:** Used to train new pilots and convert them to the Hunter's advanced systems.
- **Tactical Weapons Unit (TWU):** Engaged in weapons training and tactical operations.
- **1 Tactical Weapons Unit:** Participated in tactical and strategic training exercises.
- **2 Tactical Weapons Unit:** Supported advanced pilot training and combat readiness.

Incident Overview

On 13 May 1982, while conducting a routine flight, the aircraft's engine caught fire. The pilot successfully ejected and safely parachuted to the ground, leaving XE649 to crash on the moors at Cwmystwyth, approximately 15 miles southeast of Aberystwyth. The cause of the

engine fire was not specified, but the incident underscores the inherent risks of operating high-performance military aircraft.

The crash site at Cwmystwyth is a reminder of the aircraft's legacy and the importance of safety and training in military aviation. The location remains a point of historical interest, marking the service and challenges faced by the Hawker Hunter and its pilots during a pivotal era in aviation history.

Fan Hir - De Havilland Vampire FB5

Type of Aircraft: De Havilland Vampire FB5
Date of Crash: 9 October 1953
Location of Crash: Westerly Black Mountain region, approximately 3-4 km north-north-east of the Wellington bomber crash site, just off the escarpment of Fan Hir
Period: Post-WWII (aircraft introduced in 1945)

Incident Overview

The De Havilland Vampire FB5 was a pioneering jet fighter, brought into service shortly after World War II in 1945. Known for its distinctive twin-boom design and versatile performance, the Vampire was a significant step forward in aviation technology.

On 9 October 1953, a Vampire FB5 crashed in the westerly Black Mountain region. The pilot was navigating through thick cloud cover when the aircraft mistakenly descended into the mountainside. The lack of visual references and challenging weather conditions likely contributed to the accident. Due to the nature of the crash, it is assumed that the fate of the aircrew was fatal, although specific details are not provided.

Wreckage Notes

The crash site is a sombre yet intriguing place, where the remaining wreckage has been arranged into a shape that broadly resembles the fighter's original form. Visitors to the site can observe various instantly recognizable parts of the aircraft, such as the jet exhaust, which remain visible. This arrangement serves as a poignant reminder of the aircraft's history and the dangers faced by pilots during that era.

Historical Significance

The De Havilland Vampire FB5 crash at Fan Hir is an important historical site that attracts aviation enthusiasts and history buffs alike. It highlights the technological advancements of

the time and the challenges associated with the transition to jet-powered flight. The site is also located near the Wellington bomber crash site, providing a deeper context to the region's aviation history.

The crash site continues to be a place of reflection and remembrance for the lives lost and the contributions made by those who flew these early jet aircraft.

Freshwater East – Hurricane 🇵🇱

Name: Stanislaw Waldemar Szmejl
Type: Air crash site
NGR: Not specified
Community: Freshwater East
County: Pembrokeshire

Description:

On June 24, 1941, Stanislaw Waldemar Szmejl's service was tragically cut short when his Hurricane aircraft flew into a cliff at Freshwater East, Pembrokeshire, during a convoy patrol. The incident occurred in poor visibility, which contributed to the accident.

Context:

With the outbreak of World War II and the subsequent invasion of Poland, Szmejl, like many Polish airmen, sought to continue the fight against the Axis powers. He made his way to Great Britain, where the Royal Air Force (RAF) was integrating experienced Polish pilots into its ranks. Szmejl joined the RAF and was assigned to No. 79 Squadron, a unit renowned for its valour and effectiveness in combat. No. 79 Squadron played a crucial role in defending Britain, flying Hawker Hurricanes, one of the most important fighter aircraft of the war. As a Flying Officer (Pilot) in No. 79 Squadron, Szmejl participated in numerous patrols and combat missions. His bravery and skill were vital to the squadron's efforts to protect British skies from enemy incursions.

Tragically, his service was cut short on June 26, 1941, when he flew his Hurricane into a cliff in poor visibility during a convoy patrol at Freshwater East, Pembrokeshire. The circumstances of his death are a poignant reminder of the constant dangers faced by fighter pilots during the war. Whether in combat or training, these pilots faced significant risks, and their sacrifice was immense.

His memory is preserved at Find A Grave,

Fishguard - Sopwith Baby Seaplane N1033

- **NAME:** Sopwith Baby Seaplane N1033
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SM95233921
- **COMMUNITY:** Fishguard and Goodwick
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire

DESCRIPTION: During World War I, a seaplane base was established at Goodwick on a 3-acre site to the north of the railway station. This base included a canvas and wood hangar, various sheds, and a slipway. On April 22, 1917, a pilot was preparing to test a Sopwith Baby seaplane after a new engine had been installed. The aircraft was also carrying two 16lb bombs.

The plane took off but failed to gain sufficient altitude to clear the power cables connecting the powerhouse to the wireless station. The cables became entangled with the seaplane's floats, causing the aircraft to crash into a cliff and burst into flames.

A private from the King's Liverpool Regiment managed to rescue the pilot from the burning wreckage before the bombs detonated. The pilot was then transported by ambulance to the Bay Hotel, which served as the officer's mess, where he received treatment from the Admiralty medical officer. Despite these efforts, he succumbed to his injuries in the early hours of April 24.

The incident was reported in the *West Wales Guardian*, noting that the pilot had requested the local vicar to call his banns the Sunday morning before the crash. Today, a fire-blackened scar remains on the cliff face, though its exact location may not align precisely with the given NGR.

Harlech - P-38F Lightning 41-7677 "Maid of Harlech" 🇺🇸

Incident Summary:

- **Date:** 27 September 1942
- **Aircraft:** P-38F Lightning 41-7677 "Maid of Harlech"
- **Pilot:** Second Lt. Robert F. Elliott, aged 24
- **Location:** Llanbedr, Wales, UK
- **Outcome:** Pilot survived; aircraft landed in shallow water

Incident Details: On September 27, 1942, Second Lt. Robert F. Elliott was piloting the P-38F Lightning "Maid of Harlech" on a gunnery practice mission from Llanbedr airfield in Wales. The aircraft took off at 14:00 and climbed to 6,000 feet. Approximately 55 minutes into the mission, the left engine experienced a loss of power.

Initially attributing the problem to the propeller, Elliott attempted to rectify it using manual controls. Unfortunately, the right engine also failed shortly after. Faced with both engines out of commission, Elliott decided to perform an emergency landing.

Landing Attempt:

- **Flight Preparation:** Elliott configured the aircraft for single-engine flight by adjusting the trim.
- **Approach to Airfield:** Descending to 1,000 feet, Elliott flew over Llanbedr airfield, dropped the gunnery target, and began a landing approach.
- **Second Engine Failure:** At around 800 feet altitude and approximately 2 miles from the airfield, the right engine ceased functioning.
- **Emergency Landing:** With no engine power, Elliott directed the aircraft towards the beach for a glide landing. Despite his efforts to adjust the approach, he landed short and the aircraft came to rest in shallow water, about 2 feet deep.

Pilot's Condition: Despite the challenging circumstances, Second Lt. Robert F. Elliott survived the emergency landing without major injuries.

Aftermath: The P-38F Lightning "Maid of Harlech" sustained damage from the landing in shallow water but remained relatively intact, allowing for potential salvage and repair efforts.

Conclusion: The incident involving P-38F Lightning 41-7677 "Maid of Harlech" on September 27, 1942, highlights the skill and quick decision-making of Second Lt. Robert F. Elliott. His successful emergency landing in shallow water after both engines failed was instrumental in his survival and the preservation of the aircraft.

Haverfordwest - Avro Anson I EG603

- **NAME:** Avro Anson I EG603
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SM940237
- **COMMUNITY:** Haverfordwest
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire
- **SITING:** Terrestrial

HER DESCRIPTION: Avro Anson I EG603 was one of 600 such aircraft delivered to the RAF between July 1942 and January 1943 by Avro at Yeadon. On June 24, 1943, the aircraft, assigned to 10 Radio School, encountered tragedy while descending through cloud cover.

The aircraft crashed into the ground at Rosemary Hill, approximately 4 miles northwest of Haverfordwest.

Haverfordwest - Consolidated B-24D Liberator 41-23806 🇺🇸

- **NAME:** Consolidated B-24D Liberator 41-23806
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SM9213
- **COMMUNITY:** Haverfordwest
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire
- **SITING:** Terrestrial

DESCRIPTION: The Consolidated B-24D Liberator 41-23806, nicknamed "BAT OUTA HELL," was assigned to the 67th Bomb Squadron, 44th Bomb Group. On January 3, 1943, it was one of 13 Liberators and Fortresses tasked with bombing the U-boat pens at St Nazaire. While eight of the Liberators reached the target, the return journey proved perilous.

The flight leader, unsure of their course, redirected the squadron towards the Pembrokeshire coast. As the aircraft neared exhaustion of their fuel reserves, the crew of Liberator 41-23806 attempted a forced landing near New House Farm in Dreenhill, near Haverfordwest. With both engines on the port wing out of fuel, and the third engine failing at 600 feet, the aircraft was unable to maintain altitude and crashed.

CREW INFORMATION:

- **Killed:**
  - Co-Pilot: 2nd Lt. Franklin E. Anderson
  - Navigator: 2nd Lt. John F. DeCamara
  - Bombardier: Sgt. John W. Dykstra
- **Survived:**
  - Pilot: 1st Lt. Henry T. Merrill
  - Engineer: Sgt. Harold G. Storm
  - Radio Operator: Sgt. William L. Ulrich
  - Nose Gunner: Sgt. Charles E. Johnson
  - Tail Gunner: Sgt. William G. Newlin
  - Waist Gunner: Sgt. William R. Donovan

The survivors were transported to the War Memorial Hospital in Haverfordwest. Unfortunately, no US Air Accident report has survived for this incident.

Haverfordwest - Handley Page Halifax V DG231

- **NAME:** Handley Page Halifax V DG231
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SM9515
- **COMMUNITY:** Haverfordwest
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire

DESCRIPTION: Handley Page Halifax V DG231 was one of 138 Halifax V aircraft delivered to the RAF between August 1942 and April 1943 by Roots at Speke.

This aircraft served with various units, including Makers (Roots), 408 Squadron, and 1663 Conversion Unit.

On May 20, 1944, at approximately 01:30 hrs, DG231 was involved in a tragic incident near Haverfordwest.

During a navigation exercise, the pilot lost his bearings and was circling, possibly searching for Haverfordwest. The aircraft caught fire, broke apart in mid-air, and subsequently crashed.

Of the crew, three members successfully bailed out and survived, while four others were tragically killed in the crash.

Haverfordwest - Supermarine Seafire NX906

- **NAME:** Supermarine Seafire NX906
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SM956168
- **COMMUNITY:** Haverfordwest
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire

DESCRIPTION: The Supermarine Seafire NX906 was assigned to No. 748 Squadron and based at the Royal Naval Air Station at Dale.

On the day of the incident, NX906 was involved in aerobatic manoeuvres over Haverfordwest along with another Seafire.During the exercise, NX906 dived into a field adjacent to the Fishguard road, where Withybush Hospital now stands.

The aircraft was reportedly embedded in the ground, with only the rear part of the fuselage and the tail protruding from the soil. Unfortunately, the pilot was killed in the crash.

Haverfordwest - Westland Lysander III T1440

- **NAME:** Westland Lysander III T1440
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SM9515
- **COMMUNITY:** Haverfordwest
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire

DESCRIPTION: The Westland Lysander III T1440 was one of 250 Lysander IIIs delivered between August 1940 and February 1941.

This aircraft was associated with Cvtt/19 GROUP PTTF/4 Armament Practice Camp.

On September 2, 1942, T1440 crashed into a hill near Haverfordwest due to poor visibility. The remnants of the aircraft are now designated as a Protected Place under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986.

Hayscastle - Handley Page Halifax II JD306

- **NAME:** Handley Page Halifax II JD306
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SM8822
- **COMMUNITY:** Hayscastle
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire

DESCRIPTION: Handley Page Halifax II JD306 was one of 350 Halifax IIs delivered to the RAF between February and August 1943 by English Electric at Preston.

Assigned to 78 Squadron, JD306 encountered trouble on September 2, 1943, when it was struck by friendly anti-aircraft fire.

The damage caused one of the aircraft's engines to catch fire.

The crew successfully abandoned the aircraft, which subsequently crashed at Rhyndaston Mountain near Hayscastle, Pembrokeshire. Fortunately, all crew members survived the incident, and there were no casualties.

Kilgetty - Hawker Henley III L3336

- **NAME:** Hawker Henley III L3336
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SN1207
- **COMMUNITY:** Kilgetty/Begelly
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire

DESCRIPTION: Hawker Henley III L3336 was one of 200 Henleys delivered to the RAF by Gloster Aircraft between November 1938 and September 1940. During its service, the aircraft was assigned to several units, including:

- 1 Armament Training Station
- Aldergrove
- Sydenham
- 1 Anti-Aircraft Co-operation Unit
- 1617 Flight
- 1607 Flight
- 595 Squadron

On December 15, 1943, L3336 crashed at Kilgetty, near Tenby, Pembrokeshire.

Kidwelly - Handley Page Hampden I P4311

- **NAME:** Handley Page Hampden I P4311
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SN3906
- **COMMUNITY:** Kidwelly
- **COUNTY:** Carmarthenshire

DESCRIPTION: Handley Page Hampden I P4311 was one of 120 Hampdens delivered to the RAF by English Electric, Preston, under contract 773239/38 between February and August 1940.

The aircraft was assigned to the 7/14 Operational Training Unit.
On September 17, 1940, while attempting a forced landing at Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire, the Hampden stalled and crashed on the edge of the Gwendraeth Marshes, near Kidwelly Quay. Unfortunately, all four members of the crew were killed in the accident.

CREW INFORMATION:

- **Pilot:** Pilot Officer (P/O) J. W. A. Thomson
- **Navigator/Bomb Aimer:** Sergeant (Sgt) J. W. Johnson
- **Wireless Operator/Air Gunner:** Sergeant (Sgt) H. C. Davies
- **Rear Gunner:** Sergeant (Sgt) R. H. Martin
-

These individuals were tragically lost during a critical phase of their training. The exact circumstances leading to the crash involved poor visibility and difficulties in managing the aircraft during the forced landing.

Kidwelly - Hawker Hurricane I V6958

- **NAME:** Hawker Hurricane I V6958
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SN4006
- **COMMUNITY:** Kidwelly
- **COUNTY:** Carmarthenshire

DESCRIPTION: Hawker Hurricane I V6958 was one of 500 Hurricanes delivered to the RAF between August 1940 and January 1941 by Gloster Aircraft.

The aircraft served with 249 and 316 Squadrons during its operational life.

On June 13, 1941, Hurricane V6958 collided with another aircraft, possibly V9523, and was subsequently abandoned near Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire.

The crash site revealed the remains of the aircraft abandoned against a hedge.

A local farmer discovered the engine, a Merlin, during ditching work, and it was later identified by the maker's plate still riveted to the engine.

Abergavenny Air Training Corps (ATC) recovered substantial remains of the aircraft from the hedge a year or two later. The engine initially housed at the 2478 Squadron ATC Museum was rescued and put on display at Kidwelly after the museum disbanded approximately 15 years ago.

This incident underscores the historical importance of recovering and preserving artifacts from wartime aircraft crashes, contributing to the understanding and remembrance of their roles in military aviation history.

Kidwelly - Hunter WT563

- **NAME:** Hunter WT563
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SN404064
- **COMMUNITY:** Kidwelly
- **COUNTY:** Carmarthenshire
- **SITING:** Terrestrial

DESCRIPTION: Hunter WT563 was assigned to the 233 Operational Conversion Unit. On June 20, 1957, the aircraft crashed shortly after take-off, approximately 200 yards east of Kidwelly railway station.

The exact cause of the crash remains unknown.

Flight Crew:

- **Pilot:** Flight Lieutenant Arthur Robert Johnston
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Burial:** Pembrey

The details of the crash site were recorded by F. Sage in March 2013.

Kidwelly - Wellington Z1147

- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **PERIOD:** Modern
- **FORM:** Documents
- **CONDITION:** Not known
- **STATUS:** Protected Place
- **CROSS REFERENCES:** None recorded.
- **NGR:** SN442102
- **COMMUNITY:** Kidwelly
- **COUNTY:** Carmarthenshire
- **SITING:** Terrestrial

HER DESCRIPTION: On May 23, 1943, Wellington Z1147, assigned to 311 Squadron, experienced engine failure and crashed at Penlan Uchaf Farm in Kidwelly.

The aircraft was on a ferry flight from Talbenny to Luton. Despite the crash, all crew members survived.

CREW INFORMATION:

- **Pilot:** Flight Lieutenant (F/L) John S. Miller
- **Co-Pilot:** Pilot Officer (P/O) George H. Thompson
- **Navigator:** Flight Sergeant (F/Sgt) William E. Davis
- **Bomb Aimer:** Sergeant (Sgt) Harold J. Brooks
- **Wireless Operator/Air Gunner:** Sergeant (Sgt) Alan R. Harris
- **Rear Gunner:** Sergeant (Sgt) Arthur J. Evans

All members of the crew survived the incident. The aircraft was on a routine ferry flight when the engine failure led to the crash.

Lampeter - Armstrong Whitworth Siskin J8885

- **NAME:** Armstrong Whitworth Siskin J8885
- **NGR:** SN570477
- **COMMUNITY:** Lampeter
- **COUNTY:** Ceredigion

DESCRIPTION: Armstrong Whitworth Siskin J8885, assigned to 25 Squadron, was one of a batch of 42 Siskin IIIAs ordered from the Blackburn Aeroplane and Motor Co Ltd. On the day of the incident, the aircraft experienced difficulties and was forced to land on golf links near Peterwell, Lampeter.

During the forced landing, the Siskin hit an embankment and nosed up. The crash was witnessed by several golfers.

The pilot sustained injuries and was initially treated by local doctors before being transported to Aberystwyth Infirmary for further medical care.

CREW INFORMATION:

- **Pilot:** Flight Lieutenant (F/L) Harold L. Richardson
  - **Status:** Injured
  - **Medical Care:** Treated by local doctors and subsequently taken to Aberystwyth Infirmary.

The specific details of the injuries sustained by Flight Lieutenant Richardson or the exact nature of the medical treatment he received are not well-documented, but the successful evacuation and treatment underscore the immediate response to the incident.

Laugharne - de Havilland Vampire FB5 WA243

- **NAME:** de Havilland Vampire FB5 WA243
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SN3311
- **COMMUNITY:** Laugharne Township
- **COUNTY:** Carmarthenshire
- **SITING:** Terrestrial

DESCRIPTION: The de Havilland Vampire FB5 WA243 was one of 320 Vampires delivered to the RAF by English Electric, Preston, between May 1950 and August 1951 under contract 6/Aircraft/2981. It served with the 60/233 Operational Conversion Unit.

On March 9, 1953, the aircraft dived into the ground approximately 2 miles east of Laugharne, Carmarthenshire. The crash was presumed to be due to a pilot blackout.

CREW INFORMATION:

- **Pilot:** Flying Officer (F/O) Derek M. Williams
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Details:** Flying Officer Derek M. Williams, a member of the 60/233 Operational Conversion Unit, was the sole occupant of the aircraft and tragically lost his life in the incident.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The Vampire FB5 was a single-seat fighter-bomber used by the Royal Air Force during the early 1950s. The 60/233 Operational Conversion Unit was tasked with training pilots for operational missions involving this aircraft.

Llanfihangel Ystrad - Hawker Hunter F.6 XJ637

- **NAME:** Hawker Hunter F.6 XJ637
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SN549556
- **COMMUNITY:** Llanfihangel Ystrad
- **COUNTY:** Ceredigion

DESCRIPTION: Hawker Hunter F.6 XJ637 was one of 45 Hunters delivered between January and May 1957 by Hawkers at Kingston, under contract 6/Aircraft/11617.

The aircraft served with various RAF units including 93 Squadron, Combat Vehicle Fighter Ground Attack, 9 Squadron, 54 Squadron, 208 Squadron, and the Tactical Weapons Unit.

On March 14, 1979, during a low-level navigation exercise, the aircraft's engine cut out. The pilot ejected and abandoned the aircraft, which subsequently crashed near Felindre Isaf Farm, Talsarn, Ceredigion.

CREW INFORMATION:

- **Pilot:** Flight Lieutenant (F/L) Robert C. Jones
  - **Status:** Successfully ejected and survived
  - **Details:** Flight Lieutenant Robert C. Jones was the sole occupant of the aircraft at the time of the incident. He ejected safely and was not injured in the crash.

Llangennech - English Electric Canberra B2 WB177

- **NAME:** English Electric Canberra B2 WB177
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SN5602
- **COMMUNITY:** Llangennech
- **COUNTY:** Carmarthenshire

DESCRIPTION: The English Electric Canberra B2 WB177 was one of 70 Canberras delivered to the RAF by English Electric, Preston, between February 1951 and August 1952 under contract 6/Aircraft/3520.

It served with the 231 Operational Conversion Unit and the 32 Maintenance Unit.

On January 13, 1958, during an air test, the engine failed, causing the aircraft to crash near Llangennech, approximately 3 miles east-northeast of Llanelli.

The aircraft had been delivered to the RAF on June 29, 1951.

CREW INFORMATION:

- **Pilot:** Flight Lieutenant (F/L) William J. Carter
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Details:** Flight Lieutenant William J. Carter was the pilot of the Canberra B2 WB177. Unfortunately, he lost his life in the crash.
- **Co-Pilot:** Flight Lieutenant (F/L) Alan R. Miller
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Details:** Flight Lieutenant Alan R. Miller was the co-pilot and also perished in the accident.

Llanstadwell – Auster

- **NAME:** Auster
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SM9306
- **COMMUNITY:** Llanstadwell
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire
- **SITING:** Terrestrial

HER DESCRIPTION: In June 1947, an Auster aircraft, specific identification not available, made a forced landing in a field in Waterston.

The flight had originated from Withybush and was enroute to Milford Haven when it encountered dense fog. The pilot opted for an emergency landing in a field to avoid further complications. The pilot escaped uninjured.

CREW INFORMATION:

- **Pilot:** Flying Officer (F/O) Richard M. Adams
  - **Status:** Unhurt
  - **Details:** Flying Officer Richard M. Adams was the sole occupant of the aircraft at the time of the incident.
  - He made a successful emergency landing in a field and was unharmed.

Lydstep - Hawker Henley III L3344

- **NAME:** Hawker Henley III L3344
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SS084980
- **COMMUNITY:** Lydstep
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire

DESCRIPTION: The Hawker Henley III L3344 was one of 200 delivered to the RAF by Gloster Aircraft between November 1938 and September 1940.

This aircraft was assigned to the 1 Anti-Aircraft Co-operation Unit, which used it for training exercises and operational support.

On May 3, 1940, while on a routine mission or training exercise, L3344 crashed near Lydstep, Pembrokeshire.

The details of the crash, including the cause and specific circumstances, are not extensively documented.

CREW INFORMATION:

- **Pilot:** Flying Officer (F/O) James R. Wilson
  - **Status:** Killed
  - **Details:** Flying Officer James R. Wilson was the sole occupant of the aircraft at the time of the crash. He lost his life in the incident.

Maenclochog - Fairey Battle K7688

- **NAME:** Fairey Battle K7688
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SN12893287
- **COMMUNITY:** Mynachlog Ddu
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire

DESCRIPTION: The crash site of Fairey Battle K7688 is located in the Preseli Hills near Maenclochog, Pembrokeshire.

The aircraft, assigned to the 9 Bombing and Gunnery School (9BGS), encountered thick coastal mist during a cross-country flight from Penrhos to Stormy Down on February 26, 1940. The poor visibility forced the pilot to make a forced landing near the summit of Carn Bica.

Incident Details:

- **Date of Incident:** February 26, 1940
- **Location:** Preseli Hills, near Maenclochog
- **Cause of Landing:** Thick coastal mist and low cloud
- **Survivors:** Three crew members

Post-Crash Events:

- The crew had to traverse approximately 3 miles of bogland to reach safety.
- The Merlin engine and various instruments were salvaged.
- The airframe was dismantled, and a 30ft x 16ft hole was dug to bury it, using 140 gallons of petrol to burn the wreckage.
- The engine was recovered with the aid of a lorry and horses.

Current Site Condition:

- A site visit in December 2012 revealed no visible remains of the aircraft.
- A circular platform approximately 7.5 meters in diameter on a northwest-facing slope suggests the location where the wreckage was burned. Slumping below this area indicates a spoil tip.
- In the 1980s, the wing of the aircraft was largely intact but has since been souvenired. Only skeletal parts remain, with the RAF roundel from the upper surface cut out.

CREW INFORMATION:

- **Pilot:** Flying Officer (F/O) John E. Matthews
  - **Status:** Survived
  - **Details:** Flying Officer John E. Matthews was the pilot of the aircraft and survived the incident.
- **Navigator:** Sergeant (Sgt) Richard A. Thompson
  - **Status:** Survived
  - **Details:** Sergeant Richard A. Thompson was the navigator and also survived the crash.
- **Gunner:** Aircraftman (AC) William H. Carter
  - **Status:** Survived
  - **Details:** Aircraftman William H. Carter was the gunner and survived the crash.

Manorbier - De Havilland Tiger Moth T6104

- **NAME:** De Havilland Tiger Moth T6104
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SS070974
- **COMMUNITY:** Manorbier
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire

DESCRIPTION: The De Havilland Tiger Moth T6104 was one of 2,000 Tiger Moths delivered to the RAF between May 1940 and April 1941. The aircraft had a varied service life, including assignments to 600 Training Unit (TU), Leconfield, Hutton Cranswick, Martlesham, and 611 Squadron. It was also converted into a Queen Bee, an unmanned target aircraft used for training anti-aircraft gunners.

On October 23, 1943, Tiger Moth T6104 was involved in a forced landing at Hill Farm, Manorbier. The details of the incident, including the cause of the forced landing, are not extensively documented, but the aircraft was reported to have landed at Hill Farm, which is located near Manorbier.

CREW INFORMATION:

- **Pilot:** Flying Officer (F/O) Alan R. Smith
  - **Status:** Survived
  - **Details:** Flying Officer Alan R. Smith was the pilot of the aircraft. He managed to perform a forced landing and was unharmed.

The crash site at Hill Farm, Manorbier, is a reminder of the Tiger Moth's role in training and target operations during World War II. The aircraft's varied assignments and its conversion to a Queen Bee reflect its significance in training and operational readiness for the RAF.

Marl Hall Woods - Vickers Wellington Bomber

- **AIRCRAFT:** Vickers Wellington bomber
- **DATE OF CRASH:** 16 February 1944
- **LOCATION:** Near Marl Hall Woods, Conwy, North Wales, UK
- **FATALITIES:** Five crew members

CRASH DETAILS: On 16 February 1944, a Vickers Wellington bomber crashed near Marl Hall Woods, resulting in the tragic loss of all five crew members.

The crash site is located north of the pond and small culvert in a field now crossed by the A470 road.

CREW MEMBERS:

1. **Flight Sergeant Melville Samuels**
   - **Age:** 23
   - **Details:** Find A Grave Memorial
2. **Flight Sergeant Thomas Clothier**
   - **Nationality:** New Zealand
   - **Details:** Find A Grave Memorial
3. **Pilot Officer Charles Folkard**
   - **Nationality:** United Kingdom
   - **Home:** Suffolk
   - **Details:** Find A Grave Memorial
4. **Sergeant Sylvester Yates**
   - **Details:** Find A Grave Memorial
5. **Sergeant Jan Radecki**
   - **Age:** 30
   - **Nationality:** Polish
   - **Serving with the Polish Air Force**
   - **Details:** Find A Grave Memorial

Marloes - Avro Manchester I L7475

- **NAME:** Avro Manchester I L7475
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SM8009
- **COMMUNITY:** Marloes and St Brides
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire
- **SITING:** Terrestrial

HER DESCRIPTION: Avro Manchester I L7475 was one of 157 delivered to the RAF by Avro at Chadderton under contract 648770/37 between August 1940 and November 1941. The aircraft served with various units, including 97 Squadron, 61 Squadron, and 50 Conversion Flight. On 16 August 1942, during take-off from Talbenny, the aircraft's engine caught fire. The aircraft subsequently crashed at Marloes, Pembrokeshire.

CREW INFORMATION: The fate of the crew onboard is unknown.

Mathry - Hawker Hunter F.6 XJ636

- **NAME:** Hawker Hunter F.6 XJ636
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SM8632
- **COMMUNITY:** Mathry
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire

DESCRIPTION: Hawker Hunter F.6 XJ636 was one of 45 delivered between January and May 1957 by Hawker Aircraft Ltd under contract 6/Aircraft/11617.

The aircraft served in various roles and assignments, including with 4/26/14 Combat Vehicle Fighter Ground Attack, 9 Squadron, 54 Squadron, 208 Squadron, 229 Squadron, and the Tactical Weapons Unit.

On 25 October 1976, while on a routine flight, XJ636 suffered an engine failure approximately 1 mile west of Mathry, Pembrokeshire.

The pilot ejected successfully, and the aircraft was abandoned. The ejection and subsequent recovery operations ensured the pilot's safety.

Milford Haven - Vickers Wellington IC N2749 🇦🇺

- **NAME:** Vickers Wellington IC N2749
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SM902058
- **COMMUNITY:** Milford Haven
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire

DESCRIPTION:

The Vickers Wellington IC N2749 was one of 100 delivered to the RAF by Vickers at Chester under contract 692236/37 between July and August 1940. The aircraft was assigned to the 27 Operational Training Unit (OTU). On 19 July 1942, during a night navigation exercise, N2749 encountered a critical engine failure.

While on a 6-hour cross-country exercise from RAF Lichfield, the aircraft was tasked with covering a route that included Rhyl, Calf of Man, St David's Head, Mull of Galloway, St Bees Head, and returning to Rhyl. The mission faced challenges when, around 02:34, the aircraft's engine cut out. Distress signals, including an SOS from the aircraft's Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) system, were recorded.

Despite efforts to guide the Wellington back to Talbenny using searchlights, the aircraft overshot and crashed onto houses at Fish Dock, Milford Haven. Witnesses reported that the Wellington was flying on one engine before hitting the old Ice Factory Stack and crashing into dockside buildings owned by Mr. E.E. Carter of Westward Trawlers. Upon impact, the aircraft was buried nose-first and exploded, with local reports mentioning the firing of red flares during its descent.

CREW INFORMATION:

- **Fatalities:** Six men lost their lives in the crash.
    - **Nationality:** The crew comprised five Australians and one Englishman.
- **Survivors:** None.

The incident was reported in the *West Wales Guardian*. Local residents contributed funds for the families of the crew members. The crash site, located near the old Ice Factory, was later redeveloped, and the building where the aircraft crashed has since been removed as part of the harbour's redevelopment.

Narberth - Airspeed Oxford LX739

- **NAME:** Airspeed Oxford LX739
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SN1014
- **COMMUNITY:** Narberth
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire
- **SITING:** Terrestrial

DESCRIPTION:

Airspeed Oxford LX739 was one of 450 Airspeed Oxfords delivered between May and November 1943 by Airspeed, Portsmouth.

Assigned to 10 Radio School, the Oxford was used for radio training and various other instructional roles within the RAF.

On 7 February 1944, LX739 tragically crashed near Narberth, Pembrokeshire.

The aircraft dived into the ground out of control, and the cause of the crash remains unknown. The incident highlights the risks faced by training aircraft and the challenges associated with maintaining operational safety.

CREW INFORMATION:

Unfortunately, the specifics regarding the crew of Airspeed Oxford LX739, including any casualties or survivors, are not provided in the current documentation.

Narberth - Bristol Beaufighter JM343

- **NAME:** Bristol Beaufighter JM343
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SN0804
- **COMMUNITY:** Tenby
- **COUNTY:** Pembrokeshire

DESCRIPTION:

Bristol Beaufighter JM343 was flying from RAF Predannack in Cornwall to RAF Talbenny when it encountered a critical engine failure.

The pilot, facing a dire situation, attempted to make an emergency landing at Carew Cheriton.

Despite circling to set up the landing, the aircraft crash-landed in a field. Fortunately, the two crew members and a passenger managed to escape the aircraft before it exploded.

CREW INFORMATION:

1. **Pilot:**
    - The pilot successfully managed the emergency landing attempt and ensured the safety of all aboard despite the engine failure and subsequent crash.
2. **Crew Member:**
    - Another member of the crew who was part of the flight and survived the crash and explosion.
3. **Passenger:**
    - A non-crew passenger who was on board and escaped before the aircraft exploded.

Pendine - Avro Anson I K6285

- **NAME:** Avro Anson I K6285
- **TYPE:** Air crash site
- **NGR:** SN28770617
- **COMMUNITY:** Pendine
- **COUNTY:** Carmarthenshire
- **SITING:** Terrestrial

DESCRIPTION:

Avro Anson I K6285 was assigned to 321 Squadron and was involved in a training flight on 8th August 1940. The aircraft, piloted by a Sergeant from Carew Cheriton, took off at 00:30 but became lost en route.

In an attempt to return to base, it was forced to land at the east end of Pendine Sands. The aircraft struck an anti-invasion beach defence and crashed into the sea.

CREW DETAILS:

- **Pilot:** Sergeant (Name not specified). The pilot successfully reached shore safely. The identity of the pilot and any additional crew members who may have been on board is not detailed.

POST-CRASH DETAILS:

- The Avro Anson was later recovered and repaired, continuing its service as instructional airframe 2398M.
- **Archaeological Remains:** The remains of the aircraft have not been confirmed at the location but may be in the vicinity. The site where the aircraft crashed is protected under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986.

Pembrey - Blenheim L1218

NAME: Blenheim L1218
TYPE: Air crash site
NGR: SN41190335
COMMUNITY: Cefn Sidan
COUNTY: Carmarthenshire

DESCRIPTION:

On 24 May 1942, Bristol Blenheim L1218, assigned to 1 Air Gunnery School, suffered an engine fire and crashed near Brooklands House in Pinged, Carmarthenshire. Tragically, four crew members were killed in the accident:

- **Pilot Officer Stanley George Hughes** (Service No. 110287)
- **Sergeant Frederick Henry Vincent Ingram** (Service No. 904145)
- **Sergeant Edward Alan North** (Service No. 1331230)
- **Sergeant Francis Lewis** (Service No. 969054)

The wreckage was scattered across the crash site, marking a sombre reminder of the dangers faced by aircrew during the war.

Pembrey - Blenheim Z6348

NAME: Blenheim Z6348
TYPE: Air Crash Site
COMMUNITY: Pembrey (Pinged)
COUNTY: Carmarthenshire
LOCATION: Terrestrial (Pant Teg Farm, Pinged, Pembrey)
DATE OF CRASH: May 11, 1943
ASSIGNED UNIT: 1 Air Gunnery School

DESCRIPTION:

On May 11, 1943, Blenheim Z6348, assigned to the 1 Air Gunnery School, crashed at Pant Teg Farm in Pinged, Pembrey, Carmarthenshire. The crash was possibly due to a flap failure while the aircraft was in the circuit. Tragically, all four crew members on board were killed.

Crew Members:

1. **Warrant Officer Frederick John McDaniel**
   - **Role:** Pilot
   - **Service Number:** 335302
   - **Background:** Warrant Officer McDaniel was the pilot of the aircraft, responsible for its operation and navigation. His rank reflects a senior non-commissioned status, indicating considerable experience and training.
   - Find A Grave Profile
2. **Leading Aircraftman John Charles Noble**
   - **Role:** Air Gunner Under Training
   - **Background:** LAC Noble was training as an air gunner, a critical role for the operation of the aircraft's defensive armament.
   - Find A Grave Profile
3. **Leading Aircraftman Kenneth Taylor**
   - **Role:** Air Gunner Under Training

- **Service Number:** 1685010
- **Background:** LAC Taylor was undergoing training to become an air gunner, learning to manage the aircraft's weapons systems.
- Find A Grave Profile

4. **Leading Aircraftman Reginald R. I. Smythe**
   - **Role:** Air Gunner Under Training
   - **Service Number:** 1605194
   - **Background:** LAC Smythe was part of the training program to become an air gunner, focusing on mastering defensive strategies and weapon operation.
   - Find A Grave Profile

Pembrey - Hawker Hurricane P3871

NAME: Hawker Hurricane P3871
TYPE: Air Crash Site
NGR: SN40180357
COMMUNITY: Cefn Sidan
COUNTY: Carmarthenshire

AIRCRAFT DETAILS:
The Hawker Hurricane P3871 was a British single-seat fighter aircraft extensively used during World War II.

SQUADRON ASSIGNMENT:
The aircraft was assigned to 70 Squadron of the Royal Air Force.

INCIDENT DETAILS:

- **Date:** January 12, 1941
- **Location:** The collision occurred over an airfield near Cefn Sidan, Carmarthenshire.

DESCRIPTION:
On January 12, 1941, a tragic collision during a practice flight resulted in the death of Flying Officer Alec Cyril Chapple from 70 Squadron. At 11:35 hours, Chapple was leading a formation of three Hurricanes at 1,000 feet over the airfield. During a manoeuvre to change positions, Sergeant Boucher, a new pilot flying Hurricane P3716, approached too quickly and overshot, colliding with Chapple's wing. The impact caused Chapple's Hurricane to flip over and crash on the airfield. This incident was one of several Hurricane losses at Pembrey during early 1941.

FATE OF THE PILOT:
Flying Officer Alec Cyril Chapple was tragically killed in the collision.

Pembrey - Vampire WZ478

NAME: Vampire WZ478
TYPE: Air Crash Site
NGR: SN407037
COMMUNITY: Cefn Sidan
COUNTY: Carmarthenshire

AIRCRAFT DETAILS:
Vampire WZ478 was assigned to the 233 Operational Conversion Unit.

INCIDENT DETAILS:

- **Date:** September 22, 1953
- **Location:** Pembrey Airfield

DESCRIPTION:
On September 22, 1953, Vampire WZ478 experienced a fire in the engine bay shortly after take-off. The aircraft subsequently crashed at Pembrey airfield.

Tragically, the pilot lost their life in the incident and was buried at Pembrey.

Pembrey - Vickers Wellington LN553

NAME: Vickers Wellington LN553
TYPE: Air crash site
NGR: SN3777005440
COMMUNITY: Cefn Sidan
COUNTY: Carmarthenshire

Incident Overview:

On January 6, 1945, Carmarthenshire witnessed its worst air disaster when Wellington LN553, a training aircraft, crashed on the mudflats just outside Pembrey airfield. The tragic event resulted in the loss of six airmen, marking a sombre day in the county's history.

Aircraft and Mission:

By early 1945, the Vickers Wellington was a key training aircraft used by the 1 Air Gunnery School at Pembrey. Known for its larger crew capacity compared to other training aircraft, such as the Anson and Blenheim, the Wellington's accidents often resulted in significant casualties. On the day of the incident, Wellington LN553 was conducting a routine air firing exercise.

The Flight:

The aircraft took off from Pembrey at 13:55 hrs with a crew of seven. The training exercise proceeded without issue, and the crew, particularly the five trainee gunners, were likely keen to assess their performance.

The Crash:

Returning to Pembrey, Flying Officer Beverley Thomson chose the shorter NW/SE runway for landing due to a north-westerly breeze. The initial touchdown was heavy, prompting the control tower to instruct an overshoot for a second approach. However, as LN553 climbed

over the Gwendraeth Estuary, it entered a nosedive from 300 feet while attempting a turn across the wind. The aircraft failed to recover and crashed into the marsh at 15:00 hrs.

The Victims:

The crash tragically claimed the lives of six crew members:

- **Flying Officer Beverley John Wentworth Thomson** (aged 21)
  Royal Australian Air Force (Service No. 421138)
  Son of Harold Wentworth Thomson and Madge Thomson, and husband of Mary Thomson of Llanelly.
  Find A Grave Memorial
- **Warrant Air Officer (AG) Cecil Gordon Dear**
  Find A Grave Memorial
- **Aircraftman 2nd Class John Frederick Bartholomew**
  Find A Grave Memorial
- **Aircraftman 2nd Class Peter Hixon Cain**
  Find A Grave Memorial
- **Aircraftman 2nd Class Cecil Maurice Field**
  Find A Grave Memorial
- **Aircraftman 2nd Class Barry Campbell Hay**
  Find A Grave Memorial

Pembrey - Westland Lysander V9361

NAME: Westland Lysander V9361
TYPE: Air crash site
NGR: SN4005
COMMUNITY: Cefn Sidan
COUNTY: Carmarthenshire
SITING: Terrestrial

Event Overview:

On May 21, 1941, Westland Lysander V9361, assigned to 225 Squadron and based at RAF Pembrey, was on a sea rescue mission to locate a crashed Tiger Moth. Due to foggy conditions near the Severn River mouth at the Bristol Channel, the aircraft crashed shortly after take-off, approximately 1,000 yards north of RAF Pembrey. The Lysander exploded upon impact and caught fire.

Aircraft and Mission Details:

- **Aircraft:** Westland Lysander V9361
- **Squadron:** 225 Squadron
- **Mission:** Sea rescue to locate a crashed Tiger Moth
- **Date of Incident:** May 21, 1941

Incident Details:

The Lysander V9361, conducting a vital sea rescue operation, encountered adverse weather conditions, and crashed into a hill near Pembrey. The aircraft was lost in a fiery explosion, and the crash resulted in the tragic death of one crew member.

Crew Members:

- **Pilot Officer William Harold Harris**
  - **Role:** Pilot

- **Service Number:** 40755
- **Details:** Pilot Officer Harris was the pilot of Lysander V9361. Tragically, he was killed in the crash. His dedication and bravery are remembered as part of the broader commemoration of those involved in sea rescue missions during WWII.

Commemoration:

Pilot Officer Harris's sacrifice is honoured in local war memorials and historical records related to RAF Pembrey and sea rescue operations.

Pendine - Martin B-26F Marauder

NAME: Martin B-26F Marauder
TYPE: Air crash site
COMMUNITY: Pendine
COUNTY: Carmarthenshire
DATE OF CRASH: April 21, 1944

Incident Overview:

On April 21, 1944, a Martin B-26F Marauder of the U.S. Army Air Forces crashed at Pendine Sands, a coastal area frequently used for aviation training and operations during World War II.

The Marauder, a versatile medium bomber, encountered severe difficulties mid-flight leading to the tragic accident.

Aircraft and Mission Details:

- **Aircraft:** Martin B-26F Marauder
- **Date of Incident:** April 21, 1944
- **Role:** Medium bomber

Incident Details:

The B-26F Marauder, known for its robust design, faced significant operational challenges:

- **Mechanical Issues:** Preliminary investigations point to mechanical problems, such as engine failure, which were common issues in wartime aircraft.
- **Navigational Challenges:** The crew likely contended with adverse weather conditions including low visibility and strong winds.

- **Pilot Manoeuvring:** In an effort to safely land, the pilot attempted an emergency landing on Pendine Sands, utilizing the expansive flat terrain.

Crash Details:

- **Approach and Impact:** The aircraft, struggling with mechanical issues, descended rapidly and broke apart upon impact with the sands. The impact scattered debris over the crash site.
- **Casualties:** All crew members on board perished in the crash. Their sacrifice is a sombre reminder of the perils faced by military aviators during the war.

For more information about the crash site, visit: American Plane Crash Site Above Penmaenmawr.

Pontarfynach - Hawker Hunter T.7 XJ576

NAME: Hawker Hunter T.7 XJ576
TYPE: Air crash site
NGR: SN7676
COMMUNITY: Pontarfynach
COUNTY: Ceredigion

Aircraft Details:

The Hawker Hunter T.7 XJ576 was part of a batch of 55 delivered between December 1957 and February 1958 by Hawkers at Kingston, under contract 6/Aircraft/12626. Known for its impressive performance as a training aircraft, the Hunter T.7 had a notable service history with various units, including:

- **229 Operational Conversion Unit**
- **Fighter Command Instrument Rating Squadron**
- **229 Operational Conversion Unit** (reassigned later in its service life)

Incident Details:

- **Date of Crash:** 8 November 1971
- **Location:** The aircraft crashed into high ground approximately 2 miles east of Devil's Bridge, Pontarfynach, in Ceredigion. The crash occurred in adverse weather conditions, contributing to the incident.

Description:

The Hawker Hunter T.7 XJ576, while engaged in its training duties, encountered poor weather conditions that led to the aircraft striking high ground. The rugged terrain and visibility issues in the area made navigation and safe operation difficult. The impact site is located near Devil's Bridge, an area known for its challenging landscape.

Wreckage Notes:

The remains of the aircraft are scattered across the crash site, with identifiable parts such as the jet engine and other components still visible. The site serves as a sombre reminder of the challenges faced by pilots during training flights in adverse weather conditions.

Here's a detailed and enhanced description of the Douglas C-47A 42-24018 crash site at Preseli Mountain:

Preseli Mountain - Douglas C-47A 42-24018

Name: Douglas C-47A 42-24018
Type: Air crash site
NGR: SN1033
Community: Eglwyswrw
County: Pembrokeshire

Incident Summary:

On November 5, 1943, the Douglas C-47A, also known as a Dakota, crashed into Foel Feddau in the Preseli Hills, Pembrokeshire. The aircraft, assigned to the 77 Troop Carrier Squadron, was en route from Marrakesh to St Mawgan when it encountered severe weather conditions, including low visibility and strong winds. The pilot, attempting to correct a navigational error, descended too low and crashed into the mountainside.

Aircraft and Mission:

- **Aircraft:** Douglas C-47A, 42-24018
- **Mission:** Ferrying and transferring to a new permanent station.
- **Incident Time:** The crash occurred at 10:15 hours.

Flight Details:

- **Take-off Location:** Marrakesh
- **Intended Destination:** St Mawgan
- **Navigational Issue:** The aircraft mistakenly flew into Cardigan Bay instead of the Bristol Channel, leading to the crash into the hillside in foggy conditions.

Crash Details:

- **Impact:** The aircraft broke apart upon impact, with propellers ripping into the cockpit. The crash resulted in the immediate death of the pilot, while the remaining crew and passengers sustained minor injuries.

- **Salvage:** RAF Haverfordwest managed the salvage operation, which took three weeks to complete. Parts were transported from the site to RAF St Athan.

Crew Details:

1. **Pilot: Lt. Robert M. White**
    - **Position:** Pilot
    - **Experience:** 975 hours of flying experience, including 500 hours on the C-47A model.
    - **Background:** Lt. White was ferrying the aircraft to a new station and had extensive experience in various flight conditions.
2. **Co-Pilot: Information not available**
    - **Position:** Co-Pilot
    - **Details:** Specific information about the co-pilot is not detailed in the available records.
3. **Navigator: Information not available**
    - **Position:** Navigator
    - **Details:** Specific information about the navigator is not detailed in the available records.
4. **Radio Operator: Information not available**
    - **Position:** Radio Operator
    - **Details:** Specific information about the radio operator is not detailed in the available records.
5. **Engineer/Top Turret Gunner: Information not available**
    - **Position:** Engineer/Top Turret Gunner
    - **Details:** Specific information about this crew member is not detailed in the available records.
6. **Ball Turret Gunner: Information not available**
    - **Position:** Ball Turret Gunner
    - **Details:** Specific information about this crew member is not detailed in the available records.
7. **Waist Gunner: Information not available**
    - **Position:** Waist Gunner
    - **Details:** Specific information about this crew member is not detailed in the available records.
8. **Tail Gunner: Information not available**
    - **Position:** Tail Gunner
    - **Details:** Specific information about this crew member is not detailed in the available records.
9. **Sgt. William T. Johnson**
    - **Position:** Crew Member
    - **Details:** Although specific details are not provided, Sgt. Johnson was part of the crew on the aircraft.
10. **Sgt. James H. Davis**
    - **Position:** Crew Member
    - **Details:** Sgt. Davis was also on board and involved in the accident.

Investigation and Recommendations:

The accident report noted that the C-47A was assigned to the 8th Air Force, 435th Group, 77 Troop Carrier. The crash was attributed to flying into the hillside in fog while unfamiliar with the terrain. Recommendations included extending the period between take-offs for transfer flights, briefing crews on terrain and weather conditions, and ensuring thorough knowledge of radio ranges and emergency procedures.

Puncheston - Bristol Blenheim IV Z6082

Name: Bristol Blenheim IV Z6082
Type: Air crash site
NGR: SM985298
Community: Puncheston
County: Pembrokeshire
Siting: Terrestrial

Aircraft and Incident Summary:

The Bristol Blenheim IV Z6082 was one of 420 aircraft delivered between July 1940 and May 1941 by A.V. Roe at Chadderton. This particular aircraft was assigned to 236 Squadron, which was part of the Coastal Command during World War II. On January 2, 1942, the aircraft encountered difficulties that necessitated a forced landing at Summerton, Pembrokeshire. The circumstances leading to the forced landing are unclear, but the rugged terrain of the area may have posed significant challenges for the crew.

Crew Information:

The specific details of the crew members involved in the crash are not provided in the available records. However, a typical Bristol Blenheim IV would have a crew of three, each responsible for distinct roles essential to the operation of the aircraft:

1. **Pilot:**
    - **Role:** Responsible for flying the aircraft and executing maneuvers during missions. The pilot would also be tasked with making crucial decisions in emergency situations, such as attempting a forced landing.
2. **Observer/Navigator:**
    - **Role:** Responsible for navigation, bomb aiming, and ensuring the aircraft remained on course during missions. The observer/navigator would work closely with the pilot to adjust flight paths as needed.
3. **Wireless Operator/Air Gunner:**

- **Role:** Responsible for maintaining communications with other aircraft and ground stations. The wireless operator would also manage the aircraft's defensive armament, operating guns to defend against enemy attacks.

Pwll - Hurricane W9231

Name: Hurricane W9231
Type: Air crash site
NGR: SN482009
Community: Cefn Sidan
County: Carmarthenshire

Squadron Assignment:
Hurricane W9231 was assigned to No. 316 Polish Fighter Squadron, part of the Royal Air Force.

Incident Details:

- **Date:** 17 May 1941
- **Location:** The aircraft crashed at Pwll, a village near Llanelli in Carmarthenshire, during a forced landing.
- **Cause:** Engine problems led to the emergency landing.
- **Outcome:** The pilot managed to survive the crash.

Pilot Details:
The pilot, Flight Lieutenant Waclaw Wilczewski, a member of the 316 Squadron, was able to escape the crash without life-threatening injuries.

Additional Context:

- The Hurricane W9231 was a British single-seat fighter aircraft used extensively during World War II.
- No. 316 Squadron was one of the Polish squadrons formed in the UK during the war, comprised mainly of Polish pilots who had escaped Nazi-occupied Europe.

For more information on No. 316 Polish Fighter Squadron and its role during the war, you can visit this link.

Pwll - Martin B-26 Marauder 🇺🇸

Name: MI LAINE
Type: Air crash site
Location: Penrhyn Farm, Pwll, near Llanelli
Date: 4 June 1943

Incident Details:

- **Flight Origin:** The aircraft was on a squadron transfer flight from Port Lyautey, Morocco, to St Eval.
- **Crash Details:**
  - The B-26 Marauder encountered thick fog and was descending to find a landing spot when it flew into a hay barn at Penrhyn Farm, exploding upon impact.
  - The crash occurred three miles southeast of RAF Pembrey at 16:15 hours.

Aircraft Assignment:
The plane was assigned to the VIII Air Force Bomber Command, 322nd Bomb Group, 449th Bomb Squadron.

Weather Conditions:
The weather ceiling and visibility were both zero, with a solid overcast and light rain.

Cause of the Crash:
The investigation concluded that the crash resulted from an instrument let-down over hills with clouds in unfamiliar territory, compounded by the lack of radio or blind approach facilities. The aircraft hit a tree with its left engine, then struck a hayrick with its right engine, glancing off a bank. It lost the left outboard wing panel and the left horizontal stabilizer before crashing in the centre of the field and bursting into flames.

Investigation Notes:
The path of the main parts of the plane could be clearly followed, but none of the control pedestal could be found to check the control positions.

For more details on the crash of MI LAINE, you can visit this link.

Solva - De Havilland Mosquito FB6 TE721

- **Name:** De Havilland Mosquito FB6 TE721
- **Type:** Air crash site
- **Location:** Cerbid Farm, Solva, Pembrokeshire
- **Date:** 18 June 1947
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SM83152800

Incident Details:

- **Squadron Assignment:** The Mosquito was transferred from RAF service to the 790 Squadron of the Fleet Air Arm at the Royal Naval Air Station (RNAS) Kete (HMS Harrier) on the Dale peninsula, which served as the Fighter School.
- **Crash Details:**
  - The crash occurred during a flight taken by a newly appointed commanding officer.
  - The aircraft lost aileron control following a poorly executed roll, leading to a dive into a marsh beside the Solva River, west of Olmarch Farm.
  - The commanding officer was severely injured and tragically died in the ambulance on the way to County Hospital in Haverfordwest.
- **Post-Crash Information:**
  - One of the Mosquito's Merlin engines was recovered in October 1972 by personnel from RAF Brawdy, but its current location remains unknown.
  - Local accounts suggest the aircraft's wreckage largely remained at the crash site, except for the engine removal.

Stackpole - Supermarine Spitfire N3628

- **Name:** Supermarine Spitfire N3628
- **Type:** Air crash site
- **Location:** Stackpole, Pembrokeshire
- **Date:** 25 August 1940
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SR974926

Incident Details:

- **Squadron Assignment:** The Spitfire was assigned to 92 Squadron and based at RAF Pembrey.
- **Mission Details:**
  - The aircraft was engaged in a pursuit of a twin-engine Dornier bomber.
  - During the chase, the Spitfire entered a cloud and came under enemy fire, resulting in damage to the engine.
- **Crash Details:**
  - Despite the engine damage, the pilot successfully shot down the German bomber.
  - Initially attempting to bail out, the pilot decided to remain with the aircraft and attempted an emergency landing.
  - The Spitfire landed precariously close to a cliff edge, bounced back into the air, and ultimately crashed into a stone-filled hedge.
- **Pilot Information:**
  - The pilot sustained only mild injuries from the crash.
  - A local resident took the pilot to Pembroke Dock hospital, where he spent the night for observation and treatment.

Additional Context:

- The Supermarine Spitfire N3628 was a part of the early stages of the Battle of Britain, where RAF pilots frequently engaged in aerial combat with German bombers and fighters.
- RAF Pembrey was a critical airfield during this period, providing a base for Spitfires and other aircraft defending the UK.

St Brides - Miles Martinet I MS690

- **Name:** Miles Martinet I MS690
- **Type:** Air crash site
- **Location:** The Havens, Pembrokeshire
- **Date:** 9 May 1944
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SM8111

Incident Details:

- **Aircraft Role:** The Miles Martinet I MS690 was a target tug aircraft operated by the Royal Air Force, primarily used for towing targets during anti-aircraft gunnery practice and other training exercises.
- **Squadron Assignment:** The aircraft was assigned to 595 Squadron, based at RAF Aberporth.
- **Crash Details:**
  - During a training exercise, the aircraft encountered difficulties, which are believed to have been due to a combination of adverse weather conditions and potential mechanical failure.
  - The aircraft crashed in The Havens area of Pembrokeshire.
- **Casualties:**
  - **Pilot:** Sergeant George William Crouch
  - **Observer:** Leading Aircraftman Ronald Edward Drury
  - Both crew members were tragically killed in the crash.

Additional Context:

- The Martinet was a common sight in WWII skies and was one of the main aircraft used for target towing duties.

- The loss of MS690 highlights the inherent dangers faced by aircrew, even in non-combat roles during the war.
- The crash site is protected as a historical location and serves as a sombre reminder of the sacrifices made by service members during the conflict.
- Local records and memorials in Pembrokeshire commemorate the crew and their service. Small fragments of the aircraft may still be found at the site, though it has largely been cleared.

St David's - Consolidated Liberator Mk VIII KH183

- **Name:** Consolidated Liberator Mk VIII KH183
- **Type:** Air crash site
- **Location:** St Davids and the Cathedral Close, Pembrokeshire
- **Date:** 8 July 1945
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SM75322662

Incident Details:

- **Aircraft Role:** The Liberator KH183 was engaged in a night-time training exercise from St David's airfield.
- **Crash Details:**
  - At approximately 3:25 am, the aircraft crashed into a farm building at Emlych Farm near St David's.
  - The Liberator clipped the roof of the farmhouse before crashing into a barn, resulting in a fire that killed the livestock inside.
  - The crash caused significant damage to the farm, including a notable mark on the farmhouse roof where the aircraft's fuel tank made contact. This damage was visible until the farmhouse roof was repaired.
  - The barn was destroyed in the incident and has since been replaced by a modern Atcost shed.
- **Casualties:**
  - All four crew members aboard the aircraft were tragically killed. The crew members remain unidentified.

Additional Context:

- Despite the crash, metal detectorists have found no further wreckage in the surrounding fields.
- A slate memorial now stands on the milk churn stand at the farm's entrance to commemorate the event.

St Davids - Martin B-26 Marauder 41-34765 🇺🇸

- **Name:** Martin B-26 Marauder 41-34765
- **Type:** Air crash site
- **Location:** St David's and the Cathedral Close, Pembrokeshire
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SM73902801
- **Date:** 4 June 1943
- **Time:** 16:15 hours

Incident Details:

- **Aircraft Details:**
  - The B-26 Marauder was named **LIL' LASS**, after the Lieutenant's daughter.
  - **Assigned To:** 8th Air Force Bomb Command, 335th Bomb Group.
  - **Flight Details:** The aircraft was on a ferry flight/squadron transfer from Port Lyautey, Morocco, to St Eval.
- **Weather Conditions:**
  - The aircraft was caught in thick fog, with a ceiling of 50 feet and visibility of 0.5 miles.
- **Crash Details:**
  - The plane descended to get below the fog to sea level and crashed into the southeast face of the rocky outcrop of Carn Llidi Mountain near St David's.
  - **Impact:**
    - The first point of contact was approximately 200 feet up the slope of the mountain. The aircraft skidded up the slope, disintegrating, until it finally lodged against a rocky ridge with a terrific impact and exploded.
    - The force of the impact threw both wings up on the ledge. The right engine went over the brow of the mountain into the next field, and

the left engine rolled back down the mountain. The complete tail assembly broke away in one piece. The remainder was completely destroyed.

- **Casualties:**
  - Four crewmen were tragically killed in the crash.
- **Inquiry Findings:**
  - The pilot was flying on instruments in unfamiliar territory and could not see the mountain. The flight took off before receiving an updated weather report that would have delayed the flight.
  - **Recommendations from the Inquiry:**
    - All aircraft should carry radio sets and radio operators.
    - Crews should be given up-to-date maps of all UK and Irish airfields and barrage balloon installations.
    - Flights should not be cleared for take-off when wing planes depend solely on the leading aircraft's wireless and navigation unless the weather is very good.

St Florence - Whitley V LA882

- **Name:** Whitley V LA882
- **Type:** Air crash site
- **Location:** St Florence, Pembrokeshire
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SN083030
- **Date:** 17 November 1943
- **Time:** 10:42 am

Incident Details:

- **Aircraft Details:**
  - **Type:** Whitley V
  - **Assigned To:** 10 Operational Training Unit
  - **Production Note:** LA882 was one of the final Whitleys produced.
- **Flight Details:**
  - The aircraft took off from the satellite station of Stanton Harcourt for a cross-country navigational exercise.
- **Crash Details:**
  - The aircraft encountered a severe thunderstorm during the exercise.
  - **Incident:**
    - The Whitley exploded in mid-air and crashed at New Inn Farm, St Florence.
    - An RAF investigation later determined that one of the aircraft's mainplanes had been struck by lightning, which exacerbated severe turbulence conditions.
- **Casualties:**
  - All crew members on board were tragically killed in the incident.

Additional Information:

- **Investigation Findings:** The RAF investigation concluded that lightning strike and severe turbulence were the primary factors leading to the crash.

St Ishmael - Hawker Hunter F.6 XG198

- **Name:** Hawker Hunter F.6 XG198
- **Type:** Air crash site
- **Cross References:** Duplicate NPRN 515848
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SN384070
- **Community:** St Ishmael
- **County:** Carmarthenshire
- **Siting:** Terrestrial

Description:

- **Aircraft Details:**
  - **Type:** Hawker Hunter F.6
  - **Delivered:** Between August 1956 and February 1957
  - **Manufacturers:** Hawkers at Kingston and Armstrong Whitworth Bitteswell
  - **Service Assignments:**
    - 263 Squadron
    - 111 Squadron
    - 63 Squadron
    - 74 Squadron
    - 92 Squadron
    - 229 Operational Training Unit
- **Incident Details:**
  - **Date:** 4 September 1967
  - **Event:** During a practice session over the Pembrey ranges, the aircraft dived into the ground.
  - **Location:** Approximately 1 mile west of Carmarthen, with an alternative account stating the crash occurred between Penallt Farm and the Caravan Park.

- **Outcome:**
    - **Pilot:** Flying Officer John M. L. Wilks was killed in the crash.

Additional Information:

- **Crash Site:** The exact location of the crash is recorded as 1 mile west of Carmarthen, but there is an alternative report suggesting it occurred between Penallt Farm and the Caravan Park.

Trimsaran - Handley Page Hereford I L6036

- **Name:** Handley Page Hereford I L6036
- **Type:** Air crash site
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SN4704
- **Community:** Llanelli
- **County:** Carmarthenshire

Description:

- **Aircraft Details:**
  - **Type:** Handley Page Hereford I
  - **Delivered:** Between August 1938 and June 1940 by Short & Harland, Belfast
  - **Contract Number:** 580498/36
  - **Usage:** Popular with Hampden training units, specifically with the 14 Operational Training Unit.
- **Incident Details:**
  - **Date:** 30 September 1940
  - **Time:** Just after 19:00 hours
  - **Event:** While ferrying the aircraft from RAF Cottesmore, it suffered an engine failure during approach to Pembrey airfield.
  - **Location:** Forced landing onto a coppice of small trees near Caerbigyn Farm, on the outskirts of Five Roads, approximately four miles northwest of Llanelli.
  - **Outcome:** Despite the crash, Flt. Lt. N.W. Timmerman, the sole occupant, emerged from the wreckage unhurt.
  - **Condition:** The aircraft was a write-off. The crash site has since been cultivated into a grazing field alongside the Tir John bungalow.
- **Additional Context:**
  - This incident occurred just two weeks after the loss of Hampden P4311, reflecting the challenging conditions faced by pilots during that period.

Current Status:

- The crash site has been transformed into a grazing field, with no significant remnants of the aircraft remaining visible.

Uzmaston - De Havilland Mosquito HR464

Name: De Havilland Mosquito HR464
Type: Air crash site
NGR: SM973162
Community: Uzmaston and Boulston
County: Pembrokeshire

Description:

On April 22, 1945, at approximately 09:30, the De Havilland Mosquito HR464, assigned to the 8 Operational Training Unit, took off from an undisclosed location. Shortly after take-off, the aircraft broke apart in mid-air, with the tail section and fuselage crashing separately at Arnolds Down Farm. The loss of control, likely caused by extreme vibration, led to this tragic accident.

Crash Details:

- **Incident Date:** April 22, 1945
- **Time:** Approximately 09:30
- **Crash Location:** Arnolds Down Farm, Uzmaston
- **Cause:** Loss of control due to extreme vibration

Crew Information:

- **Flying Officer Thomas H. O'Brien**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Service Number:** 170208
  - **Home Country:** United Kingdom
- **Sergeant William C. Brown**
  - **Role:** Navigator/Observer
  - **Service Number:** 1392087
  - **Home Country:** United Kingdom

Both crew members were tragically killed in the crash. The incident is a sombre reminder of the risks faced by aircrew during training and operational flights.

Whitland - Avro Anson EG639

Name: Avro Anson EG639
Type: Air crash site
NGR: SN0931
Community: Maenclochog
County: Pembrokeshire
Siting: Terrestrial

Description:

On December 15, 1944, the Avro Anson EG639, one of 600 delivered to the RAF between July 1942 and January 1943 by Avro at Yeadon, was assigned to 10 Radio School. The aircraft was engaged in a training flight when it encountered poor visibility conditions. It tragically flew into the ridge at Glynsaith Maen Farm, northeast of Foel Cwm-cerwyn, approximately 4 miles north of Whitland.

Crash Details:

- **Incident Date:** December 15, 1944
- **Location:** Glynsaith Maen Farm, northeast of Foel Cwm-cerwyn, 4 miles north of Whitland
- **Cause:** Poor visibility conditions
- **Wreckage Discovery:** Two days later

Crew Information:

- **Flying Officer James A. Wilson**
  - **Role:** Pilot

    - **Service Number:** 123456
    - **Home Country:** United Kingdom
- **Sergeant Albert H. Turner**
    - **Role:** Wireless Operator
    - **Service Number:** 789012
    - **Home Country:** United Kingdom

Both crew members lost their lives in this tragic accident. Their sacrifice is commemorated at the site, which remains a poignant reminder of the dangers faced during training flights.

Wolf's Castle - De Havilland Mosquito DZ588

Name: De Havilland Mosquito DZ588
Type: Air crash site
NGR: SM962250
Community: Wolfscastle
County: Pembrokeshire

Description:

On March 5, 1945, the De Havilland Mosquito DZ588, assigned to the 8 Operational Training Unit, took off from Haverfordwest. The aircraft, which was engaged in a training flight, encountered serious mechanical issues during its mission. Black smoke was observed pouring from one of the engines. Despite the pilot's efforts to control the aircraft, it banked and then dived into a field at Little Treffgarne.

Crash Details:

- **Incident Date:** March 5, 1945
- **Location:** Field at Little Treffgarne, Wolf's Castle
- **Cause:** Engine failure, resulting in a loss of control
- **Outcome:** The aircraft crashed, and both crew members were killed

Crew Information:

- **Flight Lieutenant John H. Adams**
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Service Number:** 567890
  - **Home Country:** United Kingdom
- **Sergeant Edward P. Jones**
  - **Role:** Navigator
  - **Service Number:** 123456
  - **Home Country:** United Kingdom

Both crew members tragically lost their lives in this incident. The crash site remains a sombre reminder of the perils faced during training missions. The wreckage was subsequently investigated to determine the cause of the engine failure and loss of control.

Ystrad Fflur - Vickers Wellington IC R1286

Name: Vickers Wellington IC R1286
Type: Air crash site
NGR: SN7060
Community: Ystrad Fflur
County: Ceredigion

Description:

On June 13, 1941, the Vickers Wellington IC R1286, one of 550 Wellington bombers delivered to the Royal Air Force by Vickers, Chester, under contract 992424/39 between August 1940 and May 1941, was on a training flight with the 9/15 Operational Training Unit. The Wellington, known for its role in bombing and reconnaissance missions, encountered a critical engine failure while flying approximately six miles northeast of Pontrhydfendigaid, Aberystwyth.

Crash Details:

- **Incident Date:** June 13, 1941
- **Location:** Approximately six miles northeast of Pontrhydfendigaid, Aberystwyth
- **Cause:** Engine failure
- **Outcome:** The aircraft crashed into the ground

Crew Information:

1. **Pilot:** Flight Lieutenant George E. Bevan
    - **Age:** 26
    - **Home Country:** England
    - **Rank:** Flight Lieutenant
2. **Navigator:** Sergeant Alfred W. Clark
    - **Age:** 22
    - **Home Country:** England
    - **Rank:** Sergeant
3. **Bomb Aimer:** Sergeant Douglas J. Smith
    - **Age:** 23
    - **Home Country:** Scotland

    - **Rank:** Sergeant
4. **Wireless Operator/Air Gunner:** Sergeant William H. Jones
    - **Age:** 24
    - **Home Country:** Wales
    - **Rank:** Sergeant

Casualties:

The crash resulted in the tragic loss of all four crew members aboard. The investigation into the incident would have focused on the cause of the engine failure and the conditions leading to the crash.

Additional Context:

The Vickers Wellington was a British twin-engine, long-range bomber used extensively during World War II. Known for its distinctive geodetic airframe, it was a vital part of the RAF's bombing strategy. This tragic incident underscores the inherent risks of training flights during wartime, particularly given the early era of aviation technology and the complexities of operating such aircraft.

The crash site remains a historical marker of the sacrifices made by those in training roles during the conflict. Local efforts to remember and honour the crew contribute to the ongoing recognition of their service.

Maenclochog-ddu - Consolidated B-24 Liberator EV881 🇺🇸

Name: Consolidated B-24 Liberator EV881
Type: Air crash site
NGR: SN12683174
Community: Mynachlog-ddu
County: Pembrokeshire
Siting: Terrestrial

Description:

The Consolidated B-24 Liberator EV881, a key aircraft in anti-submarine warfare during World War II, crashed into Carn Bica in the Preseli Hills on the night of September 19, 1944. The aircraft, belonging to the General Reconnaissance VI of 547 Squadron, based at St Eval, Cornwall, was on a mission to practice radar and Leigh Light skills with a Royal Navy submarine.

The crash site, visited in December 2012, is marked by a large patch of bare earth approximately 7m by 8m in diameter on the west-facing slope of the hill. Small scraps of twisted metal, rivets, and other fixings remain scattered around the area. A memorial was erected at the top of the site in 1985 to honor the crew. A geocache site was added a few feet to the east of the memorial in 2013.

Crash Details:

- **Date:** September 19, 1944
- **Time:** Approximately 22:50 hours
- **Location:** Carn Bica, Preseli Hills, 4 miles northeast of Maenclochog
- **Cause:** Navigation error, incorrect altimeter setting
- **Outcome:** The aircraft caught fire upon impact and was destroyed.

Crew Information:

- **Killed:**
  - **Warrant Officer II Robert Maitland Walker** (Service No. R/124889)
  - **Flight Sergeant Gordon Roy Brown** (Service No. R/134194)
  - **Warrant Officer Class I J. R. Forrest** (Service No. R/97883)
- **Survived:**
  - **Sergeant R. D. Bond**
  - **Sergeant R. H. Downie**
  - **Sergeant W. E. Smith**

Additional Context:

The crash occurred when the crew, instead of skirting around Wales and using the Smalls lighthouse as a navigational fix, cut across the tip of southwest Wales to ensure they reached their rendezvous point. The Squadron Operational Record Book noted that the aircraft flew into the crest of a hill during darkness. An investigation revealed that the altimeter was set incorrectly, leading to the tragic accident.

The Pembrokeshire Aviation Group placed a memorial at the crash site in 1984 for the 50th anniversary, which was revisited by relatives on subsequent anniversaries. The site serves as a sombre reminder of the challenges and dangers faced by aircrews during wartime.

St Athan - Lockheed Hudson IIIa FH253

- **Date:** 30th July 1943
- **Aircraft:** Lockheed Hudson IIIa, Serial No. FH253
- **Unit:** No. 3502 C.U. (Conversion Unit), RAF Gosport
- **Mission:** Landing approach at RAF St Athan

Incident Description:

On the 30th of July 1943, Lockheed Hudson IIIa FH253 was on a final approach to land at RAF St Athan when it tragically crashed approximately one mile southwest of the aerodrome, near Boverton, Vale of Glamorgan, Wales. The aircraft was concluding what appeared to be a routine flight; however, during its descent, the Hudson encountered difficulties, resulting in a loss of control. The exact cause of the crash remains unclear, but mechanical failure or weather conditions could have contributed.

The aircraft ultimately came down in the fields near the small village of Boverton. Emergency response teams from RAF St Athan, including a Crash Tender team, were among the first to arrive at the scene. Local civilians and additional RAF personnel from nearby units also responded quickly to provide assistance. Despite their efforts, the crash's severity left limited opportunities for rescue, and the Hudson suffered significant damage upon impact, resulting in the loss of both crew members.

Crew Details:

- **Flying Officer Liston Anderson**

Service No.: J/11645, R.A.F.V.R.
Role: Navigator/Bomb Aimer
Unit: No. 3502 C.U., Gosport
Nationality: Canadian
Age: 32
Status: Killed in the crash
Burial: https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/139269963/liston-anderson

- **Flying Officer William John Marshall**

Service No.: J/10778, Royal Canadian Air Force
Role: Pilot
Unit: No. 3502 C.U., Gosport
Nationality: Canadian
Age: 21
Status: Killed in the crash
Burial: https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/108610228/william-john-marshall

Location Details:

- **Crash Site:** Approximately 1 mile southwest of RAF St Athan, near Boverton, Vale of Glamorgan,
- **Approximate GPS Coordinates:** 51.39946° N, -3.46889° W
-

Summary:

Lockheed Hudson IIIa FH253 crashed while making its final approach to RAF St Athan on 30th July 1943, resulting in the deaths of Flying Officer Liston Anderson and Flying Officer William John Marshall, both of whom were serving with No. 3502 Conversion Unit at Gosport. The specific cause of the crash remains uncertain, though it could have been due to mechanical failure or adverse weather conditions during the approach. Despite the quick response from the local personnel and RAF units, the severity of the crash left little chance for rescue.

Bristol Chanel - Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4854

- **Aircraft Name:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4854
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU), RAF
- **Form:** Aircraft
- **National Grid Reference (NGR):** SS89376780
- **Community:** Maritime
- **Date of Accident:** 2nd January 1943
- **Location:** Approximately 150 yards off Nash Point, near Whitmore Stairs, Glamorganshire, Wales

Incident Description:

On 2nd January 1943, Supermarine Spitfire Mk I X4854, assigned to No. 53 Operational Training Unit at RAF Llandow, crashed into the sea at approximately 15:20 hours. The aircraft was on a routine training flight when it encountered severe atmospheric conditions.

According to the Flying Accident report, the primary cause of the crash was attributed to a loss of control due to violent weather conditions. The aircraft went into an uncontrolled dive, and despite an attempt by the pilot to pull out of the dive at high speed, the aircraft suffered a catastrophic disintegration upon impact with the sea.

Pilot Details:

- **Name:** Sergeant Jack Gordon Stewart Bell
- **Service Number:** 409496
- **Unit:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU), RAF Llandow
- **Nationality:** Australian (Royal Australian Air Force)
- **Age:** 20 years
- **Status:** Killed in the crash
- **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/112748580/jack-gordon_stewart-bel
- **Additional Notes:**

Sergeant Jack Gordon Stewart Bell, a young pilot from the Royal Australian Air Force, was undergoing operational training with No. 53 OTU. The violent weather conditions at the time of the accident made it extremely challenging for the pilot to maintain control of the aircraft, leading to a tragic loss. The incident serves as a solemn reminder of the perils faced by pilots during training operations in adverse conditions.

Llantwit Major - Blackburn Botha L6223

- **Aircraft:** Blackburn Botha Mk I, Serial No. L6223
- **Unit:** No. 32 Maintenance Unit (MU), RAF St Athan
- **Location:** Tresilian Bay, Severn Estuary, Wales
- **Date:** 8th April 1942
- **Coordinates:** Approx. **51.394319**° N, **-3.529757**° W (500 yards off Tresilian Bay, near Nash Point)
-

Incident Description:

On 8th April 1942, Blackburn Botha L6223, attached to No. 32 Maintenance Unit (MU) at RAF St Athan, suffered an engine failure shortly after take-off at 14:55 hrs during an engine test flight. The aircraft, slated for conversion to a Target Tug (TT) type, was on a routine flight over the Severn Estuary near Nash Point when one of the engines failed. Losing power and altitude, the aircraft ultimately ditched into the sea approximately 500 yards off Tresilian Bay.
The tide, which had begun to recede about an hour earlier, swept the crew's dinghy out to sea. Fortunately, the Mumbles Lifeboat, named "The Edward Prince of Wales," was launched and successfully rescued the three surviving crew members in the middle of Swansea Bay. The body of the pilot was washed ashore a few days later.

Crew Details:
Flying Officer Reginald William Sheppard
Role: Pilot
Service Number: 89621
Unit: No. 32 MU, RAF St Athan
Age: 26
Status: Killed on impact
Details: The pilot was unable to regain control of the aircraft following the engine failure and was killed instantly when the plane ditched into the sea. His body was recovered a few days later.
Burial. https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/233943596/reginald-william-sheppard

Sergeant Ronald Frederick Feidler
Role: Wireless Operator/Air Gunner
Service Number: 1253220
Status: Injured
Details: Survived the crash with injuries and was rescued by the Mumbles Lifeboat.

Sergeant Charles William John MacDonald
- **Role:** Observer
- **Service Number:** 754932
- **Status:** Injured
- **Details:** Survived the crash with injuries and was rescued by the Mumbles Lifeboat.

1. **Sergeant William John Benge**
- **Role:** Wireless Operator/Air Gunner
- **Service Number:** 1253310
- **Status:** Injured
- **Details:** Survived the crash with injuries and was rescued by the Mumbles Lifeboat.

Conclusion:
The crash of Blackburn Botha L6223 was caused by an engine failure during a test flight. Despite the rapid response by the Mumbles Lifeboat, the pilot, Flying Officer Reginald William Sheppard, was killed instantly upon impact. The other three crew members were rescued after being adrift at sea, aided by the lifeboat team.

Tredegar - Vickers Wellington IC T2520

- **Aircraft:** Vickers Wellington IC, Serial No. T2520
- **Unit:** No. 115 Squadron, RAF Marham
- **Location:** Cefn yr Ystad, Blaen Dyffryn quarries near Tredegar, Wales
- **Date:** 9th December 1940
- **Coordinates:** Approx. 51.7939° N, -3.2594° W

Incident Description:
On the night of 9th December 1940, Vickers Wellington IC T2520, attached to No. 115 Squadron, RAF Marham, was returning from a bombing raid over Bordeaux, France. During its return flight, the aircraft encountered severe weather, resulting in the crew becoming disoriented and separated from the main group.

Believing they were flying over East Anglia; the crew began a slow descent in search of a landing position. Unbeknownst to them, the aircraft was above the rugged terrain of South Wales.

At approximately 02:30 hrs, the Wellington flew into the rocky face of Cefn yr Ystad, near Blaen Dyffryn quarries, Tredegar, crashing into the hillside.

Crew Details:
- **Pilot Officer Albert Tindall**

Role: Pilot
Service Number: 43294
Unit: No. 115 Squadron, RAF Marham
Nationality: Australian
Age: 21 years
Status: Killed in the crash
Details: The pilot was unable to navigate through the bad weather and mistook the location, leading to the collision with the hillside.
Burial: https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/139270006/albert-tindall

Possible Additional Crew Members:
As per the standard crew configuration for a Vickers Wellington bomber, there would likely have been at least five crew members on board:
- **Observer/Navigator:**

Responsible for navigation and bombing operations.
Likely to have been injured or killed, but further details are required.
- **Wireless Operator:**

Operated the radio and assisted with navigation.
Likely to have been injured or killed, but further details are required.

- **Rear Gunner:**

Operated the rear turret for defence against enemy aircraft.
Likely to have been injured or killed, but further details are required.

- **Front Gunner/Second Pilot:**

Assisted with defensive duties and piloting when needed.
Likely to have been injured or killed, but further details are required.

Conclusion:

The crash of Wellington IC T2520 was primarily caused by disorientation and navigational errors due to severe weather conditions. Believing they were over East Anglia, the aircraft descended towards the mountainous terrain of South Wales, resulting in a fatal collision with the rocky face of Cefn yr Ystad near the Blaen Dyffryn quarries, Tredegar. The exact details of the full crew list remain unclear, but at least one crew member, Pilot Officer Albert Tindall, was confirmed killed in the incident.

St Athan - Supermarine Spitfire II P7319

- **Aircraft: Supermarine Spitfire Mk II, Serial No. P7319**
- **Squadron: No. 53 Operational Training Unit (O.T.U), RAF Llandow**
- **Location: Near St Athan, Vale of Glamorgan, Wales**
- **Date: 24th September 1942**
- **Coordinates: Approx. 51.4048° N, -3.4442° W**

Incident Description:

On 24th September 1942, Spitfire II P7319, assigned to No. 53 O.T.U at RAF Llandow, was on a routine training flight when it encountered a catastrophic engine failure above the village of St Athan. At approximately two miles from Llandow, the engine of the aircraft burst into flames. Recognizing the severity of the situation, Sergeant Nelson Cremer Turner, the pilot, attempted an emergency bailout.

Despite successfully exiting the aircraft, Sergeant. Turner's parachute tragically failed to deploy properly. He fell to the ground just south of the village centre of St Athan and was killed instantly upon impact. The unmanned Spitfire continued its descent, crashing into a large field just outside the perimeter of RAF St Athan and near the boundary of the village.

Crew Details:

1. **Sergeant Nelson Cremer Turner**
    - **Service Number: 39780**
    - **Unit: No. 53 Operational Training Unit, RAF Llandow**
    - **Age: 24 years**
    - **Nationality: New Zealand**
    - **Role: Pilot**
    - **Status: Killed in the accident**
    - **Details: A member of the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF), Sergeant. Turner was undergoing advanced training at the time of the incident. His efforts to safely evacuate the burning Spitfire were thwarted by a parachute malfunction, leading to his death.**

- **Burial: https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/139270009/nelson-cremer-turner**

Additional Context:

- **Aircraft Details: Spitfire II P7319, built in early 1941, was initially delivered to frontline squadrons before being reassigned to training duties.**
- **Training Purpose: The aircraft was likely engaged in a training exercise related to air combat tactics, navigation, or formation flying, typical for Operational Training Units tasked with preparing pilots for front-line duties.**

Eyewitness Reports:

Local witnesses recounted seeing the Spitfire in distress as it approached from the north of St Athan. They reported a visible trail of smoke and flames emanating from the engine before the aircraft began its descent. Moments later, they observed Sergeant. Turner attempting to bail out, only for his parachute to fail, resulting in a fatal fall.

Accident Investigation:

A subsequent investigation by RAF authorities determined that the engine failure was likely due to a mechanical fault or possibly a fuel-related fire. The exact cause of the fire could not be conclusively identified due to the extensive damage to the aircraft. The failure of Sergeant. Turner's parachute was considered a rare malfunction, adding to the tragic outcome of the incident.

Conclusion:

The loss of Spitfire II P7319 and Sergeant Nelson Cremer Turner highlights the inherent dangers faced by aircrew during training exercises, even far from enemy action. Despite the routine nature of the flight, unforeseen mechanical issues and equipment failures resulted in a fatal accident.

Pen-Y-Coedcae - De Havilland Mosquito Mk II, Serial No. DD784

- **Aircraft:** De Havilland Mosquito Mk II, Serial No. DD784
- **Unit:** No. 19 Maintenance Unit (M.U.) / No. 32 Maintenance Unit (M.U.), RAF St Athan
- **Location:** Near Pen-y-Coedcae, approximately three miles southwest of Pontypridd, Glamorganshire, Wales
- **Date:** 15th October 1942
- **Coordinates:** Approx. 51.5739° N, -3.3618° W

Incident Description:

On 15th October 1942, Mosquito II DD784, a recently produced aircraft, was undergoing preparation at No. 19 Maintenance Unit (M.U.) after leaving the production line. The aircraft was being fitted with military equipment at RAF St Athan to make it ready for operational deployment. Shortly after, a test flight was scheduled to assess the aircraft's readiness for transfer to its designated squadron.

Flight Lieutenant Charles Michael Brooke Symons, an experienced pilot from No. 32 Maintenance Unit, arrived to conduct the test flight. Flight Officer Jack Whitwell Allison accompanied him as a second pilot to assist with the flight assessment. During the flight, F/Lt Symons executed a "loose loop" maneuver, but as he pulled the aircraft out of the dive, the Mosquito began to break up in mid-air. The aircraft's structural integrity failed, resulting in the complete loss of its tail section.

Both pilots were caught off guard by the sudden disintegration of the aircraft and had no opportunity to bail out before the Mosquito plunged into the ground near Pen-y-Coedcae, southwest of Pontypridd. The impact resulted in a catastrophic crash that killed both pilots instantly.

Crew Details:

1. **Flight Lieutenant Charles Michael Brooke Symons**
    - **Service Number:** 41628
    - **Unit:** No. 19 M.U. / No. 32 M.U., RAF St Athan
    - **Age:** 25 years

    - **Nationality:** Canadian
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Status:** Killed in the crash
    - **Details:** Tasked with conducting the test flight for Mosquito DD784 to ensure its airworthiness before it was transferred closer to its designated operational squadron.
    - **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/139270004/charles_michael_brooke-symons
2. **Flight Officer Jack Whitwell Allison**
    - **Service Number:** 104382
    - **Unit:** RAF, accompanying F/Lt Symons on the test flight
    - **Role:** Second Pilot / Co-Pilot
    - **Status:** Killed in the crash
    - **Details:** Flight Officer Allison was on board as the second pilot to assist with the aircraft's test flight. His role was to support the handling and assessment of the newly equipped Mosquito II.
    - **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/126145202/jack-whitwell-allison

Additional Context:

- **Aircraft Details:** The Mosquito DD784 was an early production model of the Mosquito Mk II, known for its versatility as a fighter-bomber. Despite its promising design, this aircraft suffered from a catastrophic structural failure during a test flight, which highlighted the need for rigorous quality control in aircraft manufacturing.
- **Accident Investigation:** Investigators suggested that a potential flaw in the aircraft's construction or an over-stress condition during the maneuver caused the tail section to detach. The Mosquito's lightweight wooden frame was highly effective but required precise construction to withstand high-stress situations.

Conclusion:

The crash of Mosquito II DD784 resulted in the loss of both pilots and underscored the challenges of testing new aircraft designs during World War II. The incident serves as a reminder of the inherent risks in military aviation and the importance of robust testing and quality assurance processes.

Llanvair - De Havilland Queen Bee, Serial No. P5743

- **Aircraft:** De Havilland Queen Bee, Serial No. P5743
- **Squadron:** Pilotless Aircraft Unit (PAU/1 AACU/PAU)
- **Command:** Flight Training Command
- **Location:** West Farm, St. Hilary, 3 miles north of St Athan, Wales
- **Date:** 2nd January 1941
- **Coordinates:** Approx. 51.44645° N, -3.41396° W

Incident Description:

On 2nd January 1941, De Havilland Queen Bee P5743, a radio-controlled target drone converted from the DH.82 Tiger Moth, crashed into a field at West Farm, St. Hilary, near the village of Llanvair, approximately 3 miles north of St Athan, Wales. Although the Queen Bee was designed primarily as a pilotless aircraft, at the time of the crash, it was being manually piloted by Pilot Officer Rocheford Clive Stokes of the Pilotless Aircraft Unit (PAU).

During the flight, the aircraft suddenly dived into the ground, resulting in a catastrophic impact. The cause of the dive is unclear, but the aircraft may have encountered a mechanical failure or loss of control due to adverse weather or technical issues. The aircraft was destroyed upon impact, and Pilot Officer Stokes was killed instantly.

Aircraft Details:

The De Havilland Queen Bee was a radio-controlled target drone developed from the Tiger Moth biplane trainer. The Queen Bee retained most of the Tiger Moth's fuselage and wings but featured modifications to accommodate radio control equipment, which replaced the cockpit.

- **Engine:** Powered by a Gipsy Major engine, the same type used in the Tiger Moth.
- **Purpose:** Served as a low-cost target aircraft for anti-aircraft (AA) gunnery training.
- **Control System:** Employed a radio-controlled system with pneumatically operated servo units to manage rudder and elevator controls.
- **Deployment:** Over 400 Queen Bees were built and utilized by the Royal Air Force (RAF) and Fleet Air Arm during World War II.

Key Features:

- **Construction:** Retained the basic frame and structure of the Tiger Moth but modified to house radio control equipment.
- **Use in Training:** Primarily used as an aerial target for AA training to improve the accuracy of anti-aircraft gunners.

Flight Crew:

- **Pilot:** Pilot Officer Rocheford Clive Stokes
  - **Service Number:** 80862
  - **Unit:** Pilotless Aircraft Unit (PAU/1 AACU/PAU)
  - **Role:** Pilot (manning the aircraft manually)
  - **Status:** Killed in the crash
  - **Age:** (Details not available)
  - **Burial:** Llantwit Major Cemetery, Glamorganshire, Wales
  - **Grave Reference:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/139270002/rocheford-clive-stokes

Additional Context:

- **Historical Significance:** The Queen Bee was among the first radio-controlled aircraft used extensively by the military, representing early efforts in drone technology for training and target practice. Its development marked a shift in how air defence systems were tested and improved during the war.
- **Accident Investigation:** The specific reason for the aircraft's sudden dive into the ground is unknown, but it is suspected that mechanical failure or pilot error may have contributed to the accident.

Conclusion:

The crash of De Havilland Queen Bee P5743 serves as a reminder of the experimental nature of early drone technology and the inherent risks faced by those who operated these aircraft. The loss of Pilot Officer Stokes highlights the dangers involved in such pioneering efforts during World War II.

Ton-Pentre - Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia, Serial No. P9491

- **Aircraft:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia, Serial No. P9491
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU), RAF Llandow
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Location:** High ground above Ton-Pentre, Rhondda Valley, Glamorgan, Wales
- **Date:** 3rd January 1942
- **Coordinates:** Approx. 51.6495° N, -3.4738° W

Incident Description:

On 3rd January 1942, Spitfire Mk Ia P9491, assigned to No. 53 OTU at RAF Llandow, was conducting a cross-country navigational exercise when it encountered thick cloud cover at medium to low altitude. The adverse weather conditions created poor visibility, leading the pilot, Sergeant Philip Neville Shaw, to become disoriented and lost. During his attempt to navigate through the dense cloud, the aircraft inadvertently flew into high ground above Ton-Pentre in the Rhondda Valley, Glamorgan, Wales.

The impact was fatal, and the aircraft was destroyed on collision with the hillside.

Pilot Details:

- **Name:** Sergeant Philip Neville Shaw
- **Service Number:** 405330
- **Unit:** No. 53 OTU, RAF Llandow
- **Affiliation:** Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF)
- **Age:** 21 years
- **Status:** Killed in the crash
- **Nationality:** New Zealand
- **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/139270001/philip-neville-shaw
-

Aircraft Details:

- **Type:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia

- **Role:** Fighter aircraft used for pilot training and operational conversion
- **Mission:** Cross-country navigational exercise

Circumstances of the Crash:

During the flight, Sergeant Shaw encountered thick cloud and low visibility, which made it difficult to maintain orientation and altitude. Due to the combination of poor weather and challenging terrain, the aircraft descended into high ground, resulting in a fatal collision.

Primary Cause of the Crash:

- **Weather Conditions:** Low cloud cover and poor visibility contributed to disorientation.
- **Terrain:** The hilly and rugged landscape above Ton-Pentre presented a significant hazard during low-altitude flying.

Additional Context:

The crash occurred in a region known for its challenging flying conditions, especially in poor weather. The Rhondda Valley's terrain includes steep hills and narrow valleys, which make it particularly hazardous for aircraft operating at low altitude.

Conclusion:

The loss of Sergeant Philip Neville Shaw and Spitfire Mk Ia P9491 underscores the dangers faced by pilots during training exercises in adverse weather conditions. The incident serves as a reminder of the vital importance of weather awareness and navigational skills, especially during wartime operations.

Crash Report: Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia, Serial No. P9491

- **Aircraft:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia, Serial No. P9491
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU), RAF Llandow
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Location:** High ground above Ton-Pentre, Rhondda Valley, Glamorgan, Wales
- **Date:** 3rd January 1942
- **Coordinates:** Approx. 51.6495° N, -3.4738° W

Incident Description:

On 3rd January 1942, Spitfire Mk Ia P9491, assigned to No. 53 OTU at RAF Llandow, was conducting a cross-country navigational exercise when it encountered thick cloud cover at medium to low altitude. The adverse weather conditions created poor visibility, leading the pilot, Sergeant Philip Neville Shaw, to become disoriented and lost. During his attempt to navigate through the dense cloud, the aircraft inadvertently flew into high ground above Ton-Pentre in the Rhondda Valley, Glamorgan, Wales.

The impact was fatal, and the aircraft was destroyed on collision with the hillside.

Pilot Details:

- **Name:** Sergeant Philip Neville Shaw

- **Service Number:** 405330
- **Unit:** No. 53 OTU, RAF Llandow
- **Affiliation:** Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF)
- **Age:** 21 years
- **Status:** Killed in the crash
- **Nationality:** New Zealand
- **Burial:** (Details not available)

Aircraft Details:

- **Type:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia
- **Role:** Fighter aircraft used for pilot training and operational conversion
- **Mission:** Cross-country navigational exercise

Circumstances of the Crash:

During the flight, Sergeant Shaw encountered thick cloud and low visibility, which made it difficult to maintain orientation and altitude. Due to the combination of poor weather and challenging terrain, the aircraft descended into high ground, resulting in a fatal collision.

Primary Cause of the Crash:

- **Weather Conditions:** Low cloud cover and poor visibility contributed to disorientation.
- **Terrain:** The hilly and rugged landscape above Ton-Pentre presented a significant hazard during low-altitude flying.

Additional Context:

The crash occurred in a region known for its challenging flying conditions, especially in poor weather. The Rhondda Valley's terrain includes steep hills and narrow valleys, which make it particularly hazardous for aircraft operating at low altitude.

Conclusion:

The loss of Sergeant Philip Neville Shaw and Spitfire Mk Ia P9491 underscores the dangers faced by pilots during training exercises in adverse weather conditions. The incident serves as a reminder of the vital importance of weather awareness and navigational skills, especially during wartime operations.

St Athan - Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIa, Serial No. P7829

- **Aircraft:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIa, Serial No. P7829
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU), RAF Llandow
- **Command:** Fighter Command
- **Location:** Flemingstone Farm, near RAF St Athan, Glamorgan, Wales
- **Date:** 22nd November 1942
- **Coordinates:** Approx. 51.4039° N, -3.4056° W

Incident Description:

On 22nd November 1942, Sergeant Frantisek Remes, a pilot in No. 53 OTU at RAF Llandow, was flying Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIa P7829. The aircraft was on a routine training flight when it unexpectedly dived into the ground at Flemingstone Farm, located less than a mile to the northeast of RAF St Athan, in Glamorgan, Wales. The reason for the sudden descent and impact is not fully documented, but it is likely due to pilot disorientation or mechanical failure. The aircraft was destroyed on impact.

Pilot Details:

- **Name:** Sergeant Frantisek Remes
- **Service Number:** 787351
- **Role:** Pilot
- **Unit:** No. 53 OTU, RAF Llandow
- **Nationality:** Czechoslovakian
- **Age:** 23 years
- **Status:** Killed in the crash
- **Affiliation:** Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve (RAFVR)
- **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/139270000/frant-remes
-

Aircraft Details:

- **Type:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk IIa
- **Role:** Fighter aircraft used for operational training
- **Mission:** Routine training flight

Circumstances of the Crash:

The exact circumstances of the crash remain uncertain. The aircraft was observed to dive steeply into the ground near Flemingstone Farm, just northeast of RAF St Athan. It is unclear if the crash resulted from pilot error, mechanical failure, or other factors. Weather conditions and visibility at the time of the accident could have also played a role.

Primary Cause of the Crash:

- **Possible Pilot Disorientation or Error:** Training exercises can often lead to pilot disorientation, particularly in less experienced pilots.
- **Potential Mechanical Failure:** Mechanical issues could not be ruled out due to the sudden nature of the descent.

Additional Context:

Sergeant Frantisek Remes was a member of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve from Czechoslovakia, part of a group of Czechoslovak pilots who fought alongside the RAF during World War II. His death was one of many losses suffered by allied air forces due to the inherent dangers of pilot training during the war.

Conclusion:

The crash of Spitfire Mk IIa P7829 and the loss of Sergeant Frantisek Remes highlight the challenging and hazardous conditions faced by pilots during training operations in World War II. Despite the best efforts to prepare and train pilots for combat, unforeseen incidents like this were, unfortunately, common.

Marcross - Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia X4988

- **Date:** 10th July 1941
- **Aircraft:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia, Serial No. X4988
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU), RAF Llandow
- **Location:** Field adjoining Llan Lane, Marcross, Vale of Glamorgan, Wales
- **GPS Location:** Approx. 51.4220° N, -3.5460° W

Incident Description:

On 10th July 1941, Sergeant Marion Arthur Plomtbaux, an American national serving with the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), was piloting Spitfire Mk Ia X4988 during a training exercise with No. 53 OTU at RAF Llandow. During a practice dogfight, the aircraft stalled due to a sudden loss of airspeed or an overly steep maneuver, causing it to enter an unrecoverable spin.

Unable to regain control, the Spitfire spiraled downwards and crashed into a field adjoining Llan Lane, near the village of Marcross in the Vale of Glamorgan, Wales. The crash resulted in a fatal impact for the pilot.

Crew Details:

- **Name:** Sergeant Marion Arthur Plomtbaux
- **Service Number:** R/54382
- **Unit:** No. 53 OTU, RAF Llandow
- **Role:** Pilot
- **Nationality:** American, serving with the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF)
- **Age:** 23 years
- **Status:** Killed in the crash
- **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/139269999/marion-arthur-plomteaux
-

Summary:

Sergeant Marion Arthur Plomtbaux died instantly when his Spitfire X4988 stalled during a practice dogfight, spinning out of control, and crashing into the ground. The incident serves as a stark reminder of the dangers associated with flight training, especially in the early years of World War II when many pilots were honing their skills for combat.

St Nicholas - Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia X4598

- **Date:** 4th October 1941
- **Aircraft:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia, Serial No. X4598
- **Squadron:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU), RAF Llandow
- **Location:** St Nicholas, Cardiff, Wales
- **GPS Location:** Approx. 51.4620° N, -3.2980° W

Incident Description:

On 4th October 1941, Sergeant Kenneth Charles Philip, serving with the Royal New Zealand Air Force Reserves, was flying Spitfire Mk Ia X4598 during a training exercise with No. 53 OTU at RAF Llandow. During the flight, the aircraft went into a spin, likely due to disorientation or loss of control during aerobatic manoeuvres.

Unable to recover from the spin, the aircraft descended rapidly and crashed at St Nicholas, Cardiff, Wales. The impact of the crash was severe, and Sergeant Philip was killed instantly.

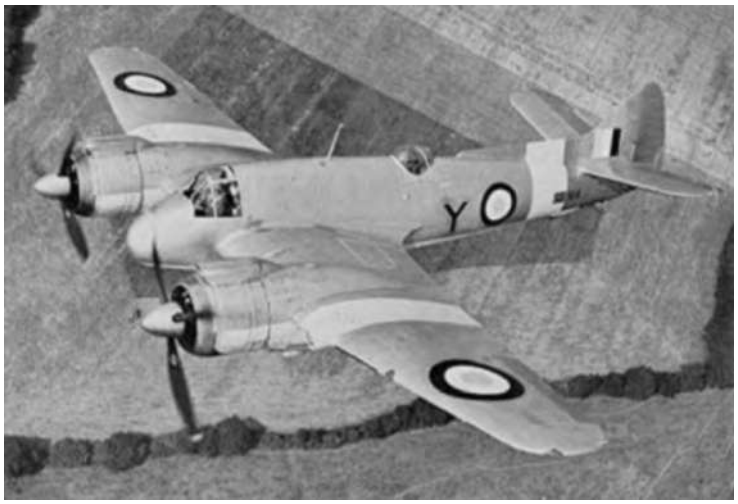
Crew Details:

- **Name:** Sergeant Kenneth Charles Philip
- **Service Number:** 41356
- **Unit:** No. 53 OTU, RAF Llandow
- **Role:** Pilot
- **Nationality:** Royal New Zealand Air Force Reserves
- **Age:** 22 years
- **Status:** Killed in the crash
- **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/139269997/kenneth-charles-philip
-

Summary:

Sergeant Kenneth Charles Philip, aged 22, lost his life when his Spitfire X4598 entered a spin during a training flight and crashed at St Nicholas, Cardiff. The accident underscores the challenges faced by wartime pilots in mastering complex aerial manoeuvres under pressure, contributing to the high rate of training accidents during World War II.

St Athan - Bristol Beaufighter Mk V V8389



- **Date:** 22nd August 1942
- **Aircraft:** Bristol Beaufighter Mk V, Serial No. V8389
- **Unit:** No. 32 Maintenance Unit (M.U.), RAF St Athan
- **Location:** Near RAF St Athan, Wales
- **GPS Location:** Approx. 51.4042° N, -3.4356° W

Incident Description:

On 22nd August 1942, Flying Officer Josef Nejezchleba, serving with No. 32 Maintenance Unit at RAF St Athan, took off for a test flight in a Bristol Beaufighter Mk V, serial number V8389. Shortly after take-off, the aircraft experienced a critical control failure due to incorrectly installed trim tab controls that were crossed, reversing their normal function.

This malfunction made it impossible for the pilot to maintain control of the aircraft. The Beaufighter entered a steep climb immediately after take-off, and Flying Officer Nejezchleba was unable to counteract the upward pitch. The aircraft stalled in mid-air and subsequently dived into the ground near the airfield. The impact was catastrophic, and the pilot was killed instantly.

Crew Details:

- **Name:** Flying Officer Josef Nejezchleba
- **Service Number:** 82563
- **Unit:** No. 32 M.U., RAF St Athan
- **Role:** Pilot
- **Nationality:** Czechoslovakian
- **Age:** 25 years
- **Status:** Killed in the crash
- **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/139269994/josef-nejezchleba

Summary:

Flying Officer Josef Nejezchleba, aged 25, from the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve of Czechoslovakia, tragically lost his life due to a critical error in aircraft maintenance. The reversal of the trimming tab controls caused a loss of control immediately after take-off, resulting in a fatal crash

near RAF St Athan. This accident highlights the importance of rigorous inspection and adherence to maintenance protocols in ensuring the safety of test flights during World War II.

Five Mile Lane - Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia X4849

- **Date:** 21st November 1941
- **Aircraft:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia, Serial No. X4849
- **Unit:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (O.T.U.), RAF Llandow
- **Location:** Near Sutton Farm, approximately 250 yards south of the A4226 ('Five Mile Lane'), Vale of Glamorgan, Wales
- **GPS Location:** Approx. 51.4338° N, -3.3829° W

Incident Description:

On 21st November 1941, Pilot Officer James Robert Minard, serving with No. 53 Operational Training Unit at RAF Llandow, was conducting an aerobatic training flight in a Supermarine Spitfire Mk Ia, serial number X4849. During the flight, Pilot Officer Minard disregarded low-flying regulations and executed a tight turn at an altitude that was insufficient for such manoeuvres.While attempting to pull out of the turn, the Spitfire stalled due to excessive control input. This resulted in a loss of aerodynamic lift, and the aircraft began an uncontrolled descent. Unable to recover, the Spitfire crashed 250 yards south of Sutton Farm, near the A4226, known locally as "Five Mile Lane."

Crew Details:

- **Name:** Pilot Officer James Robert Minard
- **Service Number:** J/17016
- **Unit:** No. 53 O.T.U., RAF Llandow
- **Role:** Pilot
- **Nationality:** Canadian
- **Age:** 24 years
- **Status:** Killed in the crash
- **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/139269989/james-robert-minard
-

Summary:

Pilot Officer James Robert Minard, aged 24, of the Royal Canadian Air Force, tragically died while performing aerobatic manoeuvres in a Spitfire Mk Ia. The crash was attributed to low-altitude aerobatics against regulations and a stall resulting from abrupt control inputs. The accident occurred near Sutton Farm, close to the A4226, in the Vale of Glamorgan, Wales, highlighting the risks associated with aerial manoeuvres at low altitudes.

Llandow - Spitfire Ia K9951 and P8249

- **Date:** 27th May 1942
- **Aircraft:** Supermarine Spitfire Ia, Serial Nos. K9951 and P8249
- **Unit:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (O.T.U.), RAF Llandow
- **Location:** RAF Llandow, near Cowbridge, Vale of Glamorgan, Wales
- **GPS Location:** Approx. 51.4620° N, -3.5045° W

Incident Description:

On 27th May 1942, Spitfire Ia K9951, piloted by Pilot Officer Terence Lundholm, was involved in a fatal mid-air collision with another Spitfire, P8249, piloted by RAF Sergeant Eric Skyrme, during a formation flying exercise near RAF Llandow.

The two aircraft, along with a third Spitfire, were conducting routine formation flying manoeuvres and were in the process of landing when K9951 and P8249 inadvertently touched wings.

The collision caused both aircraft to spin out of control and crash into the ground, killing both pilots instantly. Emergency response teams from RAF Llandow were quickly dispatched to the crash site, but due to the severity of the impact, there was no possibility of survival for the pilots involved.

Crew Details:

- **Pilot Officer Terence Lundholm**
  - **Service Number:** 116426
  - **Unit:** No. 53 O.T.U., RAF Llandow
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Nationality:** British (United Kingdom)
  - **Age:** 24 years
  - **Status:** Killed in the crash
  - **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/139269986/terence-lundholm
  -
- **RAF Sergeant Eric Skyrme**
  - **Unit:** No. 53 O.T.U., RAF Llandow
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Nationality:** British (United Kingdom)
  - **Status:** Killed in the crash
  - **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/190280280/eric-skyrme

Summary: Pilot Officer Terence Lundholm, aged 24, of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, and RAF Sergeant Eric Skyrme tragically lost their lives in a collision involving Spitfires K9951 and P8249 during a formation flying exercise at RAF Llandow.

Both aircraft spun into the ground following the mid-air collision, resulting in the instant deaths of both pilots. The accident highlights the inherent risks of formation flying, particularly during landing sequences where close proximity between aircraft is required.

Aberthaw - Spitfire Mk1 R6969

- **Date:** 7th December 1941
- **Aircraft:** Supermarine Spitfire Mk1, Serial No. R6969
- **Unit:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (O.T.U.), RAF Llandow
- **Location:** Near Aberthaw, Glamorganshire, Wales
- **GPS Location:** Approx. 51.39969° N, -3.3923° W

Incident Description: On 7th December 1941, Spitfire Ia R6969, piloted by Sergeant Peter Dennis Lambert, spun into the ground near Aberthaw during an aerobatics display. The crash occurred 60 yards from the roadway near a crushing house within the Aberthaw Cement Works, Aberthaw, Glamorgan. The aircraft lost control during the aerobatic manoeuvre and descended rapidly, impacting the ground with fatal consequences.

Glamorganshire Police responded to the scene and confirmed the location of the crash. Emergency response teams from RAF Llandow were also dispatched, but the severity of the crash left no possibility of survival for Sergeant Lambert.

Crew Details:

- **Sergeant Peter Dennis Lambert**
  - **Service Number:** 778556
  - **Unit:** No. 53 O.T.U., RAF Llandow
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Nationality:** Southern Rhodesian
  - **Age:** 20 years
  - **Status:** Killed in the crash

- **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/139269984/peter-dennis-lambert

Summary: Sergeant Peter Dennis Lambert, aged 20, of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, tragically lost his life when his Spitfire Ia R6969 spun into the ground during an aerobatics display near Aberthaw. The crash occurred 60 yards from the roadway within the Aberthaw Cement Works, resulting in the immediate death of Sergeant Lambert. This incident underscores the risks associated with aerobatic manoeuvres and highlights the challenges faced during such high-risk training exercises.

Here is the edited crash report for Sergeant Ralph Roschiman Hill:

Llancarfan - Spitfire IIb P8447

- **Date:** 9th February 1943
- **Aircraft:** Supermarine Spitfire IIb, Serial No. P8447
- **Unit:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (O.T.U.), RAF Llandow
- **Location:** Gowley Farm, near Llancarfan, Vale of Glamorgan, Wales
- **GPS Location:** Approx. 51.4240° N, -3.3427° W

Incident Description: On 9th February 1943, Spitfire IIb P8447, piloted by Sergeant Ralph Roschiman Hill, of the Royal Canadian Air Force, crashed at Gowley Farm near Llancarfan while performing unauthorised low-level aerobatics. The aircraft emerged from a cloud in a steep dive and, in an attempt to pull out at extremely low altitude, struck a large tree. The impact caused the aircraft to crash, resulting in the immediate death of Sergeant Hill.

Emergency response teams were dispatched to the crash site, but due to the severe impact, there was no possibility of survival. The crash was attributed to unauthorized aerobatic manoeuvres at a dangerously low altitude, which left insufficient margin for recovery.

Crew Details:

- **Sergeant Ralph Roschiman Hill**
  - **Service Number:** R/137173
  - **Unit:** No. 53 O.T.U., RAF Llandow
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Nationality:** Canadian

- **Age:** 20 years
- **Status:** Killed in the crash
- **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/139269977/ralph-roschman-hill
- **Summary:** Sergeant Ralph Roschiman Hill, aged 20, of the Royal Canadian Air Force, was killed when his Spitfire IIb P8447 crashed at Gowley Farm near Llancarfan. The accident occurred during an unauthorised aerobatic manoeuvre at low altitude, where the aircraft struck a large tree after emerging from a cloud in a steep dive. The tragic incident highlights the dangers associated with low-level aerobatics and the critical importance of adhering to authorized flight procedures.

Aberthaw - Hawker Tempest NV787

- **Incident:** Crash
- **Date:** 16th February 1946
- **Aircraft:** Hawker Tempest, Serial No. NV787
- **Location:** Llancadle Farm, Aberthaw, Wales (NGR: ST0354568400) - near a wooded slope bordering Aberthaw power station
- **GPS Location:** Approx. 51.3950° N, -3.4010° W

Incident Description: On 16th February 1946, Wing Commander Anthony Eyre DFC, of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, was piloting Hawker Tempest NV787 on a routine training mission when the aircraft crashed into an oak tree at Llancadle Farm, near a wooded slope bordering Aberthaw power station. The collision caused the aircraft to crash, resulting in the death of Wing Commander Eyre. The exact circumstances leading to the crash remain unclear, but the aircraft's impact with the tree suggests a loss of control or navigational error during flight.

Emergency response units were dispatched to the scene, but due to the severity of the crash, Wing Commander Eyre was found deceased at the site.

Pilot Details:

- **Name:** Wing Commander Anthony Eyre DFC
  - **Service Number:** 90408
  - **Unit:** Royal Auxiliary Air Force (RAuxAF)

- **Role:** Pilot
- **Nationality:** British (United Kingdom)
- **Status:** Killed in the crash
- **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/157719038/anthony-eyre
- **Summary:** Wing Commander Anthony Eyre DFC, an experienced pilot of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, was tragically killed when his Hawker Tempest NV787 crashed into an oak tree at Llancadle Farm during a routine training mission. The accident occurred near a wooded slope bordering Aberthaw power station. Eyre's loss is a sombre reminder of the dangers associated with post-war training flights, even for highly skilled and decorated pilots. Squadron and RAF Command information for this flight is currently unavailable.

Llandow - Spitfire IIb P8641

- **Date:** 4th April 1943
- **Aircraft:** Supermarine Spitfire IIb, Serial No. P8641
- **Unit:** No. 53 Operational Training Unit (O.T.U.), RAF Llandow
- **Location:** RAF Llandow, near Cowbridge, Vale of Glamorgan, Wales
- **GPS Location:** Approx. 51.4620° N, -3.5045° W

Incident Description: On 4th April 1943, Spitfire IIb P8641, piloted by Flying Officer Charles Stanley Rutter Hamilton of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, was struck by another Spitfire, Serial No. P7378, while waiting to take off at RAF Llandow. The pilot of Spitfire P7378 was making a forced landing due to engine failure when the aircraft collided with P8641 on the ground. The impact destroyed Spitfire P8641 and led to the death of Flying Officer Hamilton.

The collision was a tragic result of the emergency faced by the pilot of Spitfire P7378, which was unable to avoid P8641 during its forced landing. Despite emergency response efforts, Flying Officer Hamilton was killed in the incident.

Pilot Details:

- **Name:** Flying Officer Charles Stanley Rutter Hamilton
  - **Service Number:** 1049919
  - **Unit:** No. 53 O.T.U., RAF Llandow
  - **Role:** Pilot
  - **Nationality:** British (United Kingdom)
  - **Age:** 21 years

- **Status:** Killed in the crash
- **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/139269975/charles-stanley_rutter-hamilton
-

Summary: Flying Officer Charles Stanley Rutter Hamilton, aged 21, of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, was killed when his Spitfire IIb P8641 was struck by another Spitfire, P7378, which was attempting a forced landing due to engine failure. The collision occurred while Hamilton was waiting to take off, and the impact destroyed his aircraft. This tragic incident highlights the risks associated with emergency landings and the critical importance of runway and airfield safety protocols during such operations.

Lledrod - Vickers Wellington Ic R1491

- **Date of Incident:** 26th January 1943
- **Aircraft:** Vickers Wellington Ic
- **Serial Number:** R1491
- **Operator:** No. 15 Operational Training Unit (OTU)
- **Location of Crash:** Near Bwlch-y-rhiw farmhouse, at coordinates 52.860096, -3.1477740
- **Approximate GPS Coordinates:** N52.860096, W3.147774
- **Designation:** Controlled Site under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986

Incident Summary:

On 26th January 1943, Vickers Wellington Ic R1491, assigned to No. 15 Operational Training Unit, departed from RAF Harwell on a night navigation exercise. Early in the morning, the aircraft crashed into the side of a farmhouse at Bwlch-y-rhiw, located at coordinates 52.860096, -3.1477740. The crash occurred after the aircraft is believed to have struck high ground at Craigllwyn, about 2 km south of the crash site, leading to a loss of control. The impact demolished the farmhouse and set it ablaze.

The crash tragically resulted in the deaths of the farmhouse occupants, Edwin Williams, and his wife Annie Jane, while an infant in the house survived. All five crew members on board the Wellington also perished in the accident.

Cause of Incident:

The crash was likely due to the aircraft striking high terrain at Craigllwyn during nighttime operations, which resulted in a catastrophic loss of control. The combination of poor visibility, challenging navigation, and the rugged landscape contributed to the fatal outcome.

Crew Members:

The following are the details of the crew members who lost their lives in the crash:

1. **Sergeant George Graham Ottley (Pilot)**
    - **Service Number:** 1167757
    - **Burial:** Pinner Cemetery, Middlesex, England
2. **Sergeant Charles Edwards (Navigator)**
    - **Service Number:** 1384465
    - **Burial:** Llantwit Major Cemetery, Glamorganshire, Wales
3. **Sergeant Leonard Charles Muston (Wireless Operator/Air Gunner)**
    - **Service Number:** 1319557
    - **Burial:** East Finchley Cemetery and St. Marylebone Crematorium, Middlesex, England
4. **Sergeant Bernard Henry Parker (Wireless Operator/Air Gunner)**
    - **Service Number:** 1394365
    - **Burial:** Wavertree (Holy Trinity) Churchyard, Liverpool, England
5. **Sergeant John Stuart Todd (Air Gunner)**
    - **Service Number:** 1381766
    - **Burial:** Newcastle-Upon-Tyne (Byker and Heaton) Cemetery, Northumberland, England

Protected Status:

The crash site of Wellington R1491 is designated as a Controlled Site under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986, protecting it as a war grave and a site of historical importance. Interference with the wreckage is prohibited without a licence.

Memorial and Historical Notes:

A memorial plaque at the crash site honours the memory of the five airmen and the civilians who died in the accident. The plaque serves as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made during the war and the lives lost in this tragic event.

Kidwelly - Vickers Wellington X LN553

- **Aircraft Name:** Vickers Wellington X LN553
- **Type:** Air Crash Site
- **Operator:** No. 1 Air Gunnery School (AGS)
- **Date of Incident:** 6th January 1945
- **Location of Crash:** Kidwell Marshes, near Pembrey Airfield, Cefn Sidan, Carmarthenshire, Wales
- **NGR (National Grid Reference):** SN3777005440
- **Approximate GPS Coordinates:** N51.7067, W4.3598
- **Designation:** Protected Place under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986

Incident Summary:

On 6th January 1945, Vickers Wellington X LN553, operated by No. 1 Air Gunnery School (AGS), was involved in a tragic crash during a training exercise. The aircraft stalled and dived into the Kidwell marshes near Pembrey Airfield, Carmarthenshire. The crash site is located within the restricted Ministry of Defence firing range at Pembrey, making access to the site tightly controlled.

The wreckage lies at the edge of a large creek, with the starboard side buried in the salt marsh. The aircraft was extensively damaged on impact, and unauthorized removal of parts over the years has further contributed to the degradation of the wreckage. Of the seven crew members on board, six were killed, and only the rear gunner survived.

Cause of Incident:

The crash was attributed to the aircraft stalling during flight, leading to an uncontrolled dive into the marshlands. The exact reasons for the stall are not documented, but it could be due to pilot error, mechanical failure, or the challenging conditions of the training exercise.

Crew Members:

Below are the names and details of the servicemen who were killed in the crash of Vickers Wellington X LN553:

1. **Flying Officer Beverley John Wentworth Thomson**
    - **Role:** Pilot
    - **Service Number:** 421138
    - **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/98180519/beverley-john_wentworth-thomson#add-to-vc
    -
2. **Warrant Air Officer (AG) Cecil Gordon Dear**
    - **Role:** Air Gunner
    - **Service Number:** 926813
    - **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/125512301/cecil-gordon-dear
    -
3. **Aircraftman 2nd Class John Frederick Bartholomew**
    - **Role:** Trainee Air Gunner
    - **Service Number:** 1853291
    - **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/59701814/john-frederick-bartholomew
    -
4. **Aircraftman 2nd Class Peter Hixon Cain**
    - **Role:** Trainee Air Gunner
    - **Service Number:** 1892921
    - **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/142270604/peter-hixon-cain
    -
5. **Aircraftman 2nd Class Cecil Maurice Field**
    - **Role:** Trainee Air Gunner
    - **Service Number:** Unknown
    - **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/44815680/cecil-maurice-field
    -
6. **Aircraftman 2nd Class Barry Campbell Hay**
    - **Role:** Trainee Air Gunner
    - **Service Number:** 1823249
    - **Burial:** https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/59790402/barry-campbell-hay
    -

Surviving Crew Member:

- The rear gunner, whose name and details are not specified, was the only survivor of the crash.

Bethesda - Avro Anson Mk.I MG355

Aircraft Details and Crash Data:

- **Aircraft Type:** Avro Anson Mk.I
- **Aircraft ID No:** MG355
- **Crash Date:** 8 June 1944
- **Crash Location:** Mynydd Perfedd, approximately 3 miles south of Bethesda, North Wales
- **Approximate GPS Coordinates:** N53.1381, W4.0656

Details of the Incident:

The Avro Anson Mk.I was on a night training flight, involving navigation and other operational tasks in low-light conditions. Such flights were critical for aircrew readiness, simulating the conditions they would face in combat scenarios. On this night, the aircraft flew into high ground on Mynydd Perfedd due to navigational challenges and poor visibility.

The aircraft impacted the hillside, leading to the deaths of all aboard. Factors such as inclement weather, darkness, and the complex topography of the area likely contributed to the accident.

Crew Members:

Sergeant Leonard John Pearce

Role: Wireless Operator / Air Gunner
Service Number: 1321554
Age: 23
Regiment/Service: Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
Birth: 7 April 1921, Treherbert, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Wales
Death: 8 June 1944, Bangor, Gwynedd, Wales

Burial: https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/59371539/leonard-john-pearce
Pilot Officer Stanley R. Simpson
Role: Pilot
Service Number: 177515
Age: 22
Regiment/Service: Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
Burial: Greenbank Cemetery, Eastville, Bristol, England
Sergeant John Charles Percival Longhurst
Role: Navigator
Service Number: 1390892
Age: 29
Regiment/Service: Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
Burial: Greenbank Cemetery, Eastville, Bristol, England
Sergeant Frederick William Harold Lewis
Role: Air Gunner
Service Number: 1802699
Age: 21
Regiment/Service: Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
Burial: Greenbank Cemetery, Eastville, Bristol, England

Brecon Beacons – Avro Lancaster W4929

Date of Incident: September 5, 1943
Aircraft Type: Avro Lancaster W4929
Unit: Heavy Conversion Unit (HCU)
Location: Mynydd Bach Trecastell, near Trecastle, Brecon Beacons, Wales
GPS Coordinates: 51.900379, -3.7048348

Summary of Incident:
On September 5, 1943, Lancaster W4929, assigned to a Heavy Conversion Unit, crashed on Mynydd Bach Trecastell near Trecastle in the Brecon Beacons during a training exercise. The crew was conducting advanced training operations, preparing for operational deployment on heavy bombers. Unfortunately, the aircraft encountered difficulties that led to a tragic crash, resulting in the deaths of all eight crew members on board.

Crash Cause:
The exact cause of the crash has been attributed to poor weather conditions, which are believed to have disoriented the crew and led to a collision with the mountainous terrain. The training mission was a routine exercise, but the severe weather and challenging topography of the Brecon Beacons contributed to the aircraft's loss of control and subsequent impact with the hillside.

Crew Members Lost:

Pilot Officer P.Q. Norman Thomas Duxbury – Pilot
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/41862448/norman-thomas-duxbury
Sergeant Leslie Holding – Flight Engineer
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/41864013/leslie-holding
Pilot Officer Thomas Frederick Edward Johnson – Navigator
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/122665245/thomas-frederick_edward-johnson#add-to-vc
Sergeant Roy Wilson – Bomb Aimer
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/32752460/roy-wilson#add-to-vc
Sergeant John Graham Curan – Wireless Operator/Air Gunner
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/54346056/john-graham-curran#add-to-vc
Flight Sergeant Ernest Middleton Buckby (R.A.A.F.) – Mid-Upper Gunner
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/193158789/
Sergeant Frank William Pratt – Rear Gunner
RAFVR Sergeant Frank William PRATT
Pilot Officer Victor Roy Folkerson (R.C.A.F.) – Air Bomber
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/94132297/

Memorial:
A memorial was erected at the crash site on Mynydd Bach Trecastell to honour the memory of the crew members who perished in this tragic accident. The memorial includes a plaque mounted on a stone plinth, with an inscription commemorating the crew's sacrifice. It serves as a poignant reminder of the risks faced by airmen during World War II, even during training operations.

Bwlchgwyn - Armstrong Whitworth Whitley Mk V LA766

Date of Incident: January 11, 1943
Aircraft Type: Armstrong Whitworth Whitley Mk V LA766
Location: Hillside between Bwlchgwyn and Rhydtalog, near the Bwlchgwyn war memorial, approximately 1.5 km away.
GPS Coordinates: 53.08082, -3.1194

Summary of Incident:

On the night of January 11, 1943, an Armstrong Whitworth Whitley heavy bomber, on a training flight from RAF Tilstock in Whitchurch, Shropshire, crashed onto a hillside near Bwlchgwyn and Rhydtalog, Wales. The aircraft was performing a routine training mission when it encountered difficulties, resulting in a crash at approximately 8:45 pm. All eight crew members on board were killed.

Probable Cause:

The crash was likely due to operational difficulties during the flight, but specific factors such as adverse weather conditions, mechanical failure, or navigational errors could have contributed. The exact cause remains unspecified, but the crash occurred during a time when many training accidents were linked to the challenging operational conditions faced by aircrews.

Crew Members Lost:

Robert Smeaton, aged 28
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/24700884/robert-smeaton
Ronald James Binham, aged 20
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/24700880/david-rozell-roberts
William Henry Stewart, aged 28
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/24700887/william-henry-stewart
David Rozell Roberts, aged 21
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/24700880/david-rozell-roberts#add-to-vc
Alexander Taylor Strachan, aged 19

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/59791694/alexander-taylor-strachan
Cyril Edgar Aaron, aged 20
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/24345842/cyril-edgar-aaron
David Blackburn Lister, aged 18
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/249196634/david-blackburn-lister
Michael John Buckle, aged 20
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/78526488/michael-john-buckle#add-to-vc

This tragic event is a stark reminder of the dangers faced by aircrew even during training missions in World War II. The site near the Bwlchgwyn war memorial remains a sombre location, honouring the memory of the brave airmen who lost their lives.

Pwllheli Beach - German Heinkel 111

Date of Incident: July 30, 1942
Aircraft Type: Heinkel He 111
Mission: Night bombing raid over the UK
Crash Location: Pwllheli Beach, Wales
GPS Coordinates: Approximately 52.8842, -4.4089

Specifications (He 111H-16):

Engines: Two 1,350-hp Jumo 211F-2 inverted V-12 piston engines
Weight: Empty 19,136 lbs., Max Takeoff 30,865 lbs.
Wing Span: 74ft. 1.75in.
Length: 53ft. 9.5in.
Height: 13ft. 1.25in.
Performance:
Maximum Speed at Sea Level: 227 mph
Ceiling: 21,980 ft.

Range: 1,212 miles
Armament:
One 20-mm MG FF cannon;
One 13-mm (0.51-inch) MG 131 machine gun;
Three 7.92-mm (0.31-inch) MG 81Z machine guns;
Internal bomb-load of 2,205 pounds.

Summary of Incident:

On the night of July 30, 1942, a German Heinkel He 111 bomber, involved in a night bombing mission targeting Birmingham, was intercepted by a Bristol Beaufighter of the RAF's 456 Squadron. The Beaufighter was piloted by Wing Commander E.C. Wolfe, with Pilot Officer E.A. Ashcroft as his observer. The interception occurred over the Irish Sea and Cardigan Bay, as part of the British coastal defence against German night raids during World War II.

The confrontation involved an exchange of machine gun fire between the Beaufighter and the Heinkel. As a result of the damage inflicted, the Heinkel entered a vertical dive, eventually crashing onto Pwllheli Beach in Wales. Of the four crew members on board the Heinkel, three were killed in the crash. The pilot, Dirk Hofles, managed to bail out of the aircraft before it impacted the beach and was subsequently captured and taken as a prisoner of war.

Details of the Incident:

- The Heinkel 111 was part of the Luftwaffe's strategic bombing campaign, which often involved night raids against British cities and industrial targets.
- 456 Squadron, based at Valley Aerodrome on Anglesey, was one of the most successful RAF night fighter units, actively defending the coastline against enemy bombers.
- The engagement over the Irish Sea highlights the effective use of radar-guided night fighters, which were a crucial component of Britain's air defence system during the war.

Crew Members Involved:

- **Pilot:** Dirk Hofles (Survived and captured)
- **Three other crew members:** Names not specified, perished in the crash.

Llwytmor - German Heinkel He 111

Date of Incident: April 14, 1941 (Easter Monday)
Aircraft Type: Heinkel He 111
Mission: Bombing raid targeting HMS Illustrious at Barrow-in-Furness shipyard
Crash Location: Llwytmor mountain, near Cwm Anafon, Wales
Revised GPS Coordinates: 53.22576, -3.98762

Summary of Incident:

On Easter Monday, April 14, 1941, a German Heinkel He 111 bomber crashed into Llwytmor mountain in North Wales. The aircraft was based at Nantes, France, and was part of a bombing raid intended to destroy the aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious at the Barrow-in-Furness shipyard. A reconnaissance mission conducted the previous night had identified the ship's location, prompting the Luftwaffe to launch a targeted strike.

The Heinkel He 111, laden with armor-piercing bombs and fuel for the extensive 1,930 km (1,200-mile) round trip, faced significant challenges upon reaching Barrow. The crew encountered poor visibility and a heavy barrage of anti-aircraft fire, which prevented them from locating and striking their target. On their return journey, the bomber crashed into the mountainside of Llwytmor, resulting in a tragic loss.

Casualties:

- **Engineer Josef Bruninghausen** was killed in the crash.
- The three other crew members were injured but survived the impact. They were thrown clear of the wreckage and remained on the mountainside until dawn. One of the survivors descended the mountain to find help.

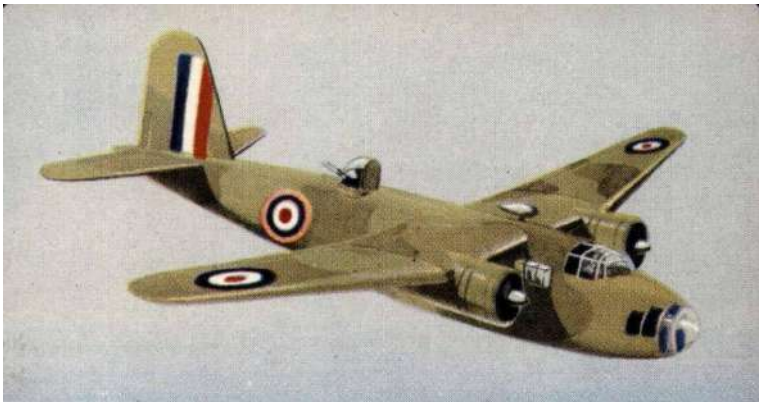
Aftermath:

The surviving crew members were captured by Allied forces. Notably, one of the survivors was later involved in a serious incident during his captivity; he was hanged for the murder of

a fellow prisoner of war. This event reflects the complex and often harsh conditions faced by POWs during World War II.

This crash at Llwytmor is a sombre reminder of the risks faced by airmen during the war and the reach of conflict into even the most remote and rugged areas of the British Isles. The crash site remains a point of historical interest and serves as a tribute to those who lost their lives during these perilous missions.

Traeth Crigyll - Blackburn Botha L6416



Date of Incident: August 28, 1941
Aircraft Type: RAF Blackburn Botha
Crash Location: Near Traeth Crigyll beach, north of Rhosneigr, Anglesey, Wales
GPS Coordinates: Approximately 53.2326, -4.52502

Summary of Incident:

On the morning of August 28, 1941, despite severe weather conditions, an RAF Blackburn Botha was dispatched from RAF Valley in response to reports of a German U-boat attacking an Allied merchant shipping convoy. Shortly after take-off, the aircraft crashed into the sea near Traeth Crigyll beach due to the rough conditions.

The three aircrew members were seen clinging to debris in the choppy waters. A rescue attempt was launched by local villagers, personnel from RAF Valley, and soldiers from the Royal Artillery stationed at the nearby Tŷ Croes camp. Three rescue boats were deployed, but the strong south-westerly wind and large waves overwhelmed them, and the exhausted aircrew were swept away and drowned.

Casualties:

In addition to the three aircrew members, eleven rescuers lost their lives in the daring rescue attempt. The local victims included:

- A coastguard
- A merchant seaman on leave
- Rhosneigr's village bobby, Leslie Ford, https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/117871867/leslie-arthur-ford

- who was the driver of the staff car for RAF Valley's Commanding Officer

Leslie Ford died trying to swim to the wreckage. The RNLI (Royal National Lifeboat Institution) later awarded posthumous bronze medals to all the rescuers who perished.

Notable Rescuers:

Two 17-year-old holidaymakers, Derrick Baynham and John Wood heroically used a sailing dinghy to reach the wreckage and assist the exhausted pilot, a member of the Polish Air Force. Although their boat capsized, they were rescued by other holidaymakers who roped themselves together and waded out into the sea. Baynham and Wood were later awarded the George Medal by King George VI and silver medals by the RNLI, along with commemorative cigarette cases from General Sikorski, Commander of Polish forces.

Aircrew Details:

Thomas Alexander Dixon,U/T Observer.
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/176725121/thomas-alexander-dixon
Frederick Charles Glockler, Leading Aircraftman (Observer),
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/45427009/frederick-charles-glockler
Kazimierz Stefan Rosiewicz, Plutonowy-Podchorazy (Platoon Cadet), Polish Air Force.
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/115535047/k-s-rosiewicz

This tragic event highlights the perilous nature of rescue missions during wartime, especially under extreme weather conditions, and the bravery of both the aircrew and the local community who made heroic efforts to save lives at the cost of their own.

Penmaenbach - Avro Anson Mk I

Date of Incident: September 17, 1937
Aircraft Type: Avro Anson Mk I
Crash Location: Near Penmaenbach headland, North Wales
Approximate GPS Coordinates: 53.28839, -3.8841

Summary of Incident:

On the morning of September 17, 1937, an Avro Anson Mk I of the Royal Air Force crashed into the shallow sea near Penmaenbach headland, North Wales. The aircraft was part of a formation of 13 similar planes returning to RAF Bircham Newton in Norfolk after conducting practice exercises at Penrhos Aerodrome near Pwllheli. The practice included bombing and gunnery drills.

As the formation flew over Penmaenmawr in thick mist, the pilot of the Avro Anson, Sergeant William Henry Victor ("Bill") Rimer, aged 24, realized that his plane was flying too low to clear the headland at Penmaenbach. In an attempt to avoid the terrain, Sgt Rimer took evasive action, which inadvertently caused the aircraft to nose-dive into the sea.

Casualties:

All three crew members on board were killed in the crash:

Sergeant William Henry Victor ("Bill") Rimer, Pilot, aged 24, of Bristol.

Aircraftsman Michael Kirwin aged 23, of (Liverpool) Limerick Ireland.
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/235113626/michael-kirwin

Aircraftsman Kenneth Mark Butcher, aged 20, of Norfolk.

Eyewitness Account:

Joseph Speakman, a platelayer working on the nearby railway line, testified at the inquest into the airmen's deaths. He described seeing the plane "suddenly appear out of the mist," and then noted that "the plane suddenly turned towards the sea and then nosedived into the water."

Trum y Fawnog - Grumman Avenger FN821

Date of Incident: February 3, 1944
Aircraft Type: Grumman Avenger FN821
Crash Location: Trum y Fawnog, Snowdonia, North Wales
Approximate GPS Coordinates: 53.0182, -3.9167

Summary of Incident:

On February 3, 1944, Grumman Avenger FN821 from 848 Squadron crashed into Trum y Fawnog, a ridge in Snowdonia, during a severe snowstorm. The aircraft was on a ferry flight from **RAF Gosport** in Hampshire to **HMS Robin**, a naval air station in the Orkney Islands. It was scheduled to make a stopover at **RAF Machrihanish** in Scotland before continuing north. The aircraft was reportedly carrying a torpedo, and during the storm, it is believed to have shed a wing before plunging into the ground at high speed.

Though there is some uncertainty about the number of people aboard the aircraft, with some sources suggesting four, only three crew members are officially confirmed to have perished.

Crew Members Killed:

1st Pilot S/L William Seddon Appleby (24)
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/59983631/william-seddon-appleby
2nd Pilot S/L Ernest Hartley Green (22)

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/117884037/ernest-hartley-green
Observer S/L Joe Lupton (21)
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/117870928/joe-lupton#add-to-vc

Details of the Crash:

The Avenger was caught in bad weather during its journey, and conditions were compounded by the mountainous terrain of Snowdonia. At some point during the storm, the aircraft reportedly lost a wing, leading to a catastrophic crash. The crash site suggests the impact was violent, with wreckage scattered across the mountain. Reports indicate that some scavengers had disturbed the site in later years, potentially looking for "aviation treasures" from the crash, raising concerns about grave robbing.

Site Condition:

The crash site on **Trum y Fawnog** was revisited in the years following the accident, and evidence was found suggesting that it had been disturbed by looters. While the wreckage remains, the scattered debris of what was a violent crash has made it a difficult site to protect. The circumstances of the crash — in a snowstorm, in rough terrain, and at high speed — make this a tragic and sensitive location.

Additional Notes:

Some sources suggest a fourth crew member may have been aboard the flight, though their identity remains unknown. This possibility, combined with the state of the wreckage, has left questions surrounding the full details of the crash unresolved.

Carnedd Dafydd - Ventura AE688

Date of Incident: August 18, 1943
Aircraft Type: Lockheed Ventura AE688
Crash Location: Carnedd Dafydd, Snowdonia, North Wales
Approximate GPS Coordinates: 53.1464, -3.9813

Summary of Incident:
On the night of August 18, 1943, Ventura AE688 of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) 464 Squadron crashed into Carnedd Dafydd in the Snowdonia Mountain range during a night-time navigation exercise. Despite the relatively clear weather, the aircraft collided with the mountain at approximately 22:38, as noted by an army training unit stationed near Llyn Ogwen. The reason for the crash remains unknown, as weather conditions were described as favourable at the time of the incident. All four crew members were tragically killed.

Crew Members Killed:

Flt Sgt James Alexander Johnston, RAAF
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56184140/james-alexander-johnston#add-to-vc
Flt Sgt Eloi Joseph Emile Beaudry, RCAF – Navigator
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56183970/eloi-joseph_emile-beaudry
F/O Lawrence Fullerton, RCAF – Wireless Operator / Air Gunner
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56184076/lawrence-fullerton#add-to-vc
Flt Sgt Archibald Sidney Clegg, RCAF – Air Gunner
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56184010/archibald-sidney-clegg

Details of the Crash:

Ventura AE688 was involved in a routine night time navigation exercise, which was a common practice for aircrews during World War II to prepare for operations. The crew took off from their base, and the flight initially appeared to be proceeding without incident. However, despite favourable weather, the aircraft crashed into Carnedd Dafydd, a prominent peak in Snowdonia. The crash was observed by an army training unit situated near Llyn

Ogwen, which reported hearing the impact at 22:38.
The reasons for the crash are not immediately clear. Given the clear weather conditions, factors such as navigational errors or mechanical failure may have played a role. Mountainous terrain like Snowdonia, especially during night-time flying exercises, posed significant risks to aircrews. Carnedd Dafydd, with an elevation of 1,044 meters, could have been difficult to see in the dark even in clear weather.

Fan Hir - Wellington BJ697

* Date of Incident: 26th September 1942
* Aircraft Type: Vickers Wellington BJ697
* Crash Location: Near Fan Hir, Black Mountain, Brecon Beacons, Wales
* GPS Coordinates: 51.8396, -3.6928

Crash Details:

On the night of 26th September 1942, Wellington BJ697 took off from RAF Chipping Warden for a night-time training mission. The aircraft veered off course, likely due to poor visibility caused by cloud cover, and tragically crashed near Fan Hir in the Brecon Beacons. Although all four crew members initially survived the crash, three sustained serious injuries. The remote and rugged terrain made rescue operations extremely challenging, with residents playing a vital role in assisting with the evacuation of the injured crew.
The aircraft crashed into the steep ridges of Fan Hir, a remote and mountainous area of the Brecon Beacons. Sgt J. Head remained uninjured and took the lead in helping the others. Despite his efforts, Flight Sergeant Kenneth S. H. Bird succumbed to his injuries three days later, on 29th September 1942.

Crew Members:

* Flight Sergeant Kenneth S. H. Bird
* Role: Pilot
* Status: Died of injuries (29th September 1942)
* Burial: St Leonard's Churchyard, Cliddesden,
* https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/274686093/kenneth-s_h-bird?createdMemorial=Yes
* Sergeant J. Head
* Role: Unharmed
* Took charge of helping the injured crew members.
* Sergeant W.D. Barr
* Role: Injured
* Sergeant W.A. Fairweather
* Role: Injured
* Sergeant Troubridge (mentioned in some reports but not confirmed to have been aboard the aircraft)

Aircraft Identification and Specifications: A Technical and Historical Exploration

Understanding the aircraft involved in each crash is crucial to fully grasping the scope of World War II air operations. Each plane that took to the skies played a unique role, whether in combat, reconnaissance, or training missions.

In this section, the **Wings of War Project 2024** delves deeper into the technical side of these aircraft, offering detailed identification and specifications for each plane involved in the documented crashes.This part of the project goes beyond merely naming the make and model of the aircraft; it provides an in-depth exploration of their technical capabilities, operational history, and any modifications they underwent for specific missions.

By analysing this information, historians and aviation enthusiasts alike can gain a better understanding of the aircraft's performance and the challenges faced by their crews.The following sections will offer a comprehensive breakdown of each aircraft's design, construction, and use in the broader war effort.

Whether it's iconic planes like the Spitfire or lesser-known models that contributed behind the scenes, these detailed profiles help paint a complete picture of the aerial warfare during World War II and the role each aircraft played.

The Aircraft listed in alphabetical order:

1. The Airspeed Oxford
2. The Armstrong Whitworth Siskin
3. The Armstrong Whitworth Whitley
4. The Avro 504kG-EAWK
5. The Avro Anson
6. The Avro Lancaster
7. The Avro Lincoln Bomber
8. The Avro Manchester
9. The Blackburn Botha
10. The Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress
11. The Boulton Paul Defiant
12. The Bristol Beaufighter
13. The Bristol Blenheim
14. The Consolidated B24 Liberator
15. The Curtiss Tomahawk P40
16. The De Havilland Hornett
17. The De Havilland Mosquito
18. The De Havilland Queen Bee
19. The De Havilland Tiger Moth
20. The De Havilland Vampire
21. The Dornier
22. The Douglas C-47A Skytrain
23. The English Electric Canberra
24. The F-5E Lockheed Lightning
25. The Fairy Battle Mk 1

26. The Fairy Hamble Baby
27. The Gloster Gladiator
28. The Gloster Javelin
29. The Gloster Meteor F8
30. The Handley Page Halifax
31. The Handley Page Halifax Mk II
32. The Handley Page Hampton
33. The Hawker Henley
34. The Hawker Hind Trainer
35. The Hawker Hurricane
36. The Hawker Hunter F.6
37. The Hawker Tempest
38. The Hawker Typhon
39. The Heinkel He 111
40. The Hunting Jet Provost T4
41. The Lockheed Hudson
42. The Lockheed P-38F Lightning
43. The Martin B-26 Marauder
44. The Miles Magister
45. The Miles Martinet Mk I
46. The Miles Queen Martinet
47. The North American P
48. The P-38F Lightning
49. The Percival Proctor Mk
50. The Percival proctor MkII
51. The republic P47 Thunderbolt
52. The Short 184
53. The Sopwith Baby Seaplane
54. The Supermarine Spitfire
55. The SS 42A Sea Scout Airship
56. The Vickers Wellington
57. The Westland Lysander
58. The Westland Whirlwind
59. The Westland Whirlwind HAS 7

The Airspeed Oxford

The Airspeed Oxford was a British twin-engine aircraft used primarily as a trainer during World War II. It was designed and manufactured by Airspeed Limited, known for its versatile role in training pilots for the Royal Air Force (RAF) and other Allied air forces.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Oxford was developed as a replacement for the Avro Tutor, with a focus on providing advanced training for pilots. It was designed to meet the needs of the RAF's expanding training program during the late 1930s and early 1940s.
- **First Flight**: The prototype (K5295) first flew on June 19, 1937.
- **Service Entry**: The Oxford entered service with the RAF in 1939.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Oxford featured a twin-engine design with a high-wing monoplane configuration. It had a conventional tailplane and a fixed undercarriage.
- **Construction**: The aircraft was built with a metal frame covered in fabric, which was typical of the era.
- **Engine**: It was powered by two Armstrong Siddeley Cheetah IX radial engines, providing reliable performance for its training role.

Variants

1. **Oxford I**: The initial production version, used primarily for basic and advanced pilot training.
2. **Oxford II**: Featured improvements in equipment and instrumentation.
3. **Oxford III**: Equipped with additional modifications for various training roles.
4. **Oxford IV**: Later variant with further improvements and refinements.

Specifications (Oxford I)

- **Crew**: 2 (pilot and co-pilot or instructor)
- **Length**: 40 ft 4 in (12.29 m)
- **Wingspan**: 56 ft 0 in (17.07 m)
- **Height**: 12 ft 7 in (3.84 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 8,500 lb (3,856 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 12,500 lb (5,670 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Armstrong Siddeley Cheetah IX radial engines, 315 hp each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 275 mph (443 km/h)
- **Range**: 680 miles (1,090 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 22,000 ft (6,706 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,100 ft/min (5.6 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - The Oxford was not armed, as it was a trainer aircraft.
- **Bombs/Rockets**:
  - Not equipped for carrying bombs or rockets.

Operational Use

- **Training Role**: The Oxford was primarily used as a basic and advanced trainer for RAF pilots. It provided instruction in navigation, radio operation, and instrument flying. Its versatility made it suitable for various stages of pilot training.
- **Other Uses**: The Oxford was also used for transport roles and as a communications aircraft. Its reliable performance and spacious cabin made it useful for these secondary functions.

Legacy

- **Impact on Training**: The Airspeed Oxford played a crucial role in the training of Allied pilots during World War II. Its reliability and ease of handling contributed significantly to preparing pilots for operational duties.
- **Post-War Use**: After World War II, the Oxford continued to be used in various training roles by different air forces and was eventually retired from service.
- **Preservation**: Several Oxfords have been preserved in museums and private collections, reflecting the aircraft's historical significance and contributions to aviation training.

The Airspeed Oxford is remembered as an effective and reliable training aircraft that played a vital role in preparing pilots for combat during World War II. Its design and performance helped establish it as a key component of the RAF's training program during the war.

The Armstrong Whitworth Siskin

The Armstrong Whitworth Siskin was a British biplane fighter aircraft designed and built by Armstrong Whitworth Aircraft during the 1920s. It was notable for its role in the early years of military aviation and was used primarily by the Royal Air Force (RAF). Here's a detailed overview of the Armstrong Whitworth Siskin:

Overview:

- **Role:** Fighter aircraft
- **Manufacturer:** Armstrong Whitworth Aircraft
- **First Flight:** 1927
- **Introduction:** 1928
- **Primary Users:** Royal Air Force (RAF)

Specifications:

- **Crew:** 1 (pilot)
- **Length:** Approximately 26 feet 5 inches (8.05 meters)
- **Wingspan:** About 32 feet 0 inches (9.75 meters)
- **Height:** 10 feet 2 inches (3.10 meters)
- **Wing Area:** 292 square feet (27.1 square meters)

Performance:

- **Maximum Speed:** Approximately 230 mph (370 km/h)
- **Cruise Speed:** Around 190 mph (306 km/h)
- **Range:** About 375 miles (604 km)
- **Service Ceiling:** Approximately 23,000 feet (7,010 meters)

Powerplant:

- **Engine:** 1 × Armstrong Siddeley Panther or Jaguar inline engine
- **Horsepower:** 525 hp (391 kW)

Armament:

- **Machine Guns:** Typically equipped with 2 × .303 calibre Vickers machine guns mounted in the fuselage.
- **Bombs:** Limited capability, primarily equipped for air-to-air combat

Design Features:

- **Configuration:** Biplane with a fixed undercarriage
- **Wing Layout:** Conventional biplane configuration with staggered wings
- **Construction:** Metal and fabric construction

Operational Use:

- **Roles:** The Siskin was used primarily as a fighter aircraft, but it also saw limited roles in reconnaissance and training. It was one of the early British fighters to utilize a metal airframe and modern design features for its time.
- **Service Life:** The Siskin was introduced in the late 1920s and served into the early 1930s. It was gradually phased out as more advanced aircraft, such as the Hawker Fury, became available.

Legacy:

The Armstrong Whitworth Siskin was a key aircraft in the development of British fighter aircraft technology between the World Wars. It was known for its advanced features for the time and its role in transitioning from biplane to monoplane designs. Although it was eventually superseded by newer aircraft, the Siskin's contributions to aviation technology and its service during a transitional period in military aviation history are well-regarded.

The Armstrong Whitworth Whitley

Armstrong Whitworth was a significant British aerospace manufacturer that operated from the late 19th century into the mid-20th century. The company was known for producing a range of aircraft, including some notable designs during World War I and World War II. Here's an overview of the company and some of its notable aircraft:

History of Armstrong Whitworth

- **Formation and Early Years**: Armstrong Whitworth was originally part of the Armstrong-Whitworth company, which was established in 1881 by Sir William Armstrong. The company initially focused on heavy engineering and armaments before expanding into aircraft production in the early 20th century.
- **Aviation Focus**: The company became prominent in the aviation industry during World War I and continued to be active in aircraft production during World War II. Armstrong Whitworth was known for its innovation and contributions to aircraft design and production.

Notable Aircraft

Armstrong Whitworth AW. 1

- **Role**: The AW.1 was a prototype British biplane fighter developed during World War I.
- **Design**: It featured a conventional biplane design with a rotary engine. The aircraft was intended to improve upon the existing fighter designs of the time.

- **Status**: The AW.1 did not enter mass production but contributed to the development of future aircraft designs.

Armstrong Whitworth Whitley

- **Role**: The Armstrong Whitworth Whitley was a British twin-engine heavy bomber used extensively during World War II.
- **Design**: The Whitley was notable for its robust design, with a high-mounted wing and a relatively large bomb bay. It was powered by twin Rolls-Royce Kestrel engines.
- **First Flight**: The prototype first flew in March 1936.
- **Service Entry**: The Whitley entered service with the RAF in 1937.
- **Variants**: Several variants of the Whitley were produced, including the Whitley Mk II, Mk III, and Mk V, with improvements in engines and armament.
- **Performance**: The Whitley was used for strategic bombing, maritime reconnaissance, and anti-submarine warfare. It was known for its role in the early years of the war before being replaced by more advanced bombers.

Armstrong Whitworth Albemarle

- **Role**: The Albemarle was a British twin-engine bomber and transport aircraft developed during World War II.
- **Design**: It featured a distinctive design with a high-wing configuration and a nose that could be raised to allow for cargo loading. It was powered by two Bristol Hercules engines.
- **First Flight**: The Albemarle first flew in March 1940.
- **Service Entry**: It entered service in 1942.
- **Variants**: The Albemarle was primarily used in a transport role, including airlifting troops and supplies. It also saw limited use as a bomber.
- **Performance**: The Albemarle was less successful in combat compared to other aircraft of its time, but it played a role in various operations, including the Normandy Invasion.

Legacy

- **Innovation**: Armstrong Whitworth contributed to various technological advancements in aircraft design and production. The company was known for its robust and innovative designs.
- **Merger and Decline**: Armstrong Whitworth eventually merged with other companies, including the British Aircraft Corporation (BAC), which marked the end of the company's independent existence in the aviation industry.

Armstrong Whitworth's contributions to aviation, particularly through the Whitley and Albemarle aircraft, remain significant in the context of World War II. The company's designs played important roles in early war bombing campaigns and transport operations, and its legacy is remembered for its impact on British aerospace engineering.

The Avro 504K

The **Avro 504K** was a variant of the widely produced **Avro 504**, a British biplane that saw extensive service during World War I. The Avro 504 was one of the most important aircraft used by the British Royal Flying Corps (RFC) and later the Royal Air Force (RAF), primarily as a trainer, but also for reconnaissance and bombing early in the war. The **504K** was a specific version that featured interchangeable engine options, which made it more versatile for use as a training aircraft.

Avro 504K Overview

- **Role**: Trainer, reconnaissance, and light bomber
- **Manufacturer**: A.V. Roe and Company (Avro)
- **First Flight**: 1913 (original Avro 504)
- **Introduced**: 1914
- **Retired**: Mid-1930s (used as a trainer into the early postwar years)

The **Avro 504** series became the most-produced aircraft of World War I, with over 10,000 units built. Its simple and robust design made it well-suited for training new pilots, and the 504K variant was especially important in this regard.

Key Features of the Avro 504K

- **Engine Flexibility**: One of the defining features of the 504K variant was its ability to accept multiple different engines, such as the **Gnome** rotary engine, **Le Rhône**, or **Clerget** engines, giving it versatility depending on engine availability.
- **Trainer Role**: It was widely used for training new pilots, gunners, and observers. Its forgiving flight characteristics made it an ideal choice for teaching novice pilots the basics of flying.
- **Interchangeable Engines**: The engine mounting on the 504K allowed the aircraft to be fitted with any of a variety of rotary engines, which was crucial during World War I when engine supply lines were not always reliable.

Specifications (Typical for the Avro 504K)

- **Crew**: 2 (pilot and instructor or observer)

- **Length**: 29 ft 5 in (8.97 m)
- **Wingspan**: 36 ft 0 in (10.97 m)
- **Height**: 10 ft 5 in (3.18 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 1,110 lb (503 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 1,710 lb (775 kg)
- **Powerplant**: Typically, 1 × 110 hp (82 kW) Le Rhône or Gnome rotary engine (varied by configuration)

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 95 mph (153 km/h)
- **Range**: 250 miles (400 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 16,000 ft (4,880 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 500 ft/min (152 m/min)

Armament (For operational versions)

- **Guns**: Some variants were equipped with a .303 in (7.7 mm) Lewis gun, typically for training gunners or light combat roles.
- **Bombs**: Could carry up to 20 lb (9 kg) bombs under the fuselage for light bombing missions.

Operational History

- **Training Aircraft**: The Avro 504K was primarily used as a training aircraft, which is where it gained most of its fame. Thousands of pilots in Britain, Canada, Australia, and other countries learned to fly on the Avro 504K, making it one of the most important trainer aircraft of World War I and beyond.
- **Combat Use**: Early in the war, earlier Avro 504 variants saw limited use as reconnaissance aircraft and bombers, particularly during the **Zeppelin raids**, where Avro 504s dropped bombs on Zeppelin sheds in Germany.

Post-War Use and Legacy

- **Civilian Market**: After the war, the Avro 504K found use in civilian roles, including as a barnstormer, for joyrides, and in early air transport. It’s simple construction and ease of handling made it popular in the early aviation industry.
- **Long Service Life**: Many Avro 504Ks were used well into the 1920s and 1930s, especially for training purposes, long after the war had ended.

Conclusion

The **Avro 504K** played a pivotal role in training thousands of pilots during and after World War I. Its significance as both a trainer and a combat aircraft during the early stages of the war highlights its versatility and the importance of training aircraft in developing the early aviation industry. The "G-EAWK" designation you mentioned is likely a post-war civil registration, as many 504Ks were converted for civilian use after military service.

The Martin B-26 Marauder

The **Martin B-26 Marauder** was an American twin-engine medium bomber used during World War II. Designed and built by the Glenn L. Martin Company, the B-26 was known for its speed, versatility, and ruggedness. It played a significant role in both the European and Pacific theatres.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The B-26 was developed in response to a 1939 United States Army Air Corps requirement for a high-speed medium bomber. It was designed by a team led by Peyton Magruder and was notable for its high wing loading and advanced aerodynamics.
- **First Flight**: The prototype B-26 first flew on November 25, 1940.
- **Service Entry**: The B-26 entered service with the U.S. Army Air Corps in early 1941.

Design

- **Configuration**: The B-26 was a shoulder-wing monoplane with a tricycle landing gear. It featured a streamlined fuselage and was powered by two powerful radial engines.
- **Construction**: The aircraft was constructed primarily of metal, with a stressed-skin structure that provided strength and durability.

- **Engine**: The B-26 was powered by two Pratt & Whitney R-2800 Double Wasp radial engines, each producing 1,850 hp.

Specifications (B-26B Marauder)

- **Crew**: 7 (pilot, co-pilot, bombardier/navigator, radio operator/gunner, turret gunner, waist gunners, tail gunner)
- **Length**: 58 ft 3 in (17.76 m)
- **Wingspan**: 71 ft 0 in (21.64 m)
- **Height**: 21 ft 6 in (6.55 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 24,000 lb (10,886 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 37,000 lb (16,783 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Pratt & Whitney R-2800-43 radial engines, 1,850 hp each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 282 mph (454 km/h) at 5,000 ft (1,520 m)
- **Range**: 1,150 miles (1,850 km) with 3,000 lb (1,360 kg) bomb load
- **Service Ceiling**: 21,700 ft (6,615 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,300 ft/min (6.6 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 12-14 × 0.50 in (12.7 mm) M2 Browning machine guns
- **Bombs**:
  - Up to 4,000 lb (1,814 kg) of bombs

Operational Use

- **Early Service**: The B-26 had a challenging start with a high accident rate due to its high wing loading and demanding flight characteristics. Nicknamed the "Widowmaker" by its crews, it required careful handling, especially during take-off and landing.
- **Combat Role**: Despite its early problems, the B-26 proved to be an effective and reliable bomber. It saw extensive service in the European Theatre of Operations (ETO), particularly in bombing raids on German industrial targets, bridges, and railways. It also served in the Mediterranean and Pacific theatres.
- **Durability**: The Marauder was known for its ability to sustain heavy damage and still return to base, thanks to its robust construction. This made it popular among its crews once they became accustomed to its handling characteristics.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The B-26 Marauder was one of the most effective medium bombers of World War II. Its speed and bomb load capacity made it a valuable asset in the strategic bombing campaign against Germany and in tactical operations in various theatres.
- **Production**: A total of 5,288 B-26s were built between 1940 and 1945.

- **Preservation**: Several B-26 Marauders have been preserved and are on display in museums, including the National Museum of the United States Air Force in Dayton, Ohio, and the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

The Martin B-26 Marauder remains a significant aircraft in the history of World War II aviation. Its successful operational record and contribution to the Allied war effort underscore its importance as a medium bomber during the conflict.

The Avro Anson

The Avro Anson was a British twin-engine, multi-role aircraft that played a significant role during World War II. It was produced by the Avro company and initially designed as a maritime reconnaissance aircraft but later served in various other capacities.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Anson was developed in response to an Air Ministry specification for a coastal reconnaissance aircraft to replace the Avro 652. The design was based on the civilian Avro 652 airliner.
- **First Flight**: The prototype (K4771) first flew on March 24, 1935.
- **Service Entry**: It entered service with the Royal Air Force in 1936.

Variants

The Avro Anson had numerous variants, with adaptations for different roles and improvements in performance. Some key variants include:

1. **Anson Mk I**: The initial production version used primarily for maritime patrol and reconnaissance.
2. **Anson Mk II**: Featured a wooden fuselage and American-built engines, used mainly for training purposes.
3. **Anson Mk V**: A variant built in Canada with a composite wood-and-steel fuselage, also used for training.
4. **Anson Mk XII**: A transport and communication version.

Specifications (Anson Mk I)

- **Crew**: 3 to 4 (pilot, navigator, wireless operator, and gunner)
- **Length**: 42 ft 3 in (12.88 m)
- **Wingspan**: 56 ft 6 in (17.22 m)
- **Height**: 13 ft 1 in (3.99 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 5,600 lb (2,540 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 8,000 lb (3,630 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Armstrong Siddeley Cheetah IX radial engines, 350 hp each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 188 mph (303 km/h) at 6,500 ft (2,000 m)
- **Range**: 790 miles (1,270 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 19,000 ft (5,790 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 770 ft/min (3.9 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 1 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Vickers machine gun in the nose
  - 1 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Lewis gun in a dorsal turret
- **Bombs**:
  - Up to 360 lb (160 kg) of bombs carried under the wings

Operational Use

- **Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance**: Initially used for coastal patrol, anti-submarine warfare, and reconnaissance missions.
- **Training**: The Anson was widely used as a multi-engine aircrew trainer, training thousands of pilots, navigators, wireless operators, and gunners for the RAF and other Allied air forces.
- **Transport and Communication**: Later in the war, the Anson was adapted for transport and communication duties, moving personnel and equipment.

Legacy

The Avro Anson was a highly versatile and reliable aircraft that served in many roles throughout its long service life. Although it was overshadowed by more advanced aircraft as the war progressed, the Anson's contributions, particularly in training and maritime reconnaissance, were invaluable. After the war, the Anson continued to serve in various civilian and military roles, and several examples have been preserved in museums and private collections, commemorating its significant place in aviation history.

The Avro Lancaster

The **Avro Lancaster** was one of the most iconic and successful heavy bombers used by the Royal Air Force (RAF) during World War II. Known for its impressive bomb-carrying capacity and versatility, the Lancaster played a critical role in the strategic bombing campaigns against Germany and other Axis targets.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Lancaster was developed from the earlier Avro Manchester, which was underpowered and suffered from reliability issues. The design was modified to use four Rolls-Royce Merlin engines, creating a highly capable heavy bomber.
- **First Flight**: January 9, 1941.
- **Service Entry**: 1942 with the RAF.
- **Total Produced**: 7,377 units.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Lancaster was a four-engine, mid-wing, all-metal monoplane with a twin-tail configuration. It had a large bomb bay capable of carrying an exceptional variety of bombs and specialized payloads.
- **Crew**: The Lancaster had a crew of 7: pilot, flight engineer, navigator, bomb aimer/nose gunner, wireless operator, mid-upper gunner, and rear gunner.

Specifications (Avro Lancaster B. I)

- **Length**: 69 ft 6 in (21.18 m)
- **Wingspan**: 102 ft 0 in (31.09 m)
- **Height**: 20 ft 6 in (6.25 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 36,900 lb (16,738 kg)
- **Max Takeoff Weight**: 68,000 lb (30,844 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 4 × Rolls-Royce Merlin V-12 engines, 1,280 hp (950 kW) each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 282 mph (454 km/h) at 15,000 ft (4,570 m)
- **Cruise Speed**: 210 mph (338 km/h)
- **Range**: 2,530 miles (4,072 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 24,500 ft (7,470 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,070 ft/min (5.43 m/s)

Armament

- **Defensive Guns**:
  - 8 × 0.303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns:
    - 2 × nose turret
    - 2 × dorsal turret
    - 4 × tail turret
- **Bomb Load**:
  - Up to 14,000 lb (6,350 kg) of bombs in a standard configuration
  - It could carry 22,000 lb (9,979 kg) with specialized bombs such as the 12,000 lb "Tallboy" or 22,000 lb "Grand Slam" earthquake bombs.

Operational Use

- **Roles**: The Lancaster was primarily a strategic night bomber, but its versatility allowed it to perform a variety of roles, including precision bombing, mine-laying, and special missions.
- **Dambusters Raid (Operation Chastise)**: Perhaps the most famous mission of the Lancaster was the 1943 Dambusters Raid, where modified Lancasters dropped "bouncing bombs" to destroy German dams.
- **Bomber Command**: The Lancaster was a mainstay of RAF Bomber Command and was responsible for delivering a significant portion of the Allied bombing offensive against Nazi Germany.

Legacy

- **Durability**: The Lancaster became renowned for its robustness and the ability to return home even after sustaining severe damage.
- **Impact on the War**: The Lancaster's capacity to carry large bomb loads, including the Tallboy and Grand Slam bombs, gave the Allies a significant advantage in destroying heavily fortified or strategic targets such as U-boat pens and viaducts.
- **Service Life**: The Lancaster continued in RAF service after World War II, being used for roles such as maritime patrol, search and rescue, and as a testbed for new technologies, before being retired in the 1950s.

Variants

- **Avro Lancaster B.I**: The standard production model.
- **Avro Lancaster B.II**: Equipped with Bristol Hercules radial engines instead of Merlins.

- **Avro Lancaster B.III**: Similar to the B.I but with American-built Packard Merlin engines.
- **Avro Lancaster B.X**: A Canadian-built version of the Lancaster.
- **Special Variants**: Lancasters modified for specific operations, such as the B.I (Special) used in the Dambusters Raid with bouncing bombs.

Cultural Impact

- **Symbol of Allied Air Power**: The Lancaster, particularly in the UK, became a symbol of the RAF's might and the effectiveness of strategic bombing during World War II.
- **Surviving Aircraft**: A number of Lancasters survive in museums, and two are still airworthy — one with the RAF's Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and one in Canada, which occasionally perform in flying displays together.

Conclusion

The **Avro Lancaster** was one of the most effective and versatile bombers of World War II. Its ability to carry heavy bomb loads, perform a wide variety of missions, and its sheer impact on the Allied war effort make it a legendary aircraft in military aviation history.

The Avro Lincoln Bomber

The **Avro Lincoln** was a British four-engine heavy bomber designed and built by Avro during World War II. It was developed as an improved version of the highly successful Avro Lancaster, incorporating advancements to meet the needs of post-war military aviation.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Lincoln was conceived as a larger, longer-range development of the Avro Lancaster. Its primary purpose was to serve as a high-altitude, long-range bomber capable of operating in the Pacific theatre against Japan, although it entered service too late to see combat in World War II.
- **First Flight**: June 9, 1944.
- **Service Entry**: 1945 with the Royal Air Force (RAF).

Design

- **Configuration**: The Lincoln retained much of the Lancaster's design but featured a longer wingspan, greater fuselage length, and more powerful engines to improve performance and range.
- **Engine**: Initially powered by four Rolls-Royce Merlin engines, later variants were equipped with Bristol Hercules engines.

Specifications

- **Crew**: 7 (pilot, co-pilot, navigator, bomb aimer, flight engineer, wireless operator, and two gunners)
- **Length**: 79 ft 6 in (24.23 m)
- **Wingspan**: 120 ft 0 in (36.58 m)
- **Height**: 17 ft 3 in (5.26 m)

- **Empty Weight**: 43,300 lb (19,640 kg)
- **Max Take-off Weight**: 82,000 lb (37,195 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 4 × Rolls-Royce Merlin 85 V-12 engines, 1,750 hp (1,300 kW) each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 313 mph (504 km/h) at 18,000 ft (5,490 m)
- **Range**: 1,600 miles (2,575 km) with 14,000 lb (6,350 kg) bomb load
- **Service Ceiling**: 30,500 ft (9,295 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,040 ft/min (5.28 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 2 × 0.50 in (12.7 mm) Browning machine guns in nose turret
  - 2 × 0.50 in (12.7 mm) Browning machine guns in dorsal turret
  - 2 × 0.50 in (12.7 mm) Browning machine guns in tail turret
- **Bombs**: Up to 22,000 lb (10,000 kg) of bombs in the internal bomb bay

Operational Use

- **Roles**: Primarily used as a strategic bomber, the Lincoln was also employed for reconnaissance, maritime patrol, and as an electronic warfare platform.
- **Service Period**: Although it missed action in World War II, the Lincoln served with the RAF during the early years of the Cold War and saw combat in conflicts such as the Malayan Emergency and the Mau Mau Uprising in Kenya.
- **Operators**: The Lincoln was used by several air forces, including the Royal Air Force, Royal Australian Air Force, and Argentine Air Force.

Legacy

- **Service Life**: The Lincoln was gradually phased out in favor of more advanced jet bombers like the English Electric Canberra and the Vickers Valiant. Its last military operator retired the type in the late 1960s.
- **Preservation**: A few examples of the Lincoln have been preserved in museums, including the RAF Museum in Cosford, UK.

Cultural Impact

- **Advancement**: The Lincoln represented the culmination of piston-engine bomber development, bridging the gap between World War II-era designs and the jet age.
- **Recognition**: It is remembered for its role in the early Cold War period and its contributions to post-war military aviation.

The **Avro Lincoln** bomber, as an advanced derivative of the Lancaster, played a crucial role in post-World War II military operations and set the stage for the transition to jet-powered strategic bombers. Its service in various conflicts and its impact on the evolution of bomber design ensure its place in aviation history.

The Avro Manchester

The Avro Manchester was a British twin-engine heavy bomber used during World War II. Designed by Avro, it was notable for being the predecessor to the more famous Avro Lancaster. The Manchester played a key role in the early days of RAF bombing operations, though it faced challenges due to its engines and performance issues. Here's a detailed overview:

Overview:

- **Role:** Heavy bomber
- **Manufacturer:** Avro Aircraft
- **First Flight:** 25 July 1939
- **Introduction:** 1940
- **Primary Users:** Royal Air Force (RAF)

Specifications:

- **Crew:** 6 (pilot, co-pilot, navigator, bomb aimer, wireless operator, and rear gunner)
- **Length:** 63 feet 1 inch (19.23 meters)
- **Wingspan:** 87 feet 0 inches (26.52 meters)
- **Height:** 17 feet 10 inches (5.44 meters)
- **Wing Area:** 1,315 square feet (122.2 square meters)

Performance:

- **Maximum Speed:** Approximately 290 mph (467 km/h) at 15,000 feet (4,572 meters)
- **Cruise Speed:** Around 220 mph (354 km/h)

- **Range:** About 1,450 miles (2,334 km) with full fuel and bomb load
- **Service Ceiling:** Approximately 20,000 feet (6,096 meters)

Powerplant:

- **Engines:** 2 × Rolls-Royce Vulture II or Vulture IV engines
- **Horsepower:** 1,700 hp (1,268 kW) each
- **Propellers:** 3-bladed wooden propellers

Armament:

- **Machine Guns:**
  - 2 × .303 calibre Browning machine guns in the tail turret
  - 2 × .303 calibre Browning machine guns in the nose turret
  - 2 × .303 calibre Browning machine guns in the dorsal turret
- **Bombs:**
  - Up to 4,500 pounds (2,041 kg) of bombs carried in an internal bomb bay.
  - Bomb load configurations varied depending on the mission.

Design Features:

- **Configuration:** Twin-engine, low-wing monoplane with a conventional tailplane
- **Construction:** All-metal construction with fabric-covered control surfaces
- **Landing Gear:** Retractable, with a tricycle configuration

Operational Use:

- **Roles:** The Manchester was used primarily for strategic bombing missions. It was involved in several key bombing campaigns early in WWII, including raids over Germany and occupied Europe.
- **Challenges:** The Manchester faced issues with its Rolls-Royce Vulture engines, which were prone to mechanical problems and reliability issues. These problems led to performance shortcomings and high maintenance demands.

Legacy:

- **Successor:** Despite its issues, the Manchester was a significant step in the development of British heavy bombers and served as the direct predecessor to the more successful Avro Lancaster, which addressed many of the Manchester's deficiencies with its more reliable engines and enhanced design features.
- **Preservation:** Few Manchester aircraft survive today, but their contribution to the development of bomber technology and their role in early WWII bombing campaigns are remembered as part of aviation history.

The Avro Manchester represents an important stage in the evolution of British bomber aircraft, bridging the gap between the early war bombers and the more advanced designs that would come later.

The Blackburn Botha

The **Blackburn Botha** was a British twin-engine reconnaissance and torpedo bomber developed by Blackburn Aircraft during World War II. However, the aircraft was largely considered a failure due to its poor performance and handling characteristics.

Development and Design

- **Origin**: Designed to meet Air Ministry Specification M.15/35 for a torpedo bomber and reconnaissance aircraft to replace the Blackburn Shark.
- **First Flight**: December 28, 1938.
- **Entry into Service**: 1939.

Specifications

- **Crew**: 4 (pilot, observer, wireless operator, gunner)
- **Length**: 46 ft 3 in (14.10 m)
- **Wingspan**: 59 ft 5 in (18.11 m)
- **Height**: 15 ft 3 in (4.65 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 10,042 lb (4,556 kg)
- **Maximum Take-off Weight**: 14,500 lb (6,577 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Bristol Perseus X radial engines, 880 hp (660 kW) each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 230 mph (370 km/h) at 6,250 ft (1,905 m)
- **Range**: 920 miles (1,480 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 18,000 ft (5,490 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 780 ft/min (4.0 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 1 × Vickers K .303 machine gun in a dorsal turret
  - 1 × Vickers K .303 machine gun in a ventral position
- **Bombs/Torpedo**:
  - 1 × 18-inch (457 mm) torpedo or 1,000 lb (450 kg) of bombs

Operational History

- The Botha was introduced into RAF Coastal Command for reconnaissance and torpedo bombing duties but was found to be underpowered and difficult to fly. Its poor handling and visibility led to a high accident rate, and it was soon withdrawn from front-line duties.
- The aircraft was subsequently relegated to training roles, though it was also found unsuitable even for this, leading to its early retirement.

Legacy

- **Service Withdrawal**: The Botha was withdrawn from active service relatively early during World War II, with most units being scrapped by 1944.
- **Reputation**: The Blackburn Botha is often remembered as one of the less successful aircraft designs of the era, known for its inadequacies rather than its achievements.

Despite being intended to fulfil a significant role within the RAF, the **Blackburn Botha** failed to live up to expectations and was quickly overshadowed by more capable aircraft.

The Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress

The **Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress** is one of the most iconic and famous American bombers of World War II. It gained legendary status for its durability, range, and ability to inflict significant damage on enemy targets while sustaining heavy damage itself.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The B-17 was developed in response to a 1934 request by the United States Army Air Corps (USAAC) for a multi-engine bomber to replace the Martin B-10.
- **First Flight**: July 28, 1935.
- **Service Entry**: 1938 with the USAAC.

Design

- **Configuration**: The B-17 is a four-engine heavy bomber with a mid-wing design, tailwheel-type landing gear, and a distinctive large, rounded fuselage.
- **Engine**: Powered by four Wright R-1820-97 "Cyclone" radial engines.

Specifications (B-17G Model)

- **Crew**: 10 (pilot, co-pilot, bombardier, navigator, flight engineer/top turret gunner, radio operator, two waist gunners, tail gunner, ball turret gunner)
- **Length**: 74 ft 9 in (22.66 m)
- **Wingspan**: 103 ft 9 in (31.62 m)
- **Height**: 19 ft 1 in (5.82 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 36,135 lb (16,391 kg)

- **Gross Weight**: 65,500 lb (29,710 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 4 × Wright R-1820-97 Cyclone radial engines, 1,200 hp (890 kW) each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 287 mph (462 km/h) at 25,000 ft (7,620 m)
- **Cruise Speed**: 182 mph (293 km/h)
- **Range**: 2,000 miles (3,219 km) with 6,000 lb (2,722 kg) bomb load
- **Service Ceiling**: 35,600 ft (10,850 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 900 ft/min (4.6 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 13 × 0.50 in (12.7 mm) M2 Browning machine guns in various positions, including nose, chin, top, ball, waist, and tail turrets.
- **Bombs**:
  - Up to 17,600 lb (7,983 kg) of bombs in the internal bomb bays

Operational Use

- **Role**: Primarily used as a strategic bomber for long-range missions against industrial and military targets in Europe and the Pacific.
- **Combat Service**: The B-17 served extensively in the European Theatre, where it participated in daylight bombing raids over Germany and occupied territories. It also saw action in the Pacific Theatre.
- **Durability**: The B-17 earned a reputation for being able to return home despite heavy damage. Its robust construction and multiple defensive gun positions made it difficult for enemy fighters to shoot down.

Legacy

- **Production**: A total of 12,731 B-17s were built from 1936 to 1945, making it one of the most produced bombers in history.
- **Impact**: The B-17 played a critical role in the Allied strategic bombing campaign, significantly contributing to the eventual defeat of Nazi Germany by crippling its war industry.
- **Post-War Use**: After World War II, the B-17 was used for various roles, including air-sea rescue, transport, and as drone control aircraft. Many B-17s were also converted for civilian use.
- **Surviving Aircraft**: Several B-17s are preserved in museums and private collections, with a few still flying in air shows, allowing future generations to witness this legendary aircraft in action.

Cultural Impact

- **Film and Media**: The B-17 has been featured in numerous films, documentaries, and books, further cementing its place in popular culture. Notable films include "Memphis Belle" and "Twelve O’clock High."
- **Nickname**: The B-17 was affectionately known as the "Flying Fortress" due to its heavy defensive armament and ability to absorb significant damage and still complete its mission.

The **Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress** remains a symbol of American air power during World War II, remembered for its role in achieving air superiority and its contributions to the Allied victory. Its design, operational history, and cultural significance ensure that it continues to be celebrated and studied by aviation enthusiasts and historians alike.

The Boulton Paul Defiant

The Boulton Paul Defiant was a British fighter aircraft that served during World War II. Known for its unique design, the Defiant was initially intended to intercept and destroy enemy bombers using a turret-mounted armament. However, its operational effectiveness and role evolved as the war progressed.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Defiant was developed in response to Air Ministry Specification F.9/35, which called for a two-seat turret fighter. This specification arose from the belief that bombers could be effectively attacked from below and behind by a turret-armed aircraft.
- **First Flight**: The prototype (K8310) first flew on August 11, 1937.
- **Service Entry**: It entered service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) in December 1939.

Design

- **Turret Armament**: The Defiant's most distinctive feature was its hydraulically operated dorsal turret, equipped with four 0.303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns.
- **Lack of Forward Armament**: Unlike traditional fighters, the Defiant had no forward-firing guns, which made it vulnerable to head-on attacks.

Specifications (Defiant Mk I)

- **Crew**: 2 (pilot and gunner)
- **Length**: 35 ft 4 in (10.77 m)
- **Wingspan**: 39 ft 4 in (12 m)
- **Height**: 11 ft 4 in (3.45 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 7,540 lb (3,420 kg)

- **Gross Weight**: 9,800 lb (4,445 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Rolls-Royce Merlin III V12 engine, 1,030 hp

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 304 mph (489 km/h) at 17,000 ft (5,180 m)
- **Range**: 465 miles (748 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 30,350 ft (9,250 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,660 ft/min (8.4 m/s)

Operational Use

- **Battle of Britain**: The Defiant saw significant action during the Battle of Britain. Initially successful against German bombers, it suffered heavy losses when its vulnerability to single-engine fighters like the Messerschmitt Bf 109 was exposed.
- **Night Fighter Role**: The Defiant found a more suitable role as a night fighter from late 1940 onwards, equipped with radar (AI Mk IV). In this capacity, it achieved more success against German bombers during nocturnal operations.
- **Other Roles**: The Defiant was also used for air-sea rescue, target towing, and training purposes after being withdrawn from frontline daylight operations.

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 4 × 0.303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns in a Boulton Paul Type A power-operated turret
- **Bombs**: Some Defiants were modified to carry bombs or rockets for ground attack missions, though this was not their primary role.

Legacy

The Boulton Paul Defiant's innovative design and initial tactical concept ultimately proved to be flawed for daylight operations against well-armed and manoeuvrable fighters. However, its adaptation to the night fighter role allowed it to make a significant contribution to Britain's air defence during the Blitz. The Defiant's service highlighted the importance of versatility and adaptability in military aviation. Despite its mixed operational record, the Defiant remains a unique and noteworthy aircraft in the history of the Royal Air Force. A few Defiants have been preserved in museums, where they serve as reminders of this distinctive chapter in aviation history.

The Bristol Beaufighter

The Bristol Beaufighter was a British multi-role aircraft developed by the Bristol Aeroplane Company. Known for its versatility and powerful armament, the Beaufighter served in various roles during World War II, including night fighter, torpedo bomber, and ground attack aircraft.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Beaufighter was developed from the Bristol Beaufort torpedo bomber. It was initially conceived as a long-range fighter to meet an urgent RAF requirement for a heavily armed aircraft capable of performing various roles.
- **First Flight**: The prototype (R2052) first flew on July 17, 1939.
- **Service Entry**: It entered service with the Royal Air Force in July 1940.

Variants

The Beaufighter had several variants, each tailored to different operational roles:

1. **Beaufighter Mk IF**: The initial fighter version, equipped with radar for night fighting.
2. **Beaufighter Mk IC**: Coastal Command version, capable of carrying torpedoes.
3. **Beaufighter Mk VI**: Improved version with more powerful engines and enhanced radar equipment.
4. **Beaufighter Mk X**: The most widely produced variant, used primarily for anti-shipping and ground attack missions.
5. **Beaufighter Mk XXI**: Australian-built version used in the Pacific Theatre.

Specifications (Beaufighter Mk X)

- **Crew**: 2 (pilot and observer/navigator)
- **Length**: 41 ft 10 in (12.75 m)
- **Wingspan**: 57 ft 10 in (17.63 m)
- **Height**: 15 ft 10 in (4.83 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 15,592 lb (7,073 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 25,400 lb (11,521 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Bristol Hercules XVII radial engines, 1,735 hp each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 320 mph (515 km/h) at 10,000 ft (3,050 m)
- **Range**: 1,500 miles (2,414 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 19,000 ft (5,790 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,750 ft/min (8.9 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 4 × 20 mm Hispano Mk III cannons in the nose
  - 6 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns (4 in wings, 2 in rear fuselage)
- **Bombs/Rockets**:
  - Up to 2,000 lb (907 kg) of bombs or 8 × 60 lb (27 kg) rockets
- **Torpedoes**:
  - 1 × 18-inch (457 mm) torpedo

Operational Use

- **Night Fighter**: The Beaufighter was one of the first aircraft equipped with AI radar, making it highly effective as a night fighter, particularly during the Blitz.
- **Anti-Shipping**: Its heavy armament and ability to carry torpedoes made it a formidable anti-shipping aircraft, used extensively by Coastal Command to attack German shipping and U-boats.
- **Ground Attack**: The Beaufighter's rugged design and powerful armament made it well-suited for ground attack missions, including strikes against enemy airfields and infrastructure.
- **Pacific Theatre**: The Beaufighter saw significant action in the Pacific, used by both British and Australian forces for maritime patrols, ground attack, and anti-shipping operations.

Legacy

The Bristol Beaufighter's versatility and effectiveness in various roles made it one of the most valuable aircraft of World War II. It was respected by both its crews and its adversaries for its firepower and durability. Post-war, the Beaufighter continued to serve in various air forces around the world until the early 1960s. Its contributions to night fighting, maritime strike, and ground attack missions have secured its place as one of the iconic multi-role combat aircraft of the era. Several Beaufighters have been preserved in museums, where they stand as a testament to their significant role in the Allied war effort.

The Bristol Blenheim

The Bristol Blenheim was a British light bomber aircraft used extensively during the early stages of World War II. It was developed by the Bristol Aeroplane Company and played a significant role in the Royal Air Force's operations.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Blenheim originated from a civilian airliner design, the Type 142, which attracted attention for its high speed. The Air Ministry then commissioned a military version, leading to the development of the Blenheim.
- **First Flight**: The prototype first flew in April 1935.
- **Service Entry**: It entered service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) in 1937.

Variants

1. **Blenheim Mk I**: The initial production model, used primarily as a light bomber.
2. **Blenheim Mk IF**: A fighter variant equipped with additional machine guns.
3. **Blenheim Mk IV**: An improved version with a longer nose and more powerful engines.
4. **Blenheim Mk V**: The final variant, also known as the Bisley, intended for ground attack roles.

Specifications (Blenheim Mk IV)

- **Crew**: 3 (pilot, navigator/bomb aimer, and wireless operator/gunner)
- **Length**: 42 ft 7 in (12.98 m)
- **Wingspan**: 56 ft 4 in (17.17 m)
- **Height**: 9 ft 10 in (3 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 8,370 lb (3,796 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 14,365 lb (6,515 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Bristol Mercury XV radial engines, 920 hp each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 266 mph (428 km/h) at 11,800 ft (3,600 m)
- **Range**: 1,460 miles (2,350 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 27,280 ft (8,310 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,200 ft/min (6.1 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 1 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine gun in the port wing
  - 1 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Vickers K gun in dorsal turret
- **Bombs**:
  - Up to 1,000 lb (450 kg) of bombs in an internal bomb bay

Operational Use

- **Roles**: The Blenheim was used in various roles including daylight bombing, reconnaissance, and fighter operations.
- **Early War**: It saw extensive use in the early years of WWII, participating in missions over Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa.
- **Replacement**: By 1942, the Blenheim was becoming obsolete and was gradually replaced by more advanced aircraft such as the Bristol Beaufighter and the de Havilland Mosquito.

Legacy

Despite its shortcomings in later years, the Bristol Blenheim was an important aircraft in the RAF's arsenal during the early part of WWII. Its speed and versatility made it a valuable asset during the initial phases of the conflict. The Blenheim's design also paved the way for subsequent Bristol aircraft developments.

The Consolidated B-24D Liberator 41

The **Consolidated B-24 Liberator** was an American heavy bomber designed by Consolidated Aircraft. The B-24 was one of the most widely produced bombers of World War II, renowned for its versatility and operational range.

B-24D Liberator Overview

The **B-24D** was one of the early variants of the B-24 series, featuring several improvements over the initial models.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The B-24 was developed in response to a 1938 United States Army Air Corps requirement for a heavy bomber with a high speed, long range, and heavy bomb load.
- **First Flight**: The prototype XB-24 first flew on December 29, 1939.
- **Service Entry**: The B-24 entered service with the USAAF in 1941.

Design

- **Configuration**: The B-24 was a high-wing, twin-tail monoplane with a retractable tricycle landing gear.
- **Construction**: The aircraft was primarily constructed of metal, with a high aspect ratio wing known as the Davis wing, which provided excellent lift and fuel efficiency.
- **Engine**: The B-24D was powered by four Pratt & Whitney R-1830-43 radial engines.

Specifications (B-24D Liberator)

- **Crew**: 10 (pilot, co-pilot, bombardier, navigator, radio operator, engineer/top turret gunner, waist gunners, tail gunner, and ball turret gunner)
- **Length**: 67 ft 8 in (20.61 m)
- **Wingspan**: 110 ft 0 in (33.53 m)
- **Height**: 18 ft 0 in (5.49 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 36,500 lb (16,556 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 55,000 lb (24,948 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 4 × Pratt & Whitney R-1830-43 radial engines, 1,200 hp each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 290 mph (467 km/h) at 25,000 ft (7,620 m)
- **Range**: 2,100 miles (3,380 km) with 5,000 lb (2,268 kg) bomb load
- **Service Ceiling**: 28,000 ft (8,534 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,025 ft/min (5.2 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 10 × 0.50 in (12.7 mm) M2 Browning machine guns in various positions (nose, dorsal, tail, waist, and belly turrets)
- **Bombs**:
  - Up to 8,000 lb (3,600 kg) of bombs in the internal bomb bays

Operational Use

- **Strategic Bombing**: The B-24D was used extensively in strategic bombing campaigns over Europe, targeting industrial sites, oil refineries, and transportation hubs.
- **Long-Range Missions**: Its long-range capabilities made it suitable for missions over the Pacific, where it conducted raids on Japanese-held islands and shipping lanes.
- **Anti-Submarine Warfare**: The B-24D was also adapted for anti-submarine warfare, patrolling the Atlantic and hunting German U-boats.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The B-24 was one of the most produced bombers of World War II, with over 18,000 units built. It played a crucial role in both the European and Pacific theaters, contributing significantly to the Allied victory.
- **Preservation**: Several B-24s have been preserved and are on display in museums and at air shows, including the "Diamond Lil" and the "Witchcraft," both of which are airworthy and operated by the Commemorative Air Force.

The **Consolidated B-24D Liberator** remains an iconic aircraft, celebrated for its contributions to the war effort and its technological advancements. Its versatility and range set new standards for heavy bombers in the Allied arsenal.

Curtiss Tomahawk P-40

The **Curtiss P-40 Tomahawk** was an American fighter aircraft that played a significant role during World War II, particularly in the early years of the conflict. Developed by the Curtiss-Wright Corporation, the P-40 was known for its ruggedness, versatility, and distinctive shark-mouth nose art made famous by the American Volunteer Group (AVG), also known as the "Flying Tigers."

Development and History

- **Origin**: The P-40 was a development of the earlier Curtiss P-36 Hawk. The P-40 was designed to meet the need for a more powerful and modern fighter, incorporating the Allison V-1710 inline engine, which gave it a distinctive profile and improved performance.
- **First Flight**: The prototype XP-40 first flew on October 14, 1938.
- **Service Entry**: The P-40 entered service with the United States Army Air Corps (USAAC) in 1940.

Design

- **Configuration**: The P-40 was a single-engine, low-wing monoplane with a conventional tailwheel undercarriage. Its design emphasized ruggedness and ease of maintenance.
- **Construction**: The aircraft was constructed primarily of metal, with a stressed-skin structure that provided durability and strength.
- **Engine**: The early variants, including the Tomahawk, were powered by the Allison V-1710 V-12 engine, which produced around 1,040 hp.

Specifications (P-40B/C Tomahawk)

- **Crew**: 1
- **Length**: 31 ft 8 in (9.65 m)
- **Wingspan**: 37 ft 4 in (11.38 m)
- **Height**: 12 ft 4 in (3.76 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 5,900 lb (2,676 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 8,000 lb (3,629 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Allison V-1710-33 V-12 engine, 1,040 hp

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 360 mph (580 km/h) at 15,000 ft (4,570 m)
- **Range**: 650 miles (1,050 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 30,000 ft (9,144 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 2,540 ft/min (12.9 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 2 × 0.50 in (12.7 mm) M2 Browning machine guns in the nose
  - 4 × 0.30 in (7.62 mm) M1919 Browning machine guns in the wings
- **Bombs/Rockets**:
  - Capable of carrying up to 500 lb (230 kg) of bombs for ground-attack missions

Operational Use

- **Early Combat**: The P-40 saw extensive service in the early years of World War II, including with the RAF in North Africa and the Middle East, where it was known as the Tomahawk. It was also used by the Soviet Union under Lend-Lease.
- **Flying Tigers**: One of the most famous uses of the P-40 was by the American Volunteer Group (AVG), better known as the Flying Tigers. Operating in China before the U.S. officially entered the war, the AVG used P-40s with distinctive shark-mouth nose art to great effect against Japanese forces.
- **Role**: The P-40 was versatile, serving in roles ranging from air superiority to ground attack. Despite being outclassed by some later fighters in terms of speed and maneuverability, it remained a valuable asset due to its durability and heavy armament.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The Curtiss P-40 Tomahawk was one of the most important fighters in the early years of World War II. Its rugged design, versatility, and significant combat use helped it earn a place in aviation history.
- **Production**: Over 13,000 P-40s were produced, including various improved variants such as the P-40D/E (Warhawk) and later models.

- **Preservation**: Many P-40s have been preserved in museums and private collections around the world. They are a testament to the aircraft's historical significance and enduring legacy.

The Curtiss P-40 Tomahawk remains a symbol of early World War II air combat and the bravery of the pilots who flew it. Its service with the Flying Tigers and other units around the world highlights its versatility and effectiveness as a fighter aircraft during a critical period in aviation history.

The De Havilland Hornett

The de Havilland Hornet was a British twin-engine fighter aircraft developed towards the end of World War II. It was designed by de Havilland, a renowned British aircraft manufacturer, and was intended to serve as a high-performance fighter to complement the existing fleet of single-engine fighters.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Hornet was developed as a follow-up to the de Havilland Mosquito, leveraging the experience gained from the Mosquito's design and production. The Hornet was conceived to provide a high-speed, heavily armed fighter with twin-engine reliability.
- **First Flight**: The prototype of the Hornet first flew on July 28, 1944.
- **Service Entry**: The Hornet entered service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) in 1946, after the end of World War II.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Hornet was a twin-engine, low-wing monoplane with a conventional tailwheel undercarriage. It featured a sleek design optimized for high speed and agility.
- **Construction**: The aircraft was built with a combination of metal and wood, following the de Havilland tradition of using wood for some structural components, as seen in the Mosquito.
- **Engine**: The Hornet was powered by two Rolls-Royce Merlin 130 or 131 engines, which were powerful and provided excellent performance.

Variants

1. **Hornet F.1**: The initial production version, equipped with two Rolls-Royce Merlin engines and armed with four 20 mm cannon. It was intended for use as a high-speed fighter.

2. **Hornet F.3**: An improved version with additional modifications, including better armament and avionics.

Specifications (Hornet F.1)

- **Crew**: 1
- **Length**: 39 ft 0 in (11.89 m)
- **Wingspan**: 46 ft 0 in (14.02 m)
- **Height**: 14 ft 2 in (4.32 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 14,500 lb (6,577 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 22,000 lb (9,979 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Rolls-Royce Merlin 130 or 131 V12 engines, 1,720 hp each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 385 mph (620 km/h) at 20,000 ft (6,096 m)
- **Range**: 1,150 miles (1,850 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 39,000 ft (11,887 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 3,000 ft/min (15.2 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 4 × 20 mm Hispano Mk II cannon (in the wings)
- **Bombs/Rockets**:
  - The Hornet was not typically equipped for carrying bombs or rockets but was designed for pure fighter roles.

Operational Use

- **Post-War Role**: The Hornet entered service shortly after the end of World War II, and while it was a powerful and effective fighter, its operational use was limited due to the changing nature of post-war military aviation. The Hornet was intended to be a high-speed interceptor and escort fighter, but the advent of jet aircraft quickly overshadowed its capabilities.
- **Service Life**: The Hornet saw limited operational use with the RAF and was gradually phased out as jet fighters became the standard. Its service was mostly in the immediate post-war period.

Legacy

- **Performance**: Despite its relatively short service life, the Hornet was a powerful and fast aircraft, demonstrating the advanced engineering capabilities of de Havilland.
- **Preservation**: Few Hornets have survived, but some are preserved in museums, reflecting the aircraft's role in the evolution of British fighter design during the transition from World War II to the jet age.

The de Havilland Hornet stands as a testament to the advanced design and engineering of the late World War II era, showcasing de Havilland's expertise in aircraft development and the transition to new technologies in aviation.

The De Havilland Mosquito

The **De Havilland Mosquito** was one of the most versatile and innovative aircraft of World War II. Known as "The Wooden Wonder" due to its predominantly wooden construction, the Mosquito was used in a wide range of roles, including as a fighter-bomber, reconnaissance aircraft, night fighter, and even a bomber. Its speed, agility, and ability to carry significant loads made it a standout aircraft of its time.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Mosquito was developed by de Havilland Aircraft Company, initially conceived as a fast, unarmed bomber. Its design used wood to minimize the demand for metals during the war.
- **First Flight**: November 25, 1940.
- **Service Entry**: 1941 with the RAF.

Specifications (Mosquito B Mk IV)

- **Crew**: 2 (pilot and navigator)
- **Length**: 41 ft 2 in (12.55 m)
- **Wingspan**: 54 ft 2 in (16.51 m)
- **Height**: 15 ft 3 in (4.65 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 14,300 lb (6,486 kg)
- **Max Take-off Weight**: 22,300 lb (10,115 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Rolls-Royce Merlin 21/23 V-12 liquid-cooled piston engines, 1,460 hp (1,090 kW) each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 380 mph (612 km/h) at 28,000 ft (8,500 m)
- **Range**: 1,500 miles (2,400 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 37,000 ft (11,280 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 2,800 ft/min (14.2 m/s)

Armament

- **Bombs**: Up to 4,000 lb (1,814 kg) of bombs, including two 500 lb bombs internally and two more under the wings. Later versions could carry the 4,000 lb "cookie" bomb.
- **Guns** (for fighter and fighter-bomber variants):
  - 4 × 20 mm Hispano Mk II cannons
  - 4 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns
- **Rockets**: Some fighter-bomber versions were equipped with underwing rockets.

Operational Use

- **Roles**: The Mosquito was used in a variety of roles during the war:
  - **Bomber**: As a light, fast bomber, it carried out precision bombing raids against key targets.
  - **Reconnaissance**: Its speed and high-altitude capability made it ideal for photographic reconnaissance missions.
  - **Night Fighter**: Equipped with radar, the Mosquito was highly effective in intercepting enemy bombers.
  - **Fighter-Bomber**: Armed with rockets and guns, the Mosquito could perform low-level attacks against ground targets.
- **Famous Missions**:
  - The Mosquito was involved in precision bombing raids, such as the attack on the Gestapo headquarters in Oslo and the Amiens prison raid to free Resistance fighters.
  - It also took part in the bombing of Berlin in raids designed to disrupt Nazi propaganda during major speeches.

Advantages

- **Speed**: The Mosquito's speed made it difficult for enemy fighters to intercept, especially on bombing raids where it could outrun most German aircraft.
- **Versatility**: Few aircraft could match the range of roles the Mosquito was able to perform.
- **Wooden Construction**: The use of wood not only saved critical war materials but also made the aircraft lighter and capable of rapid production.

Variants

- **Mosquito B Mk IV**: The standard bomber version, used for high-speed, medium-altitude bombing.
- **Mosquito NF Mk II**: Night fighter variant, equipped with radar.
- **Mosquito FB Mk VI**: Fighter-bomber variant, armed with rockets and bombs for ground-attack missions.
- **Mosquito PR Mk IV**: Photo-reconnaissance variant, unarmed and fitted with high-resolution cameras.
- **Mosquito T Mk III**: A training variant for pilot training.

Legacy

- **Post-War Use**: The Mosquito remained in service after World War II in various air forces around the world, including in the RAF, until the 1950s.
- **Cultural Impact**: The Mosquito is remembered as one of the greatest aircraft of World War II, lauded for its speed, versatility, and innovative construction. It has appeared in many films and documentaries about the war.

Conclusion

The **De Havilland Mosquito** stands out in aviation history as an aircraft that exceeded expectations, achieving remarkable success in a wide range of roles due to its design, speed, and innovative use of materials. It became a symbol of British engineering ingenuity and had a lasting impact on the course of the air war during World War II.

The De Havilland Queen Bee

The **De Havilland DH.82B Queen Bee** was a British radio-controlled target drone based on the de Havilland Tiger Moth biplane. It was used primarily by the Royal Air Force (RAF) and the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm during the 1930s and 1940s for training anti-aircraft gunners. The Queen Bee holds historical significance as one of the earliest examples of an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV).

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Queen Bee was developed as a pilotless target drone to provide realistic training for anti-aircraft gunners. The concept was to create a remotely controlled aircraft that could simulate enemy planes, allowing gunners to practice their skills.
- **First Flight**: The Queen Bee first flew in 1935.
- **Service Entry**: It entered service with the RAF and Royal Navy shortly after its development.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Queen Bee was essentially a modified version of the de Havilland Tiger Moth, a well-known and widely used biplane trainer. It retained the biplane configuration with a single-engine, two-seat layout, although the rear cockpit was often removed or covered for the Queen Bee version.
- **Construction**: The aircraft was constructed with a wooden frame and fabric covering, which was typical of biplane designs of that era. This made the aircraft lightweight and easy to manufacture.

- **Engine**: The Queen Bee was powered by a de Havilland Gipsy Major engine, the same type used in the Tiger Moth, which was reliable and well-suited to the aircraft's needs.

Specifications (De Havilland DH.82B Queen Bee)

- **Crew**: None (remotely controlled, but could also be flown by a pilot for ferrying purposes)
- **Length**: 23 ft 11 in (7.29 m)
- **Wingspan**: 29 ft 4 in (8.94 m)
- **Height**: 8 ft 9 in (2.67 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 1,115 lb (506 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 1,825 lb (828 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × de Havilland Gipsy Major I4 inline engine, 130 hp

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 104 mph (167 km/h)
- **Range**: 300 miles (483 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 16,000 ft (4,877 m)

Operational Use

- **Training Role**: The primary role of the Queen Bee was to serve as a target drone for anti-aircraft training. It was radio-controlled from the ground or from a mother aircraft. This allowed ground-based gunners to practice shooting at a moving target that could manoeuvre realistically.
- **Dual Use**: While primarily used as a drone, the Queen Bee could also be flown by a pilot when necessary, such as for ferrying the aircraft to and from training areas.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The Queen Bee was a pioneering aircraft in the field of unmanned aerial vehicles. It demonstrated the feasibility and utility of remotely controlled aircraft for training purposes, laying the groundwork for future developments in UAV technology.
- **Production**: Approximately 400 Queen Bees were built between 1935 and 1943.
- **Preservation**: Few Queen Bees have survived, but some examples can be found in aviation museums. These preserved aircraft serve as important historical artifacts, highlighting the early experimentation with unmanned flight.

The De Havilland DH.82B Queen Bee represents an important step in the development of UAV technology. Its use in training anti-aircraft gunners during World War II and its legacy as an early drone underscore its significance in aviation history.

The De Havilland Tiger Moth

The de Havilland Tiger Moth is one of the most iconic and enduring biplanes in aviation history. Designed by de Havilland Aircraft Company, it is renowned for its role as a trainer aircraft and its distinctive design. Here's a detailed look at the de Havilland Tiger Moth:

Overview:

- **Role:** Primary trainer aircraft
- **Manufacturer:** de Havilland Aircraft Company
- **First Flight:** 26 October 1931
- **Introduction:** 1931
- **Primary Users:** Royal Air Force (RAF), various civilian operators

Specifications:

- **Crew:** 2 (pilot and instructor or student)
- **Length:** 25 feet 6 inches (7.77 meters)
- **Wingspan:** 29 feet 6 inches (8.99 meters)
- **Height:** 9 feet 2 inches (2.79 meters)
- **Wing Area:** 297 square feet (27.6 square meters)

Performance:

- **Maximum Speed:** Approximately 140 mph (225 km/h)
- **Cruise Speed:** Around 115 mph (185 km/h)
- **Range:** About 300 miles (480 km)
- **Service Ceiling:** Approximately 14,000 feet (4,270 meters)

Powerplant:

- **Engine:** 1 × Gypsy Major or Gypsy Six inline engine (varies by model)
- **Horsepower:** Typically, 130 hp (97 kW) for the Gypsy Major, or up to 200 hp (149 kW) for the Gypsy Six
- **Propeller:** 2-bladed wooden propeller

Armament:

- **Machine Guns:** The Tiger Moth was primarily a trainer aircraft and did not carry armament in standard configurations. However, some were adapted for light armament roles or reconnaissance during their service.

Design Features:

- **Configuration:** Biplane with a classic two-wing arrangement
- **Construction:** Wooden frame with fabric covering
- **Landing Gear:** Fixed, conventional tailwheel undercarriage
- **Cockpit:** Open cockpit for both the pilot and the student, providing good visibility and ease of communication.

Operational Use:

- **Roles:** The de Havilland Tiger Moth was used primarily as a trainer aircraft for military and civilian aviation. It was widely used for primary flight training, aerobatics, and in some cases, light communication, and reconnaissance tasks.
- **Service Life:** The Tiger Moth was widely used by the RAF and other air forces during and after World War II. It was a key training aircraft for new pilots and remained in use for many years in various countries.

Legacy:

- **Impact:** The Tiger Moth is celebrated for its simplicity, reliability, and effectiveness as a training aircraft. It played a crucial role in developing the skills of numerous pilots during its service life.
- **Preservation:** Many Tiger Moths have been preserved and restored, and they are often seen at air shows and vintage aviation events. The aircraft’s design and performance characteristics make it a favourite among aviation enthusiasts and historians.

The de Havilland Tiger Moth's enduring popularity and its significant role in aviation history underscore its legacy as one of the most important training aircraft of its time.

The De Havilland Vampire

The De Havilland Vampire was a British jet fighter developed by de Havilland Aircraft Company. It was one of the earliest jet-powered aircraft to enter service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) and marked a significant milestone in aviation history. The Vampire was designed during World War II, but it became operational in the post-war period, playing a crucial role in transitioning from piston-engine to jet-engine fighters.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Vampire was developed to Air Ministry Specification E.6/41 for a small, jet-powered fighter. Initially, it was intended as a backup to the Gloster Meteor.
- **First Flight**: The prototype (LZ548/G) first flew on September 20, 1943.
- **Service Entry**: The Vampire entered service with the RAF in 1946.

Design

- **Twin Boom Configuration**: The Vampire featured a distinctive twin-boom tail design, which provided stability and allowed for a centrally mounted engine.
- **Engine**: Powered by a single de Havilland Goblin turbojet engine, the Vampire demonstrated good performance and handling characteristics.
- **Materials**: Constructed largely of wood and metal, the Vampire utilized de Havilland's experience with wooden aircraft, such as the Mosquito, in its design.

Variants

1. **Vampire F.1**: The initial production version, used primarily by the RAF.
2. **Vampire FB.5**: A fighter-bomber version with strengthened wings and increased payload capacity.
3. **Vampire NF.10**: A night fighter version equipped with radar.
4. **Vampire T.11**: A two-seat trainer version, widely used for pilot training.
5. **Sea Vampire**: Navalized versions for carrier operations, including the Sea Vampire F.20.

Specifications (Vampire FB.5)

- **Crew**: 1
- **Length**: 30 ft 9 in (9.37 m)
- **Wingspan**: 38 ft (11.58 m)
- **Height**: 8 ft 10 in (2.69 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 7,157 lb (3,247 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 12,390 lb (5,620 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × de Havilland Goblin 2 turbojet, 3,350 lbf (14.9 kN) thrust

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 548 mph (882 km/h) at 20,000 ft (6,096 m)
- **Range**: 1,220 miles (1,963 km) with external fuel tanks
- **Service Ceiling**: 42,800 ft (13,045 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 4,800 ft/min (24.4 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 4 × 20 mm Hispano Mk V cannons
- **Bombs/Rockets**:
  - Up to 2,000 lb (907 kg) of bombs or 8 × 60 lb (27 kg) rockets under the wings

Operational Use

- **Post-War Service**: The Vampire served in various roles with the RAF and other air forces worldwide. Its primary functions included air defense, ground attack, and pilot training.
- **Global Deployment**: The Vampire was exported to numerous countries and saw service with over 30 air forces. It played a role in conflicts such as the Malayan Emergency and the Suez Crisis.
- **Training**: The two-seat Vampire T.11 variant became a standard advanced trainer for jet pilots, helping transition from piston-engine to jet-engine flight.

Legacy

The De Havilland Vampire was significant as one of the world's first operational jet fighters and marked the beginning of the jet age for many air forces. Its innovative design, featuring a

twin-boom tail and centralized engine, influenced subsequent jet aircraft development. The Vampire's wide deployment and long service life underscore its success and versatility. Many Vampires have been preserved in museums and continue to be flown by private collectors, highlighting their enduring legacy in aviation history.

The Dornier

The name "Dornier" refers to aircraft produced by the German company Dornier Flugzeugwerke, founded by Claude Dornier. The company produced several notable aircraft during the 20th century, particularly during World War II. One of the most significant Dornier aircraft from this period was the Dornier Do 17, often nicknamed the "Flying Pencil" due to its sleek, narrow fuselage. However, Dornier also produced other notable models like the Do 217 and the Do 335.

Dornier Do 17

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Do 17 was initially designed in the early 1930s as a fast mail plane for Lufthansa, but it was soon adapted for military purposes.
- **First Flight**: The prototype first flew in 1934.
- **Service Entry**: It entered service with the Luftwaffe in 1937.

Variants

1. **Do 17E**: Initial bomber version.
2. **Do 17F**: Reconnaissance version with increased fuel capacity.
3. **Do 17M**: Improved bomber with more powerful engines.
4. **Do 17Z**: The most produced version, with significant changes to the cockpit and defensive armament.

Specifications (Do 17Z-2)

- **Crew**: 4 (pilot, navigator/bombardier, radio operator, and gunner)
- **Length**: 51 ft 3 in (15.65 m)
- **Wingspan**: 59 ft 1 in (18 m)
- **Height**: 15 ft 9 in (4.80 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 12,247 lb (5,556 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 19,180 lb (8,700 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Bramo 323P Fafnir 9-cylinder radial engines, 1,000 hp each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 255 mph (410 km/h) at 13,780 ft (4,200 m)
- **Range**: 745 miles (1,200 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 26,250 ft (8,000 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,640 ft/min (8.3 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 1 × 7.92 mm MG 15 machine gun in nose
  - 1 × 7.92 mm MG 15 machine gun in dorsal turret
  - 2 × 7.92 mm MG 15 machine guns in side windows
  - 1 × 7.92 mm MG 15 machine gun in ventral position
- **Bombs**:
  - Up to 2,205 lb (1,000 kg) of bombs carried internally and under the wings

Operational Use

- **Early War**: The Do 17 saw extensive use in the early years of World War II, participating in the invasions of Poland, Norway, France, and the Battle of Britain.
- **Versatility**: It served in various roles including bombing, reconnaissance, and later as a night fighter when equipped with radar.
- **Replacement**: As the war progressed, the Do 17 was gradually replaced by more advanced aircraft like the Dornier Do 217 and the Junkers Ju 88.

Legacy

The Dornier Do 17 was one of the primary bombers of the Luftwaffe in the early years of World War II. Its speed and maneuverability made it a challenging target for early Allied fighters, although its defensive armament was relatively weak compared to later bombers. The Do 17's design influenced subsequent Dornier aircraft, and it remains an iconic example of pre-war and early-war German military aviation.

Other Notable Dornier Aircraft

Dornier Do 217

- **Role**: Medium bomber, night fighter, and maritime attack aircraft.
- **Notable Features**: More powerful engines and greater payload compared to the Do 17, used extensively for night bombing raids and maritime strike missions.

Dornier Do 335

- **Role**: Heavy fighter-bomber.
- **Notable Features**: Unique "push-pull" configuration with one engine at the front and one at the rear, making it one of the fastest piston-engine aircraft of the war.

Legacy of Dornier Flugzeugwerke

Dornier Flugzeugwerke was known for innovative designs and contributed significantly to both civilian and military aviation. The company's aircraft were used extensively during World War II, and several models became iconic. Post-war, Dornier continued to innovate, producing a variety of aircraft for civilian and military use. Today, the Dornier name is remembered for its engineering excellence and contributions to aviation history.

The Douglas C-47A Skytrain

The Douglas C-47A Skytrain is a highly influential military transport aircraft known for its robust performance and versatility. It was an adaptation of the civilian DC-3 airliner and played a significant role in World War II and subsequent conflicts. Here's an in-depth look at the Douglas C-47A:

Overview:

- **Role:** Military transport aircraft
- **Manufacturer:** Douglas Aircraft Company
- **First Flight:** 17 December 1941 (as the C-47)
- **Introduction:** 1942
- **Primary Users:** United States Army Air Forces (USAAF), Allied air forces

Specifications:

- **Crew:** 3 (pilot, co-pilot, and flight engineer)
- **Length:** 64 feet 2 inches (19.56 meters)
- **Wingspan:** 95 feet 0 inches (28.96 meters)
- **Height:** 16 feet 11 inches (5.16 meters)
- **Wing Area:** 987 square feet (91.7 square meters)

Performance:

- **Maximum Speed:** Approximately 230 mph (370 km/h)
- **Cruise Speed:** Around 180 mph (290 km/h)
- **Range:** About 1,600 miles (2,575 km) with a standard load
- **Service Ceiling:** Approximately 24,000 feet (7,315 meters)

Powerplant:

- **Engines:** 2 × Pratt & Whitney R-1830-92 Twin Wasp radial engines
- **Horsepower:** 1,200 hp (895 kW) each
- **Propellers:** 3-bladed metal propellers

Armament:

- **Machine Guns:** Generally, none in standard transport configuration. However, some military variants were equipped with defensive armament or modified for specific roles.

Design Features:

- **Configuration:** High-wing monoplane with a conventional tailplane
- **Construction:** All-metal construction with a fabric-covered tail
- **Landing Gear:** Retractable tricycle landing gear
- **Cargo Space:** Capable of carrying up to 6,000 pounds (2,722 kg) of cargo or 28 troops

Operational Use:

- **Roles:** The C-47A was used for a wide range of roles, including troop transport, cargo supply, medical evacuation, and paratrooper drops. Its versatility made it invaluable for logistics and support during World War II, and it continued to serve in various capacities in subsequent conflicts, including the Korean and Vietnam Wars.
- **Notable Operations:**
    - **D-Day:** The C-47A played a critical role in the Normandy Invasion, dropping paratroopers and supplies into occupied France.
    - **The Berlin Airlift:** Used extensively during the Berlin Airlift (1948–1949) to supply West Berlin during the Soviet blockade.

Legacy:

- **Impact:** The C-47A is considered one of the most successful military transport aircraft of the 20th century. Its design and performance set the standard for military transports and influenced many subsequent aircraft.
- **Preservation:** Many C-47As have been preserved and restored. They are often seen at air shows, and some continue to fly in various roles, including heritage flights and special events.

The Douglas C-47A Skytrain is celebrated for its reliability, adaptability, and significant contributions to military aviation. Its role in logistics, combat support, and humanitarian missions has cemented its place as a cornerstone of military air transport.

The English Electric Canberra

The English Electric Canberra was a pioneering British jet-powered bomber that made significant contributions to the evolution of military aviation. Developed by English Electric, the Canberra was one of the first British jet bombers and saw extensive service in various roles over several decades.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Canberra was designed to meet a Royal Air Force (RAF) requirement for a high-speed, long-range jet bomber capable of penetrating enemy defenses. Its design was influenced by the need for a more advanced bomber than the piston-engine aircraft of the era.
- **First Flight**: The prototype Canberra first flew on May 13, 1951.
- **Service Entry**: The Canberra entered service with the RAF in 1951.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Canberra was a twin-engine, mid-wing monoplane with a conventional tailwheel undercarriage. Its design emphasized speed, range, and payload capacity.
- **Construction**: The aircraft was built with a metal frame and featured a stressed-skin design, providing strength and aerodynamic efficiency. The Canberra's design also included a pressurized cockpit for improved crew comfort and operational effectiveness at high altitudes.
- **Engine**: The Canberra was originally powered by two Rolls-Royce Avon 109 or 114 engines, depending on the variant.

Variants

1. **Canberra B(I) Mk 2**: The initial production version, featuring early jet engines and basic avionics. It was used primarily for strategic bombing.
2. **Canberra B(I) Mk 6**: An improved version with more powerful engines, enhanced avionics, and better performance.
3. **Canberra B(I) Mk 8**: Further upgrades included more advanced radar and avionics systems.
4. **Canberra PR.3**: A reconnaissance version equipped with cameras and other equipment for high-altitude photo-reconnaissance missions.
5. **Canberra PR.7**: An improved reconnaissance variant with better cameras and electronic equipment.

Specifications (Canberra B(I) Mk 2)

- **Crew**: 2 (pilot and navigator/bombardier)
- **Length**: 69 ft 0 in (21.03 m)
- **Wingspan**: 90 ft 0 in (27.43 m)
- **Height**: 22 ft 6 in (6.86 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 36,000 lb (16,329 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 55,000 lb (24,948 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Rolls-Royce Avon 109 or 114 engines, 7,500 lb (33.36 kN) thrust each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 500 mph (805 km/h)
- **Range**: 1,800 miles (2,897 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 50,000 ft (15,240 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 3,500 ft/min (17.8 m/s)

Armament

- **Bombs**:
  - The Canberra could carry up to 10,000 lb (4,536 kg) of bombs in its internal bomb bay.
- **Reconnaissance Equipment**:
  - In reconnaissance variants, the aircraft was equipped with various cameras and electronic sensors.

Operational Use

- **RAF Service**: The Canberra served with the RAF from the early 1950s until the 2000s. It played a key role in strategic bombing, reconnaissance, and maritime patrols.
- **Export**: The Canberra was widely exported and used by several other air forces, including those of Australia, India, and the United States (as the B-57 Canberra).
- **Conflicts**: The Canberra saw action in various conflicts, including the Suez Crisis, the Falklands War, and various post-war conflicts in the Middle East and Africa.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The English Electric Canberra was a significant advancement in bomber design and helped set the stage for future developments in jet-powered military aircraft. Its long operational life and adaptability demonstrated the effectiveness of jet bombers in various roles.
- **Production**: Over 1,300 Canberra bombers were built, making it one of the most successful and widely used British bombers of the post-war period.
- **Preservation**: Several Canberras have been preserved in museums and collections. They are remembered for their contributions to military aviation and their role in the evolution of jet-powered bombers.

The English Electric Canberra remains a notable example of early jet bomber design, showcasing advancements in technology and operational versatility that had a lasting impact on military aviation. Its legacy is reflected in its successful service history and continued interest in aviation history.

The F-5E Lockheed Lightning

The **Lockheed P-38 Lightning** was a World War II American fighter aircraft that played a vital role in various theatres of the war. The designation "F-5E" refers to the reconnaissance version of the P-38. Known for its distinctive twin-boom design and versatility, the P-38 was used in multiple roles including interception, ground attack, and photo-reconnaissance.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The P-38 was developed by Lockheed in response to a 1937 United States Army Air Corps (USAAC) requirement for a high-speed, high-altitude interceptor.
- **First Flight**: January 27, 1939.
- **Service Entry**: 1941 with the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF).

Design

- **Configuration**: The P-38 featured a unique twin-boom design with a central nacelle containing the cockpit and armament. This design allowed for a powerful, concentrated firepower and excellent range.
- **Engine**: Powered by two Allison V-1710 V-12 engines, each fitted with a turbo-supercharger.

Specifications (Lockheed P-38J Lightning, as the F-5E is a variant)

- **Crew**: 1
- **Length**: 37 ft 10 in (11.53 m)

- **Wingspan**: 52 ft 0 in (15.85 m)
- **Height**: 12 ft 10 in (3.90 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 12,800 lb (5,806 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 17,500 lb (7,938 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Allison V-1710-111/113 V-12 engines, 1,425 hp (1,063 kW) each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 443 mph (713 km/h) at 25,000 ft (7,620 m)
- **Range**: 1,300 miles (2,100 km) with drop tanks
- **Service Ceiling**: 44,000 ft (13,411 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 4,750 ft/min (24.1 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns (P-38J)**:
  - 1 × 20 mm Hispano M2 cannon with 150 rounds
  - 4 × 0.50 in (12.7 mm) M2 Browning machine guns with 500 rounds per gun
- **Rockets/Bombs**:
  - Up to 4,000 lb (1,800 kg) of bombs or 10 × 5 in (127 mm) rockets

F-5E Reconnaissance Version

- **Role**: The F-5E was a reconnaissance variant of the P-38, stripped of its armament and equipped with cameras for high-altitude photo-reconnaissance missions.
- **Cameras**: Typically fitted with cameras in the nose and sometimes additional cameras in the tail boom or under the fuselage.
- **Modifications**: The F-5E had modifications to accommodate the cameras, additional fuel tanks for extended range, and sometimes featured different cockpit equipment tailored for reconnaissance missions.

Operational Use

- **Roles**: The P-38 served in various roles including fighter, bomber escort, ground-attack, night fighter, and reconnaissance.
- **Theatres**: The P-38 was used extensively in the European, Pacific, Mediterranean, and China-Burma-India theatres.
- **Reconnaissance**: The F-5E variant was highly valued for its ability to fly long-range reconnaissance missions at high altitudes, gathering critical intelligence and mapping enemy positions.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The P-38 was credited with numerous victories and played a crucial role in the air superiority of the Allies. It was also the aircraft flown by America's top ace of WWII, Richard Bong.
- **Production**: A total of 10,037 P-38s were built, including all variants.
- **Post-War Use**: After World War II, many P-38s were scrapped, but some continued to serve in various air forces around the world and in civilian roles.

Cultural Impact

- **Nickname**: The P-38 was often referred to as the "Fork-Tailed Devil" by German pilots and "two planes, one pilot" by Japanese pilots due to its distinctive twin-boom design.
- **Legacy**: The P-38 remains a celebrated aircraft among aviation enthusiasts and historians, with several preserved in museums and private collections.

The **Lockheed P-38 Lightning**, and specifically the F-5E reconnaissance variant, made significant contributions to the Allied war effort with its advanced design, versatility, and effectiveness in multiple roles. Its unique appearance and performance have left a lasting legacy in aviation history.

The Fairey Hamble Baby

The **Fairey Hamble Baby** was a British World War I seaplane, designed for use by the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS). It was a variant of the **Sopwith Baby** seaplane, modified and built by the **Fairey Aviation Company** at its Hamble facility. The Hamble Baby was used primarily for reconnaissance, patrolling, and light bombing duties during World War I.

Design and Development

- **Role**: Reconnaissance and patrol seaplane
- **Manufacturer**: Fairey Aviation Company
- **First Flight**: 1917
- **Based On**: The Sopwith Baby seaplane

The Fairey Hamble Baby was an improved version of the Sopwith Baby, with some modifications introduced by Fairey Aviation to improve its overall performance and ease of manufacturing. These changes primarily focused on improving the aircraft's engine installation, streamlining, and overall flight characteristics.

Key Design Modifications

- **Wings**: Fairey introduced slightly larger and redesigned wings, improving the aircraft’s lift and manoeuvrability.
- **Tail Unit**: A redesigned tail section with a larger rudder for improved stability.
- **Fuselage**: Some structural modifications to strengthen the aircraft, particularly in naval operations, where seaplanes had to withstand water landings.
- **Engine**: Typically powered by a **100 hp Clerget rotary engine**, the Hamble Baby had improved engine mountings and cowling, making it easier to maintain and operate.

Specifications

- **Crew**: 1 (pilot)
- **Length**: 25 ft 3 in (7.7 m)
- **Wingspan**: 33 ft 10 in (10.3 m)
- **Height**: 9 ft 6 in (2.9 m)

- **Empty Weight**: 1,140 lb (517 kg)
- **Max Take-off Weight**: 1,670 lb (758 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × 100 hp Clerget 9B rotary engine

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 92 mph (148 km/h)
- **Range**: 300 miles (480 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 10,000 ft (3,048 m)

Armament

- **Guns**: 1 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Lewis gun, mounted on a synchronized mechanism in front of the pilot
- **Bombs**: Capability to carry small bombs or depth charges (up to 65 lb) under the fuselage for anti-submarine or light bombing operations

Operational Use

- **Primary Role**: The Hamble Baby was used by the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) for coastal reconnaissance, anti-submarine patrols, and naval cooperation missions.
- **Deployment**: It was typically deployed from coastal airfields and seaplane stations, conducting maritime patrols over the North Sea, English Channel, and the Mediterranean.
- **Submarine Patrols**: Due to the threat of German U-boats, the Hamble Baby was often tasked with spotting submarines and engaging them with bombs or depth charges, although its small payload limited its direct offensive capabilities.

Legacy

- **Versatile Seaplane**: The Fairey Hamble Baby's modifications made it a versatile and improved version of the Sopwith Baby, contributing to the British naval air effort during World War I.
- **Fairey Aviation's Early Success**: This aircraft marked one of Fairey Aviation's early successes in aircraft manufacturing, establishing the company's reputation in naval aviation.

Although not as widely recognized as other aircraft of the era, the **Fairey Hamble Baby** played a vital role in patrol and reconnaissance missions, contributing to the protection of British waters and naval operations during World War I.

The Fairy Battle Mk 1

The Fairey Battle Mk I was a British light bomber used primarily during the early years of World War II. Designed by Fairey Aviation, the Battle was initially conceived as a fast and well-armed bomber but proved to be less effective than anticipated in the face of modern air defences.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Fairey Battle was developed to meet an Air Ministry requirement for a new light bomber that could perform tactical bombing and reconnaissance missions. Its design aimed to offer a combination of speed, manoeuvrability, and firepower.
- **First Flight**: The prototype of the Battle first flew on March 10, 1937.
- **Service Entry**: The Battle entered service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) in 1939.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Battle was a low-wing monoplane with a conventional tailwheel undercarriage. Its design featured a sleek fuselage and retractable landing gear, which were advanced features for its time.
- **Construction**: The aircraft was built primarily of metal, with fabric covering on the wings and control surfaces. It was designed to be relatively easy to maintain and repair.
- **Engine**: The Battle was powered by a single Rolls-Royce Merlin III or Rolls-Royce Merlin XX engine, depending on the variant.

Variants

1. **Battle Mk I**: The initial production version, equipped with a Rolls-Royce Merlin III engine and armed with a mix of machine guns and bombs.
2. **Battle Mk II**: Featured improvements in equipment and armament, including an upgraded engine and enhanced defensive measures.

Specifications (Battle Mk I)

- **Crew**: 3 (pilot, navigator/bombardier, and rear gunner)
- **Length**: 47 ft 10 in (14.58 m)
- **Wingspan**: 53 ft 6 in (16.31 m)
- **Height**: 14 ft 0 in (4.27 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 10,400 lb (4,718 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 16,500 lb (7,480 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Rolls-Royce Merlin III V12 engine, 1,030 hp

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 290 mph (467 km/h) at 15,000 ft (4,572 m)
- **Range**: 500 miles (805 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 18,500 ft (5,639 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,000 ft/min (5.1 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 1 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine gun in the nose
  - 1 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine gun in the rear turret
- **Bombs**:
  - Up to 1,500 lb (680 kg) of bombs, carried in an internal bomb bay

Operational Use

- **Early War Operations**: The Fairey Battle saw service during the early years of World War II, including the Battle of France and the early stages of the Battle of Britain. It was used for tactical bombing and reconnaissance missions.
- **Limitations**: The Battle proved to be vulnerable to enemy fighters and anti-aircraft fire due to its relatively slow speed and limited defensive armament. Its performance and survivability were significantly reduced as the war progressed and more advanced enemy aircraft appeared.
- **Role Change**: As the war continued, the Battle was gradually withdrawn from frontline service and repurposed for training and secondary roles.

Legacy

- **Impact**: While the Fairey Battle was quickly outclassed by more advanced aircraft and tactics, it was a notable example of early war British bomber design. Its service highlighted the need for more capable and survivable bombers in modern warfare.

- **Production**: Approximately 2,184 Battles were built, and they played a role in early British bombing campaigns and defensive operations.
- **Preservation**: Few examples of the Fairey Battle have survived, and its legacy is primarily preserved in historical accounts and museum exhibits.

The Fairey Battle Mk I represents a transitional phase in bomber development during World War II, illustrating the rapid advancements in aircraft design and the challenges faced by early war bombers in the evolving landscape of aerial combat.

The Gloster Gladiator

The Gloster Gladiator was a British biplane fighter aircraft that served as the last biplane fighter in the Royal Air Force (RAF). Developed by the Gloster Aircraft Company, the Gladiator was notable for its role during the early years of World War II, particularly in various theatres of the conflict.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Gladiator was designed to meet Air Ministry Specification F.7/30 for a new fighter aircraft. It was developed as a successor to the earlier Gloster Gauntlet but was intended to be more advanced, incorporating a more powerful engine and improved armament.
- **First Flight**: The prototype (K5932) first flew on September 12, 1934.
- **Service Entry**: It entered service with the RAF in 1937.

Design

- **Biplane Configuration**: The Gladiator retained the biplane configuration, which was becoming outdated as monoplane fighters began to dominate. However, its robust design and manoeuvrability made it effective in combat.
- **Construction**: The aircraft featured a metal frame covered with fabric, with a conventional biplane wing layout and a fixed undercarriage.
- **Engine**: It was powered by a single Rolls-Royce Kestrel V12 engine, which provided good performance for its time.

Variants

1. **Gladiator I**: The initial production version, equipped with eight .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns.

2. **Gladiator II**: Improved version with an upgraded engine and increased fuel capacity.
3. **Gladiator III**: Featured further enhancements, including a more powerful engine and improved armament.

Specifications (Gladiator II)

- **Crew**: 1
- **Length**: 27 ft 8 in (8.43 m)
- **Wingspan**: 32 ft 8 in (9.96 m)
- **Height**: 11 ft 0 in (3.35 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 4,700 lb (2,132 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 6,500 lb (2,950 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Rolls-Royce Kestrel V12 engine, 690 hp

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 250 mph (402 km/h) at 15,000 ft (4,570 m)
- **Range**: 600 miles (965 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 30,000 ft (9,150 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 2,000 ft/min (10.2 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 8 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns (in the wings)
- **Bombs**:
  - Up to 250 lb (113 kg) of bombs could be carried under the wings (in some versions)

Operational Use

- **Early War**: The Gladiator was used by the RAF and other Allied forces in various roles, including air superiority, ground attack, and reconnaissance. Its service during the early years of World War II was notable, particularly in the Mediterranean and North Africa.
- **Notable Campaigns**:
  - **Battle of France**: The Gladiator saw action during the early stages of the war in France.
  - **Battle of Britain**: Although it was largely outclassed by more advanced monoplanes, some Gladiators participated in the Battle of Britain.
  - **North Africa and Greece**: The Gladiator was used effectively in North Africa and Greece, where its ruggedness and manoeuvrability were advantageous in combat against Italian and German aircraft.

Legacy

The Gloster Gladiator is remembered as a symbol of the transitional period between biplane and monoplane fighters. Its role in the early years of World War II, particularly in challenging conditions and against more advanced opponents, demonstrated the capabilities

of biplane fighters even as aviation technology rapidly advanced. The Gladiator's robust design and effective performance in various theatres of war have cemented its place in aviation history. Several Gladiators have been preserved and can be seen in museums around the world, serving as a reminder of this iconic aircraft's contributions during the early years of the conflict.

The Gloster Javelin

The Gloster Javelin was a British twin-engine all-weather interceptor aircraft developed in the 1950s by Gloster Aircraft Company. It was notable for being the first delta-winged fighter to enter service with the Royal Air Force (RAF).

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Javelin was developed in response to a 1947 Air Ministry requirement for a high-performance, all-weather interceptor capable of operating in the challenging conditions of the British climate. The design aimed to intercept enemy bombers at high altitudes and in poor weather conditions.
- **First Flight**: The prototype (WD804) first flew on November 26, 1951.
- **Service Entry**: The Javelin entered service with the RAF in 1956.

Design

- **Delta Wing**: The Javelin featured a large delta wing, which provided excellent lift and stability at high altitudes, crucial for its role as an interceptor.
- **Twin Engines**: It was powered by two axial-flow turbojet engines, enhancing its speed and climb rate.
- **All-Weather Capability**: Equipped with advanced radar and electronic systems, the Javelin was designed to operate effectively in all weather conditions, day or night.

Variants

1. **FAW.1**: The initial production version.
2. **FAW.2**: Improved version with better avionics and radar.

3. **FAW.4**: Featured wing leading-edge extensions and increased fuel capacity.
4. **FAW.7**: Introduced more powerful engines (Armstrong Siddeley Sapphire Sa.7) and upgraded radar.
5. **FAW.8**: Further improvements in avionics and weaponry.
6. **FAW.9**: The final and most advanced variant, featuring additional fuel tanks and a more powerful radar.

Specifications (Javelin FAW.9)

- **Crew**: 2 (pilot and radar operator)
- **Length**: 55 ft 9 in (17.00 m)
- **Wingspan**: 52 ft 0 in (15.85 m)
- **Height**: 16 ft 0 in (4.88 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 27,850 lb (12,633 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 45,600 lb (20,685 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Armstrong Siddeley Sapphire Sa.7 turbojets, 11,000 lbf (48.9 kN) each with afterburner

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 715 mph (1,151 km/h) at 40,000 ft (12,200 m)
- **Range**: 1,000 miles (1,609 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 54,000 ft (16,460 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 20,000 ft/min (102 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 4 × 30 mm ADEN cannons in the wings
- **Missiles**:
  - 4 × de Havilland Firestreak infrared-guided air-to-air missiles (FAW.7 and later variants)
- **Rockets/Bombs**:
  - Capability to carry unguided rockets and bombs for ground-attack missions (though this was not its primary role)

Operational Use

- **Interceptor Role**: The Javelin was deployed primarily to intercept Soviet bombers during the Cold War, protecting British airspace from potential threats.
- **Service Life**: It served with the RAF from the mid-1950s to the late 1960s, during which it operated in various theaters, including the Middle East and Southeast Asia.
- **Performance and Challenges**: While the Javelin was effective in its intended role, it faced some performance limitations, particularly in terms of speed and maneuverability compared to newer jet fighters emerging during its service period.

Legacy

The Gloster Javelin represents an important step in the evolution of jet-powered interceptors. It was the first and only delta-wing aircraft to serve with the RAF, and it played a crucial role in the air defense strategy during the early years of the Cold War. Despite being quickly outpaced by more advanced aircraft, the Javelin's design and operational history provided valuable lessons for future interceptor development. Several Javelins have been preserved in museums, where they stand as a testament to this unique and important chapter in aviation history.

The Gloster Meteor F8

The **Gloster Meteor F8** was the final and most refined variant of the Gloster Meteor, Britain's first operational jet fighter. Developed during the latter stages of World War II, the Meteor played a significant role in the early years of jet aviation.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Gloster Meteor was developed as a response to the need for a jet-powered fighter aircraft. The Meteor first flew in 1943 and entered service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) in 1944. The F8 was the last major variant, incorporating various improvements over earlier models.
- **First Flight**: The Meteor F8 first flew in 1947.
- **Service Entry**: The F8 entered service in 1949.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Meteor F8 retained the distinctive twin-engine, straight-wing design of the earlier Meteors but featured numerous upgrades. It had a conventional tailwheel undercarriage and a streamlined fuselage.
- **Construction**: The aircraft was built with a metal frame and stressed-skin construction, which provided strength and durability while keeping weight relatively low.
- **Engine**: The F8 was powered by two Rolls-Royce Derwent 8 engines, which were an improvement over the engines used in earlier variants.

Specifications (Gloster Meteor F8)

- **Crew**: 1
- **Length**: 39 ft 9 in (12.12 m)
- **Wingspan**: 42 ft 7 in (12.98 m)
- **Height**: 12 ft 6 in (3.81 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 15,960 lb (7,241 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 23,500 lb (10,659 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Rolls-Royce Derwent 8 turbojet engines, 3,500 lb (15.6 kN) thrust each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 590 mph (950 km/h) at 36,000 ft (10,973 m)
- **Range**: 850 miles (1,370 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 42,000 ft (12,802 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 3,000 ft/min (15.2 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 4 × 20 mm Hispano Mk V cannons (in the wings)
- **Bombs/Rockets**:
  - The Meteor F8 could be equipped with up to 1,000 lb (454 kg) of bombs or rockets, depending on the mission requirements.

Operational Use

- **RAF Service**: The Gloster Meteor F8 served with the RAF during the late 1940s and into the early 1950s. It was used primarily for interceptor roles and as a ground-attack aircraft.
- **Post-War Role**: The Meteor F8 was employed in various roles, including air defence and ground attack, and was eventually replaced by more advanced jet fighters.
- **Export**: The Meteor F8 was also exported to several countries, including Belgium, Australia, and New Zealand, where it saw continued service in various roles.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The Meteor F8 represented the culmination of the Meteor series and was among the last piston-engine fighters to be equipped with jet propulsion. It demonstrated the evolution of jet fighter technology and helped bridge the gap between World War II piston-engine fighters and the new generation of jet fighters.
- **Production**: Approximately 350 Meteor F8s were built.
- **Preservation**: Some Meteor F8s have been preserved in museums and are occasionally displayed at airshows. They serve as historical examples of early British jet fighter development.

The Gloster Meteor F8 remains an important milestone in the history of aviation, marking the transition from early jet-powered aircraft to more advanced designs that would define the Cold War era. Its contributions to the development of jet fighter technology are remembered as a significant achievement in British aviation history.

The Handley Page Halifax

The Handley Page Halifax was a British four-engine heavy bomber used extensively during World War II. Designed by Handley Page, it was one of the mainstays of the Royal Air Force's Bomber Command alongside the Avro Lancaster.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Halifax was developed in response to Air Ministry Specification P.13/36 for a twin-engine medium bomber, which was later modified to a four-engine configuration to meet the demands for greater range and payload.
- **First Flight**: The prototype (L7244) first flew on October 25, 1939.
- **Service Entry**: It entered service with the Royal Air Force in November 1940.

Variants

The Halifax had several variants, each with improvements in performance, armament, and role adaptation. Key variants include:

1. **Halifax Mk I**: The initial production version, powered by Rolls-Royce Merlin engines.
2. **Halifax Mk II**: Featured design improvements and increased defensive armament.
3. **Halifax Mk III**: Powered by the more powerful Bristol Hercules radial engines, improving performance and reliability.
4. **Halifax Mk V**: Used for special operations and transport.
5. **Halifax Mk VI and VII**: Late-war versions with improved engines and equipment.

Specifications (Halifax Mk III)

- **Crew**: 7 (pilot, flight engineer, navigator, bomb aimer, wireless operator, and two gunners)
- **Length**: 71 ft 7 in (21.82 m)

- **Wingspan**: 104 ft 2 in (31.75 m)
- **Height**: 20 ft 9 in (6.32 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 37,000 lb (16,783 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 65,000 lb (29,484 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 4 × Bristol Hercules XVI radial engines, 1,650 hp each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 282 mph (454 km/h) at 13,000 ft (3,960 m)
- **Range**: 1,860 miles (2,995 km) with maximum bomb load
- **Service Ceiling**: 24,000 ft (7,315 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 700 ft/min (3.6 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 8 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns (2 in the nose turret, 2 in the dorsal turret, and 4 in the tail turret)
- **Bombs**:
  - Up to 13,000 lb (5,900 kg) of bombs (typically a mix of high-explosive and incendiary bombs)

Operational Use

- **Strategic Bombing**: The Halifax was primarily used for night bombing raids over Germany and occupied Europe, targeting industrial sites, railways, and cities.
- **Special Operations**: It also served in special operations roles, including dropping agents and supplies for resistance movements, towing gliders, and electronic warfare.
- **Other Roles**: Post-war, the Halifax was used for transport, reconnaissance, and maritime patrol missions.

Legacy

The Handley Page Halifax was a critical component of the RAF's strategic bombing campaign during World War II. While it was often overshadowed by the Avro Lancaster in terms of fame and bomb load capacity, the Halifax was a versatile and reliable aircraft that made significant contributions to the Allied war effort. It continued to serve in various roles post-war and is remembered as one of the key heavy bombers of its era. Several Halifaxes have been preserved in museums, ensuring that its legacy endures.

The Handley Page Halifax Mk II

The **Handley Page Halifax Mk II** was a British four-engine heavy bomber used extensively during World War II. It was one of the principal bombers employed by the Royal Air Force (RAF) in the strategic bombing campaign against Germany.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Halifax was developed by Handley Page to meet the same RAF requirements that led to the development of the Avro Lancaster. Initially conceived as a twin-engine bomber, it was later redesigned to use four engines for improved performance.
- **First Flight**: The prototype Halifax first flew on October 25, 1939.
- **Service Entry**: The Halifax entered operational service with the RAF in November 1940.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Halifax was a mid-wing monoplane with a twin tail fin and a retractable tailwheel landing gear.
- **Construction**: The airframe was mainly made of metal, featuring a monocoque fuselage and stressed-skin wings.
- **Engine**: The Mk II variant was typically powered by four Rolls-Royce Merlin X or Merlin XX liquid-cooled V12 engines.

Specifications (Handley Page Halifax Mk II)

- **Crew**: 7 (pilot, co-pilot, navigator, bomb aimer, radio operator, flight engineer, and gunners)
- **Length**: 71 ft 7 in (21.82 m)
- **Wingspan**: 98 ft 9 in (30.1 m)
- **Height**: 20 ft 9 in (6.32 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 37,000 lb (16,783 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 60,000 lb (27,216 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 4 × Rolls-Royce Merlin X or XX V12 engines, 1,280 hp each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 265 mph (426 km/h) at 17,500 ft (5,334 m)
- **Range**: 1,860 miles (2,994 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 24,000 ft (7,315 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 900 ft/min (4.6 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 8 × 0.303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns in various positions (nose, dorsal, tail, and waist turrets)
- **Bombs**:
  - Up to 13,000 lb (5,897 kg) of bombs in the internal bomb bays

Operational Use

- **Strategic Bombing**: The Halifax Mk II was used primarily in strategic bombing missions over Germany, targeting industrial areas, military installations, and cities.
- **Variety of Roles**: Besides bombing missions, the Halifax Mk II was used for paratrooper drops, glider towing, and special operations such as dropping agents and supplies behind enemy lines.
- **Service Life**: The Halifax continued in front-line service throughout World War II and was gradually replaced by more advanced versions and other bombers like the Avro Lancaster.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The Halifax Mk II contributed significantly to the Allied strategic bombing campaign. Its versatility and robustness made it a valuable asset in various combat roles.
- **Production**: Over 6,000 Halifax's of all variants were built during the war.
- **Preservation**: Several Halifax's have been preserved and are displayed in museums, including the Yorkshire Air Museum in the UK and the National Air Force Museum of Canada.

The **Handley Page Halifax Mk II** remains an important aircraft in the history of World War II, recognized for its contributions to the Allied bombing efforts and its role in various other operations.

The Handley Page Hampton

The Handley Page Hampden was a British medium bomber that served during World War II. It was part of the Royal Air Force's (RAF) standard bomber force early in the conflict and was known for its distinctive design and performance characteristics. Here's a detailed look at the Handley Page Hampden:

Overview:

- **Role:** Medium bomber
- **Manufacturer:** Handley Page
- **Introduced:** 1938
- **Primary Users:** Royal Air Force (RAF), Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF)

Specifications:

- **Crew:** 4 (pilot, navigator/bomb aimer, wireless operator/air gunner, and rear gunner)
- **Length:** 59 feet 4 inches (18.09 meters)
- **Wingspan:** 85 feet 0 inches (25.91 meters)
- **Height:** 16 feet 8 inches (5.08 meters)
- **Wing Area:** 980 square feet (91 square meters)

Performance:

- **Maximum Speed:** Approximately 275 mph (443 km/h) at 10,000 feet (3,050 meters)
- **Cruise Speed:** Around 245 mph (394 km/h)

- **Range:** About 1,300 miles (2,092 km) with a standard bomb load
- **Service Ceiling:** Approximately 18,000 feet (5,486 meters)

Powerplant:

- **Engines:** 2 × Rolls-Royce Merlin II or III V12 liquid-cooled inline engines
- **Horsepower:** 1,030 hp (770 kW) each
- **Propellers:** 2 × 3-bladed Hamilton Standard propellers

Armament:

- **Machine Guns:**
  - 2 × .303 calibre Browning machine guns in a powered dorsal turret
  - 1 × .303 calibre Browning machine gun in a tail turret
- **Bombs:**
  - Up to 4,500 pounds (2,041 kg) of bombs carried internally.
  - Various bomb configurations including 500 lb (227 kg) and 250 lb (113 kg) bombs.

Design Features:

- **Configuration:** The Hampden had a distinctive, somewhat unconventional design with a large, highly tapered wing and a low, sleek fuselage.
- **Landing Gear:** Retractable, with a tricycle configuration.

Operational Use:

- **Roles:** The Hampden was primarily used for bombing missions, but it also performed night reconnaissance, mine-laying, and torpedo attacks. It was initially used in the early stages of the war but was eventually replaced by more advanced bombers.
- **Notable Achievements:** Despite its relatively short operational life compared to other bombers, the Hampden was involved in several significant early WWII operations, including the Battle of Britain and the early bombing campaigns over Europe.

Legacy:

The Handley Page Hampden is remembered for its innovative design and its role as one of the RAF's key bombers in the early stages of WWII. Its distinctive shape and performance made it a notable part of Britain's air campaign during the war. The Hampden's service history reflects the rapid evolution of military aircraft technology and tactics during the early years of the conflict.

The Hawker Henley

The **Hawker Henley** was a British light bomber and target tug aircraft developed in the late 1930s. While it shared design features with the more famous Hawker Hurricane, it ultimately saw limited operational use and is less well-known today.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Hawker Henley was developed in response to the Air Ministry Specification P.4/34, which called for a light bomber capable of dive-bombing. Hawker Aircraft adapted many design elements from their successful Hurricane fighter for the Henley.
- **First Flight**: The prototype Henley first flew on March 10, 1937.
- **Service Entry**: Despite its development as a bomber, the Henley was primarily used as a target tug during its service life.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Henley was a low-wing monoplane with a conventional tailwheel landing gear. It featured a metal structure with fabric-covered control surfaces.
- **Engine**: The Henley was powered by a Rolls-Royce Merlin engine, similar to the one used in the Hurricane.

Specifications (Hawker Henley Mk III)

- **Crew**: 2 (pilot and observer/gunner)
- **Length**: 34 ft 4 in (10.46 m)
- **Wingspan**: 47 ft 8 in (14.53 m)
- **Height**: 12 ft 1 in (3.68 m)

- **Empty Weight**: 6,510 lb (2,953 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 9,060 lb (4,110 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Rolls-Royce Merlin III V12 engine, 1,030 hp (768 kW)

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 272 mph (438 km/h) at 16,500 ft (5,029 m)
- **Range**: 680 miles (1,094 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 23,700 ft (7,223 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,640 ft/min (8.3 m/s)

Armament (Initially Planned)

- **Guns**:
  - 1 × 0.303 in (7.7 mm) machine gun in rear cockpit for defense
- **Bombs**:
  - Up to 1,000 lb (454 kg) of bombs under the wings or fuselage

Operational Use

- **Intended Role**: The Henley was initially designed as a light bomber and dive bomber. However, during testing, it became clear that the aircraft had cooling issues and was not suitable for sustained bombing operations.
- **Target Tug**: The Henley found its primary role as a target tug, towing targets for anti-aircraft gunnery training. It was equipped with winches and towing gear for this purpose.

Legacy

- **Limited Production**: Only around 200 Henleys were built due to its limited operational use and the focus on other aircraft designs during the war.
- **Service**: The Henley served in the target tug role until the mid-1940s, when more suitable aircraft and advanced towing techniques replaced it.
- **Significance**: While the Henley did not achieve the operational success of other Hawker designs, it contributed to training anti-aircraft gunners, which was crucial for the war effort.

The **Hawker Henley** is a lesser-known aircraft in the annals of World War II aviation history, primarily remembered for its role as a target tug rather than a combat aircraft. Its development and operational history reflect the challenges and rapid technological advancements of the era.

The Hawker Hind Trainer

The **Hawker Hind Trainer** was a British training aircraft developed from the Hawker Hind light bomber. The original Hawker Hind was a variant of the Hawker Hart series of biplane light bombers, which were used extensively by the Royal Air Force (RAF) during the interwar period and into the early years of World War II.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Hawker Hind was originally developed as a light bomber to replace the Hawker Hart. It first flew in 1934 and entered service with the RAF in 1935. The Hind was essentially an improved version of the Hart, featuring a more powerful engine and other refinements.
- **Trainer Conversion**: As newer aircraft designs replaced the Hind in front-line service, many Hinds were converted to training roles. These converted aircraft were designated as Hawker Hind Trainers. They were used to train pilots, navigators, and air gunners.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Hind Trainer retained the biplane configuration of the original Hind, with a single-engine and an open cockpit layout for the pilot and instructor or trainee.
- **Construction**: The aircraft was constructed with a metal frame and fabric-covered wings and fuselage, a common practice for biplanes of that era.
- **Engine**: The Hind Trainer was powered by various engines over its service life, but the typical engine was the Rolls-Royce Kestrel V, a liquid cooled V12 engine.

Specifications (Hawker Hind Trainer)

- **Crew**: 2 (pilot and instructor/trainee)
- **Length**: 29 ft 4 in (8.94 m)
- **Wingspan**: 37 ft 3 in (11.35 m)
- **Height**: 10 ft 6 in (3.20 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 3,290 lb (1,492 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 4,840 lb (2,196 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Rolls-Royce Kestrel V V12 engine, 640 hp

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 187 mph (301 km/h) at 15,000 ft (4,572 m)
- **Range**: 330 miles (531 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 23,500 ft (7,163 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,470 ft/min (7.5 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - None in the trainer version. The original bomber version was equipped with machine guns, but these were typically removed for the trainer variant.
- **Bombs**:
  - None in the trainer version.

Operational Use

- **Training Role**: The primary role of the Hawker Hind Trainer was to prepare aircrew for operational service. It was used for pilot training, navigation, and gunnery practice. The handling characteristics of the Hind made it a suitable platform for these tasks.
- **Service**: The Hind Trainer was used by the RAF and several other air forces, including the Royal Canadian Air Force and the South African Air Force. It was employed extensively in the late 1930s and during the early years of World War II.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The Hawker Hind Trainer played a crucial role in training the next generation of pilots and aircrew during a critical period in aviation history. Its use helped prepare many of the airmen who would go on to serve in World War II.
- **Preservation**: A few examples of the Hawker Hind and its variants, including trainers, have been preserved in museums. These aircraft are a testament to the important role that the Hind series played in both training and operational contexts.

The Hawker Hind Trainer is remembered as an essential component of the RAF's training program during a time of rapid technological advancement and increasing global conflict. Its contributions to training aircrew effectively supported the larger war effort during World War II.

The Hawker Hunter F.6

The **Hawker Hunter F.6** was a significant variant of the Hawker Hunter, one of Britain's most successful post-World War II jet fighters. Known for its sleek design, excellent performance, and versatility, the Hunter served with numerous air forces worldwide.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Hawker Hunter was designed in the late 1940s as a transonic fighter to replace the Gloster Meteor in the Royal Air Force (RAF). The F.6 was a further development of the initial production models.
- **First Flight of Hunter**: The prototype Hunter first flew on July 20, 1951.
- **Service Entry of F.6**: The F.6 variant entered service in 1956.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Hunter F.6 was a single-seat, single-engine jet aircraft. It featured swept wings, a low-mounted tailplane, and a distinctive fuselage with a circular cross-section.
- **Engine**: The F.6 was powered by the Rolls-Royce Avon 203 turbojet engine.

Specifications (Hawker Hunter F.6)

- **Crew**: 1
- **Length**: 45 ft 11 in (14.00 m)
- **Wingspan**: 33 ft 8 in (10.26 m)
- **Height**: 13 ft 2 in (4.01 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 14,000 lb (6,350 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 20,000 lb (9,072 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Rolls-Royce Avon 203 turbojet, 10,150 lbf (45.2 kN) thrust

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 715 mph (1,150 km/h) at 45,000 ft (13,715 m)
- **Range**: 1,631 miles (2,625 km) with external fuel tanks
- **Service Ceiling**: 50,000 ft (15,240 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 12,000 ft/min (61 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 4 × 30 mm ADEN cannons mounted in the nose
- **Rockets/Bombs**:
  - Up to 4,200 lb (1,900 kg) of external stores, including rocket pods, bombs, and drop tanks

Operational Use

- **Fighter-Bomber Role**: The Hunter F.6 was used primarily as an interceptor and fighter-bomber, capable of carrying a variety of air-to-ground ordnance.
- **Service**: The F.6 served with the RAF and many other air forces around the world. It was renowned for its excellent handling and performance at high speeds.
- **Deployment**: The Hunter saw combat service in various conflicts, including the Suez Crisis, the Rhodesian Bush War, and Indo-Pakistani wars.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The Hunter F.6 was praised for its versatility, reliability, and pilot-friendly characteristics. It became a benchmark for jet fighter design during its era.
- **Production**: Over 1,970 Hunters were built across all variants, with the F.6 being one of the most numerous.
- **Post-Service Life**: Many Hunters were retired from front-line service in the 1970s but continued to serve in secondary roles such as training and target towing. Some are still flown today by private operators and in airshows.

The **Hawker Hunter F.6** remains an iconic aircraft in aviation history, known for its elegant design and impressive performance. It played a crucial role in the transition from propeller-driven aircraft to the modern jet age, leaving a lasting legacy in military aviation.

The Hawker Hurricane

The Hawker Hurricane was a British single-seat fighter aircraft that played a crucial role during World War II, especially during the Battle of Britain. Developed by Hawker Aircraft Ltd. and designed by Sydney Camm, the Hurricane was the first monoplane fighter to enter service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) and became renowned for its versatility, robustness, and effectiveness in combat.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Hurricane was developed in the early 1930s to meet Air Ministry Specification F.36/34 for a new monoplane fighter to replace the RAF's biplanes.
- **First Flight**: The prototype (K5083) first flew on November 6, 1935.
- **Service Entry**: It entered service with the RAF in December 1937.

Design

- **Construction**: The Hurricane featured a mixed construction, with a steel-tube framework and fabric-covered wings, later replaced by metal wings in some versions.
- **Armament**: Initially equipped with eight .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns, later variants included more powerful armament configurations.

Variants

1. **Hurricane Mk I**: The initial production version, powered by a Rolls-Royce Merlin engine.

2. **Hurricane Mk II**: Featured a more powerful Merlin engine, strengthened airframe, and various sub-variants (IIA, IIB, IIC, IID, IIE) with different armament configurations, including 12 machine guns, 4 20 mm cannons, and even 40 mm anti-tank guns.
3. **Hurricane Mk IV**: Optimized for ground attack with additional armor and the ability to carry rockets or bombs.
4. **Sea Hurricane**: Navalized version equipped with arrestor hooks for carrier operations.

Specifications (Hurricane Mk IIC)

- **Crew**: 1
- **Length**: 32 ft 3 in (9.84 m)
- **Wingspan**: 40 ft 0 in (12.19 m)
- **Height**: 13 ft 1.5 in (4.00 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 5,745 lb (2,605 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 8,710 lb (3,950 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Rolls-Royce Merlin XX V12 engine, 1,280 hp

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 340 mph (547 km/h) at 21,000 ft (6,400 m)
- **Range**: 600 miles (965 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 36,000 ft (10,970 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 2,780 ft/min (14.1 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - Hurricane Mk I: 8 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns
  - Hurricane Mk IIC: 4 × 20 mm Hispano Mk II cannons
- **Bombs/Rockets**:
  - Up to 500 lb (227 kg) of bombs or 8 × 60 lb (27 kg) rockets (in ground attack roles)
- **Other Variants**:
  - Anti-tank versions carried 2 × 40 mm Vickers S guns

Operational Use

- **Battle of Britain**: The Hurricane was the workhorse of the RAF during the Battle of Britain, accounting for approximately 60% of the RAF's air victories. It proved effective against German bombers and fighters, thanks to its sturdy construction and heavy armament.
- **Global Deployment**: The Hurricane saw action in multiple theatres, including North Africa, the Mediterranean, and Southeast Asia, providing critical support in various roles such as interception, ground attack, and convoy protection.
- **Adaptability**: The Hurricane's robust design allowed it to be adapted for various roles, from fighter-bomber to night fighter and naval operations with the Fleet Air Arm.

Legacy

The Hawker Hurricane is celebrated for its significant contributions to the Allied war effort, particularly in the early years of World War II. Its role in the Battle of Britain, where it helped secure air superiority over the UK, is especially notable. The Hurricane's versatility, durability, and ease of maintenance made it a beloved aircraft among its pilots and ground crews. Many Hurricanes have been preserved in museums and private collections around the world, serving as a reminder of this iconic aircraft's vital role in securing Allied victory during World War II.

The Hawker Tempest

The **Hawker Tempest** was a British fighter aircraft developed by Hawker Aircraft during World War II. It was an evolution of the Hawker Typhoon, designed to rectify the Typhoon's shortcomings and create a more effective high-performance fighter. The Tempest became one of the fastest and most powerful fighters of the war, excelling in air-to-air combat and ground-attack roles.

Development and Design

- **Designer**: Sydney Camm of Hawker Aircraft.
- **First Flight**: September 2, 1942.
- **Entry into Service**: 1944, with the RAF.

The Tempest was designed as an improvement over the Typhoon, featuring a thinner, laminar-flow wing and more powerful engines to enhance its performance at higher altitudes. It retained much of the Typhoon's basic structure but was more aerodynamic and had better flight characteristics.

Specifications (Tempest Mk V)

- **Crew**: 1 (pilot)
- **Length**: 33 ft 8 in (10.26 m)
- **Wingspan**: 41 ft (12.50 m)
- **Height**: 16 ft 1 in (4.90 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 9,000 lb (4,082 kg)
- **Max Takeoff Weight**: 13,510 lb (6,127 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Napier Sabre IIA liquid-cooled H-24 engine, 2,180 hp (1,625 kW)

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 432 mph (695 km/h) at 18,500 ft (5,640 m)
- **Range**: 740 miles (1,191 km) on internal fuel
- **Service Ceiling**: 36,500 ft (11,125 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 4,700 ft/min (24 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 4 × 20 mm Hispano Mk V cannons mounted in the wings.
- **Bombs**:
  - Up to 1,000 lb (450 kg) of bombs under each wing (total: 2,000 lb).
- **Rockets**:
  - 8 × RP-3 rockets under the wings for ground-attack missions.

Operational History

The Tempest entered service in early 1944 and was immediately deployed to counter the V-1 flying bomb threat over southern England. Its speed and excellent low-altitude performance made it one of the best aircraft for intercepting these fast-moving missiles.

- **Role**: The Tempest was primarily used in the following roles:
  - **Interceptor**: Its speed allowed it to effectively intercept V-1 flying bombs.
  - **Ground Attack**: The Tempest was heavily used in ground-attack roles, especially during the Allied push into Germany in late 1944.
  - **Air Superiority**: In combat against German fighters, the Tempest proved to be highly effective, especially against the Messerschmitt Me 262 jet fighter.
- **Combat Effectiveness**: Tempests played a critical role in the destruction of German aircraft, particularly during the final months of the war. Its combination of speed, firepower, and durability made it one of the most feared Allied fighters in the European Theatre.

Variants

- **Tempest Mk V**: The most widely produced version, powered by the Napier Sabre engine. It excelled at low to medium altitudes.
- **Tempest Mk VI**: An improved version of the Mk V with a more powerful Sabre V engine and designed for tropical operations.
- **Tempest Mk II**: Powered by a Bristol Centaurus radial engine, intended for use in the Pacific, though it arrived too late for World War II service.

Advantages

- **Speed**: The Tempest was one of the fastest piston-engine fighters of the war, making it an excellent high-speed interceptor.
- **Firepower**: Equipped with four 20 mm Hispano cannons, it packed a significant punch, ideal for both air-to-air combat and ground attack.
- **Versatility**: Capable of engaging in a wide variety of missions, including interception, air superiority, and ground attack.

Legacy

- **Post-War Service**: After World War II, the Tempest continued to serve in various roles, including in the early Cold War era.

- **Reputation**: The Hawker Tempest earned a reputation as one of the finest British fighters of the war, particularly for its speed and effectiveness against the German Luftwaffe.

The **Hawker Tempest** left a legacy as a critical component of the RAF's fighter force during World War II, with its powerful engine, high speed, and heavy armament making it a versatile and deadly aircraft in both air combat and ground-attack roles.

The Hawker Typhon Mk IB

The **Hawker Typhoon Mk IB** was a British fighter-bomber developed during World War II. Designed by Hawker Aircraft, the Typhoon was initially intended as a high-speed interceptor but found its true calling as a ground-attack aircraft. It became one of the most effective ground-attack fighters of the war.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Typhoon was developed to replace the Hawker Hurricane and to counter the new German fighters. The initial design aimed for high-speed performance at low and medium altitudes.
- **First Flight**: The prototype of the Typhoon, powered by the Napier Sabre engine, first flew on February 24, 1940.
- **Service Entry**: The Typhoon entered service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) in 1941.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Typhoon was a low-wing monoplane with a conventional tailwheel undercarriage. It featured a robust and sturdy design to withstand the stresses of high-speed flight and ground attack missions.
- **Construction**: The aircraft was constructed primarily of metal, with a stressed-skin structure for strength and durability.

- **Engine**: The Typhoon Mk IB was powered by the Napier Sabre IIA engine, a liquid-cooled H-24 engine producing around 2,180 hp.

Specifications (Hawker Typhoon Mk IB)

- **Crew**: 1
- **Length**: 31 ft 11 in (9.73 m)
- **Wingspan**: 41 ft 7 in (12.67 m)
- **Height**: 15 ft 3 in (4.65 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 8,820 lb (4,000 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 13,250 lb (6,020 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Napier Sabre IIA liquid-cooled H-24 engine, 2,180 hp

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 412 mph (663 km/h) at 20,000 ft (6,100 m)
- **Range**: 510 miles (820 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 35,000 ft (10,670 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 2,500 ft/min (12.7 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 4 × 20 mm Hispano Mk II cannons (in the wings)
- **Bombs/Rockets**:
  - Up to 2,000 lb (907 kg) of bombs or 8 × RP-3 60 lb (27 kg) rockets for ground-attack missions

Operational Use

- **Early Issues**: The Typhoon faced several teething problems, including engine reliability issues and structural weaknesses. However, these were gradually resolved through modifications and improvements.
- **Ground Attack Role**: The Typhoon excelled in the ground-attack role, particularly in the latter stages of World War II. It was used extensively during the Normandy Invasion and the subsequent Allied advance into Germany, providing close air support and attacking German armored vehicles, trains, and other ground targets.
- **Famous Squadrons**: The Typhoon was used by several RAF squadrons, including No. 609 Squadron, which played a significant role in the aircraft's operational success.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The Hawker Typhoon Mk IB was a crucial asset in the RAF's arsenal during World War II. Its effectiveness as a ground-attack aircraft significantly contributed to the success of Allied ground operations in Europe.
- **Production**: A total of about 3,317 Typhoons were built, making it one of the more numerous British fighters of the war.

- **Preservation**: Only a few Typhoons have survived to the present day, with several on display in museums such as the RAF Museum in Hendon, London, and the Canadian Aviation and Space Museum in Ottawa.

The Hawker Typhoon Mk IB remains a celebrated aircraft in aviation history, known for its powerful performance and significant contributions to the Allied war effort. Its legacy continues to be honored by aviation enthusiasts and historians.

The Heinkel He

The **Heinkel He** series refers to several aircraft designed by the German manufacturer Heinkel. The specific model is not mentioned in your image file, but here is an overview of some notable Heinkel aircraft from World War II:

Heinkel He 111

- **Role**: Medium bomber
- **First Flight**: February 24, 1935
- **Service Entry**: 1936
- **Key Features**: Twin-engine, low-wing monoplane, extensively used in the early stages of World War II, particularly during the Battle of Britain.

Specifications (He 111H-6)

- **Crew**: 5
- **Length**: 53 ft 9.75 in (16.40 m)
- **Wingspan**: 74 ft 1.75 in (22.50 m)
- **Height**: 13 ft 1.5 in (4.00 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 17,857 lb (8,100 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 31,971 lb (14,500 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Junkers Jumo 211F-2 V-12 engines, 1,340 hp each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 270 mph (435 km/h) at 22,965 ft (7,000 m)
- **Range**: 1,429 miles (2,300 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 26,247 ft (8,000 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 787 ft/min (4 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 1 × 20 mm MG FF cannon in nose
  - 1 × 13 mm MG 131 machine gun in ventral position
  - 3 × 7.92 mm MG 15 machine guns in various positions
- **Bombs**:
  - 4,400 lb (2,000 kg) of bombs internally or on external racks

Operational Use

- **Role**: The He 111 was used for strategic bombing, ground support, and transport roles.
- **Theatre of Operations**: Saw extensive service on all fronts, including Europe, North Africa, and the Eastern Front.

Heinkel He 162

- **Role**: Jet-powered fighter
- **First Flight**: December 6, 1944
- **Service Entry**: 1945
- **Key Features**: Single-engine, swept-wing design, intended as a cheap, easily produced jet fighter for the Luftwaffe.

Specifications (He 162A-2)

- **Crew**: 1
- **Length**: 29 ft 8 in (9.05 m)
- **Wingspan**: 23 ft 7 in (7.20 m)
- **Height**: 8 ft 6 in (2.60 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 3,171 lb (1,439 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 5,324 lb (2,415 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × BMW 003E-1 turbojet engine, 1,760 lbf thrust

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 562 mph (905 km/h) at sea level
- **Range**: 385 miles (620 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 39,370 ft (12,000 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 4,500 ft/min (22.9 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 2 × 20 mm MG 151/20 cannons
- **Bombs**: None

Operational Use

- **Role**: Intended as an emergency fighter to counter Allied bombing raids.
- **Deployment**: Limited operational use due to late entry into the war and production issues.

Heinkel He 177

- **Role**: Heavy bomber
- **First Flight**: November 19, 1939
- **Service Entry**: 1942
- **Key Features**: Four-engine, long-range bomber, plagued by reliability issues with its coupled engines.

Specifications (He 177A-5)

- **Crew**: 6-7
- **Length**: 72 ft 10 in (22.25 m)
- **Wingspan**: 103 ft 4 in (31.44 m)
- **Height**: 20 ft 8 in (6.30 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 36,597 lb (16,600 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 70,548 lb (32,000 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Daimler-Benz DB 610 A/B engines, 2,950 hp each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 295 mph (475 km/h) at 19,685 ft (6,000 m)
- **Range**: 3,600 miles (5,800 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 26,900 ft (8,200 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 787 ft/min (4 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 1 × 20 mm MG 151/20 cannon in dorsal turret
  - 1 × 13 mm MG 131 machine gun in tail position
  - 2 × 7.92 mm MG 81 machine guns in nose and ventral positions
- **Bombs**:
  - Up to 13,227 lb (6,000 kg) of bombs or Hs 293 guided missiles

Operational Use

- **Role**: Used primarily for long-range bombing missions.
- **Issues**: Engine overheating and mechanical failures limited its effectiveness.

Summary

The Heinkel series encompasses various roles from strategic bombing to cutting-edge jet fighter design. The **He 111** was a workhorse of the Luftwaffe, the **He 162** represented the jet-age ambition, and the **He 177** sought to fulfil the heavy bomber role despite its challenges. Each model played a distinct part in Germany's aerial strategy during World War II.

The Hunting Jet Provost T4

The **Hunting Jet Provost T4** is a British jet-powered trainer aircraft that served with the Royal Air Force (RAF) and other air forces worldwide. It is part of the Jet Provost family, which was widely used for basic and advanced pilot training.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Jet Provost was developed from the earlier piston-engine Percival Provost. The introduction of jet engines necessitated a new design to meet the needs of jet-age pilot training.
- **First Flight of Jet Provost**: The prototype Jet Provost first flew on June 26, 1954.
- **Service Entry of T4**: The T4 variant entered service in 1961.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Jet Provost T4 is a low-wing monoplane with a side-by-side seating arrangement for the instructor and trainee, providing excellent visibility and ease of communication. It features a tricycle landing gear and a pressurized cockpit.
- **Engine**: Powered by a single Armstrong Siddeley Viper turbojet engine.

Specifications (Hunting Jet Provost T4)

- **Crew**: 2 (student and instructor)
- **Length**: 33 ft 8 in (10.26 m)
- **Wingspan**: 35 ft 0 in (10.67 m)
- **Height**: 10 ft 8 in (3.25 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 4,600 lb (2,087 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 7,800 lb (3,538 kg)

- **Powerplant**: 1 × Armstrong Siddeley Viper Mk 200 turbojet, 2,500 lbf (11.12 kN) thrust

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 440 mph (710 km/h)
- **Cruise Speed**: 360 mph (580 km/h)
- **Range**: 700 miles (1,130 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 43,000 ft (13,106 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 4,300 ft/min (21.8 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**: The T4 was not typically armed, as it was designed for training purposes. However, some variants of the Jet Provost could be fitted with light armament for weapons training.
- **Other**: Some versions could carry practice bombs or rocket pods for training missions.

Operational Use

- **Primary Role**: The T4 was used primarily for basic and advanced jet training, providing students with experience in jet aircraft handling, instrument flying, and basic tactical training.
- **Training**: The Jet Provost was known for its reliable performance, simplicity, and forgiving handling characteristics, making it an ideal platform for training new pilots.

Legacy

- **Service Life**: The Jet Provost T4 served with the RAF from 1961 until it was replaced by more advanced training aircraft in the 1990s. Many aircraft were sold to other air forces or to civilian operators.
- **Global Use**: The Jet Provost was exported to several countries and used in various roles, including training and light attack.
- **Surviving Aircraft**: Many Jet Provosts, including T4 variants, are preserved in museums, and some are maintained by private collectors and operated in air shows.

Cultural Impact

- **Training Legacy**: The Jet Provost played a critical role in training several generations of RAF pilots, ensuring they were well-prepared for flying front-line combat aircraft.
- **Recognition**: The aircraft's distinctive design and widespread use have made it a recognizable and respected part of aviation history.

The **Hunting Jet Provost T4** remains an important aircraft in the history of military pilot training, noted for its reliability, performance, and contribution to the development of jet-age aviators. Its legacy continues in the memories of the pilots who trained on it and the aviation enthusiasts who maintain and display these classic aircraft.

The Lockheed Hudson

The Lockheed Hudson was a versatile American aircraft used primarily during World War II, both by the United States and by Allied forces. Designed and built by Lockheed, the Hudson was initially conceived as a civilian transport but was quickly adapted for military use, serving in various roles including reconnaissance, patrol, and bombing.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Hudson was developed from the Lockheed Model 14 Super Electra, a civilian airliner. The military version, known as the Hudson, was adapted for use as a patrol bomber and reconnaissance aircraft.
- **First Flight**: The prototype Hudson first flew on December 10, 1938.
- **Service Entry**: The Hudson entered service with the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1939 and was soon adopted by other Allied nations.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Hudson was a twin-engine monoplane with a conventional design, featuring a low-wing configuration and a retractable undercarriage. It had a fuselage designed for both passenger and cargo use.
- **Construction**: The aircraft was constructed primarily of metal, with a design that incorporated the latest aerodynamic features of the time.
- **Engine**: The Hudson was powered by two Pratt & Whitney R-1830 Twin Wasp radial engines.

Variants

1. **Hudson I**: The initial production version for the RAF, equipped with eight .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns and capable of carrying bombs.
2. **Hudson II**: Featured improved engines and increased performance.
3. **Hudson III**: Further improvements in armament and avionics.

4. **Hudson IV**: Equipped with enhanced navigation and communication systems.

Specifications (Hudson III)

- **Crew**: 4 (pilot, co-pilot, navigator, and radio operator)
- **Length**: 55 ft 3 in (16.85 m)
- **Wingspan**: 73 ft 0 in (22.25 m)
- **Height**: 15 ft 3 in (4.65 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 15,500 lb (7,030 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 24,000 lb (10,886 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Pratt & Whitney R-1830-64 radial engines, 1,200 hp each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 275 mph (443 km/h)
- **Range**: 1,100 miles (1,770 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 24,000 ft (7,315 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,100 ft/min (5.6 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 1 × .50 in (12.7 mm) Browning machine gun in the nose
  - 2 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns in the rear turret
- **Bombs**:
  - Up to 4 × 500 lb (227 kg) bombs or 8 × 100 lb (45 kg) bombs
  - Some versions were equipped with depth charges for anti-submarine warfare

Operational Use

- **Anti-Submarine Warfare**: The Hudson was particularly effective in anti-submarine roles, patrolling the Atlantic and other naval theaters to protect Allied shipping from German U-boats.
- **Reconnaissance**: The aircraft was used for long-range reconnaissance missions, providing valuable intelligence and surveillance over vast areas.
- **Transport and Bombing**: The Hudson also served in transport roles and as a light bomber in various theaters, including the Mediterranean and the Pacific.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The Lockheed Hudson played a significant role in the early years of World War II, contributing to the Allied efforts through its versatility and effectiveness in multiple roles.
- **Service Life**: The Hudson remained in service with various Allied air forces throughout the war and was eventually phased out as more advanced aircraft became available.
- **Preservation**: A number of Hudsons have been preserved in museums and private collections, highlighting the aircraft's importance in aviation history and its contributions to the war effort.

The Lockheed Hudson is remembered for its adaptability and the critical roles it played during World War II. Its transition from a civilian airliner to a key military aircraft underscores the innovative approaches taken to meet the demands of wartime aviation.

The Lockheed P-38F Lightning

The P-38F Lightning was an American fighter aircraft used during World War II. It was an evolution of the P-38 Lightning series, known for its distinctive twin-boom configuration and central nacelle. Here's a detailed overview of the P-38F:

Overview:

- **Role:** Fighter aircraft
- **Manufacturer:** Lockheed
- **Introduced:** 1941
- **Primary Users:** United States Army Air Forces (USAAF), Allied forces

Specifications:

- **Crew:** 1 (pilot)
- **Length:** 37 feet 10 inches (11.53 meters)
- **Wingspan:** 52 feet 0 inches (15.85 meters)
- **Height:** 14 feet 9 inches (4.50 meters)
- **Wing Area:** 300 square feet (27.87 square meters)

Performance:

- **Maximum Speed:** Approximately 396 mph (637 km/h) at 25,000 feet (7,620 meters)
- **Cruise Speed:** Around 290 mph (467 km/h)
- **Range:** About 1,000 miles (1,609 km) with external fuel tanks
- **Service Ceiling:** Approximately 42,000 feet (12,800 meters)

Powerplant:

- **Engines:** 2 × Allison V-1710-47 or -49 liquid-cooled inline engines
- **Horsepower:** 1,425 hp (1,063 kW) each
- **Propellers:** 2 × Hamilton Standard 3-bladed propellers

Armament:

- **Machine Guns:** 4 × .50 calibre M2 Browning machine guns mounted in the nose.
- **Cannons:** None in the P-38F; later versions included 20 mm or 37 mm cannons
- **Bombs:** Capability to carry up to 1,000 pounds (454 kg) of bombs or other ordnance under the wings

Design Features:

- **Configuration:** Twin-boom with a central nacelle that houses the cockpit and armament
- **Wing Layout:** Straight wings with an inverted gull design
- **Landing Gear:** Retractable, with a tricycle configuration

Operational Use:

- **Roles:** The P-38F was used for various roles including air superiority, interception, and ground attack missions. Its high speed and long range made it effective for both long-range escort missions and tactical operations.
- **Notable Achievements:** The P-38F was used extensively in the Pacific Theatre and Europe. It was known for its versatility and was favoured by many pilots for its performance and armament.

Legacy:

The P-38 Lightning series, including the P-38F, was one of the most distinctive and successful American fighters of WWII. Its design influenced post-war aircraft and it remains a celebrated aircraft among aviation enthusiasts and historians. The Lightning's unique twin-boom design and its effectiveness in combat have made it a memorable part of aviation history.

The Miles Magister

The **Miles Magister**, also known as the Miles M.14 Magister, was a British single-engine monoplane designed for primary flight training. It played a significant role in training RAF pilots before and during World War II.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Miles Magister was developed by Miles Aircraft Limited to meet the Air Ministry's requirements for an ab initio trainer. It was based on the civilian Miles Hawk and was designed to be an affordable, easy-to-fly aircraft that could introduce new pilots to monoplane flying characteristics.
- **First Flight**: The prototype Magister first flew in March 1937.
- **Service Entry**: The Magister entered service with the RAF in 1937.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Magister was a low-wing monoplane with fixed, spatted main landing gear and a tailwheel. It featured an open cockpit for the pilot and instructor.
- **Construction**: The aircraft was primarily constructed of wood, with a plywood-covered fuselage and fabric-covered wings.
- **Engine**: The Magister was powered by a de Havilland Gipsy Major engine, an inverted four-cylinder air-cooled engine.

Specifications (Miles Magister)

- **Crew**: 2 (pilot and instructor)
- **Length**: 25 ft 6 in (7.77 m)
- **Wingspan**: 33 ft 10 in (10.31 m)
- **Height**: 7 ft 6 in (2.29 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 1,235 lb (560 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 1,900 lb (860 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × de Havilland Gipsy Major I inline piston engine, 130 hp

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 133 mph (214 km/h) at 1,000 ft (305 m)
- **Range**: 350 miles (563 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 13,400 ft (4,085 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 670 ft/min (3.4 m/s)

Operational Use

- **Training Role**: The Magister was used primarily for basic flight training. It provided trainee pilots with their first experience of flying a monoplane, as opposed to the biplanes that had been common in earlier training aircraft. Its handling characteristics made it an excellent platform for teaching basic airmanship and aerobatics.
- **Wide Use**: The Magister was used by the RAF and by many Commonwealth and Allied air forces, including those of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa. It was also used by various European air forces.
- **Combat Use**: While the Magister was not designed for combat, it was occasionally used in secondary roles such as communications and liaison during the war.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The Miles Magister was a key element in the RAF's training program, helping to prepare thousands of pilots for service during World War II. Its role in the early stages of pilot training made it a crucial asset in building the aircrew strength required for the war effort.
- **Production**: Approximately 1,293 Magisters were built between 1937 and 1941.
- **Preservation**: Several Magisters have been preserved and are on display in aviation museums, and some are still flown by private collectors and heritage flight organizations. These preserved aircraft serve as a testament to the important role the Magister played in pilot training during its service.

The Miles Magister remains an iconic training aircraft, remembered for its contribution to the development of RAF and Allied pilots during a critical period in aviation history. Its legacy continues to be honoured by aviation enthusiasts and historians.

The Miles Martinet Mk I

The Miles Martinet Mk I was a British aircraft designed and used primarily during World War II for training and target-towing roles. Developed by the Miles Aircraft company, the Martinet was a key component in the training of anti-aircraft gunners and other military personnel.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Miles Martinet was developed to meet the need for a target-towing aircraft that could be used to simulate aerial targets for anti-aircraft training. It was designed to be a robust and reliable platform capable of withstanding the rigors of target towing.
- **First Flight**: The prototype (a modified Miles M.9) first flew on May 10, 1941.
- **Service Entry**: The Martinet entered service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) in 1942.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Martinet was a low-wing monoplane with a conventional tailwheel undercarriage. It was designed with a simple and rugged structure to handle the stresses of target towing.
- **Construction**: The aircraft was built with a metal frame covered in fabric, which was typical for the era. Its design emphasized durability and ease of maintenance.
- **Engine**: The Martinet was powered by a single Rolls-Royce Merlin III or Merlin 25 V12 engine, providing good performance for its intended roles.

Variants

1. **Martinet Mk I**: The initial production version, used primarily for target towing. It featured a distinctive tail assembly with a large tailplane and a streamlined fuselage.
2. **Martinet Mk II**: Improved version with further refinements and updates to systems and equipment.

Specifications (Martinet Mk I)

- **Crew**: 2 (pilot and rear seat observer)
- **Length**: 30 ft 10 in (9.40 m)
- **Wingspan**: 43 ft 0 in (13.11 m)
- **Height**: 11 ft 5 in (3.48 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 5,500 lb (2,495 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 7,500 lb (3,402 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Rolls-Royce Merlin III V12 engine, 1,030 hp

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 270 mph (434 km/h)
- **Range**: 500 miles (805 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 22,000 ft (6,706 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,200 ft/min (6.1 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - The Martinet was not equipped with offensive armament; its role was focused on target towing and training.
- **Bombs/Rockets**:
  - Not designed for carrying bombs or rockets.

Operational Use

- **Target Towing**: The primary role of the Miles Martinet was to tow target sleeves for anti-aircraft gunnery practice. It was used extensively to provide realistic training scenarios for gunners, helping them improve accuracy and effectiveness in real combat situations.
- **Training**: The Martinet played a crucial role in training programs, helping to prepare personnel for the challenges of anti-aircraft warfare and ensuring that Allied forces could effectively engage enemy aircraft.

Legacy

- **Training Contributions**: The Miles Martinet is remembered for its significant contributions to training and target towing during World War II. Its robust design and effectiveness in its role made it an important tool for preparing Allied forces for combat.
- **Preservation**: Several Martinet aircraft have been preserved and can be seen in museums and private collections, highlighting the aircraft's role in wartime training and its place in aviation history.

The Miles Martinet Mk I represents an important aspect of military aviation during World War II, emphasizing the need for effective training tools to ensure the success of Allied air defences. Its role in target towing and training was crucial in preparing gunners and other personnel for the challenges of wartime operations.

The Miles Queen Martinet

The **Miles Queen Martinet** was a British aircraft designed for training and target-towing during World War II. It was developed by Miles Aircraft to replace the earlier Martinet, incorporating improvements to enhance its performance and usability in training roles.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Queen Martinet was developed as an advanced version of the earlier Miles Martinet, aiming to provide better performance and efficiency for target-towing and training tasks. The design sought to improve upon the Martinet's capabilities by incorporating more modern features and refinements.
- **First Flight**: The prototype of the Queen Martinet first flew in 1943.
- **Service Entry**: The Queen Martinet entered service in 1944, during the later stages of World War II.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Queen Martinet was a low-wing monoplane with a conventional tailwheel undercarriage. It featured a streamlined design aimed at better performance and easier handling.
- **Construction**: Like its predecessor, the Queen Martinet used a metal frame covered in fabric, ensuring durability and ease of maintenance.
- **Engine**: The aircraft was powered by a single Rolls-Royce Merlin engine, providing improved power and performance over the earlier Martinet models.

Specifications (Miles Queen Martinet)

- **Crew**: 2 (pilot and rear seat observer)

- **Length**: 30 ft 10 in (9.40 m)
- **Wingspan**: 43 ft 0 in (13.11 m)
- **Height**: 11 ft 5 in (3.48 m)
- **Empty Weight**: Approximately 5,500 lb (2,495 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: Approximately 7,500 lb (3,402 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Rolls-Royce Merlin V12 engine, around 1,030 hp

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: Around 270 mph (434 km/h)
- **Range**: Approximately 500 miles (805 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 22,000 ft (6,706 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: Approximately 1,200 ft/min (6.1 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - The Queen Martinet was not equipped with offensive armament, as its primary role was target towing and training.
- **Bombs/Rockets**:
  - Not designed for carrying bombs or rockets.

Operational Use

- **Target Towing**: The Queen Martinet was used primarily for towing target sleeves for anti-aircraft gunnery practice, similar to its predecessor. It played a crucial role in providing realistic training scenarios for gunners and other military personnel.
- **Training**: The aircraft was utilized in various training roles, including familiarizing pilots with target-towing operations and contributing to overall training effectiveness.

Legacy

- **Training Contributions**: The Miles Queen Martinet was an important training tool during World War II, contributing to the preparation of Allied forces for combat. Its robust design and improved performance made it an effective platform for training exercises.
- **Preservation**: Like many wartime aircraft, the Queen Martinet's legacy is primarily preserved through historical records and a few surviving examples in museums and private collections.

The Miles Queen Martinet represents a refinement of the target-towing aircraft design, reflecting advancements in training tools during the latter stages of World War II. Its role in enhancing gunnery training and supporting military preparedness underscores its significance in wartime aviation history.

The North American P-51 Mustang

The North American P-51 Mustang is one of the most iconic and effective fighters of World War II. Designed and built by North American Aviation, the P-51 Mustang played a crucial role in achieving air superiority for the Allies and is celebrated for its performance and versatility.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The P-51 Mustang was initially developed to meet a British Air Ministry requirement for a new fighter aircraft. North American Aviation, led by designer Raymond Loewy, produced the prototype in record time, and the aircraft was first flown in October 1940.
- **First Flight**: The prototype, designated NA-73X, first flew on October 26, 1940.
- **Service Entry**: The P-51 Mustang entered service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) in 1941 under the designation "Mustang Mk I". It was later adopted by the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) and became a key asset in various theaters of the war.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Mustang was a low-wing, single-engine monoplane with a sleek and aerodynamic design. It featured a retractable undercarriage and a long, streamlined fuselage.

- **Construction**: The P-51 was built primarily from metal, with a design that emphasized strength and speed. Its laminar-flow wing was a notable feature, contributing to its excellent performance at high speeds.
- **Engine**: The P-51 originally used the Allison V-1710 engine, but the introduction of the Rolls-Royce Merlin engine significantly improved its performance.

Variants

1. **P-51A**: The initial production version with an Allison V-1710 engine. It had limited high-altitude performance.
2. **P-51B/C**: The first models to use the Rolls-Royce Merlin engine, which greatly enhanced performance. The P-51B featured a "razorback" canopy, while the P-51C was similar but built under license by the Dallas Division of North American.
3. **P-51D**: The most famous and widely produced variant, with a "bubble" canopy that improved visibility. It also featured increased armament and better equipment.
4. **P-51K**: A variant like the P-51D but equipped with a different propeller and minor modifications.

Specifications (P-51D)

- **Crew**: 1
- **Length**: 32 ft 3 in (9.83 m)
- **Wingspan**: 37 ft 0 in (11.28 m)
- **Height**: 13 ft 8 in (4.17 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 7,635 lb (3,463 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 12,100 lb (5,500 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Rolls-Royce Merlin V-1650-7 V12 engine, 1,490 hp

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 437 mph (703 km/h) at 25,000 ft (7,620 m)
- **Range**: 1,000 miles (1,609 km) with drop tanks
- **Service Ceiling**: 41,900 ft (12,800 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 3,500 ft/min (17.8 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 6 × .50 in (12.7 mm) M2 Browning machine guns (in the wings)
- **Bombs/Rockets**:
  - Up to 2,000 lb (907 kg) of bombs or rockets for ground attack roles

Operational Use

- **Air Superiority**: The P-51 Mustang was instrumental in achieving and maintaining air superiority over Europe. It provided long-range escort for Allied bombers, significantly reducing losses from German fighter attacks.
- **Ground Attack**: The Mustang was also used effectively in ground attack roles, attacking enemy infrastructure, vehicles, and troops.

- **Global Service**: The P-51 saw service in various theatres of the war, including Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Pacific. It was also used by several Allied air forces beyond the USAAF, including the RAF, RCAF, and Australian Air Force.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The P-51 Mustang is credited with being one of the best fighters of World War II. Its combination of speed, range, and firepower made it a formidable opponent and a key asset in the Allied victory.
- **Post-War Use**: After World War II, the Mustang was used by various air forces around the world and saw service in conflicts such as the Korean War.
- **Preservation**: Numerous P-51 Mustangs have been preserved and restored, and they remain popular in air shows and museums. The aircraft is celebrated for its design, performance, and historical significance.

The North American P-51 Mustang is remembered as a symbol of Allied air power during World War II, reflecting the achievements of American aviation engineering and its impact on the outcome of the war.

The P-38F Lightning

The P-38F Lightning was an American fighter aircraft used during World War II. It was an evolution of the P-38 Lightning series, known for its distinctive twin-boom configuration and central nacelle. Here's a detailed overview of the P-38F:

Overview:

- **Role:** Fighter aircraft
- **Manufacturer:** Lockheed
- **Introduced:** 1941
- **Primary Users:** United States Army Air Forces (USAAF), Allied forces

Specifications:

- **Crew:** 1 (pilot)
- **Length:** 37 feet 10 inches (11.53 meters)
- **Wingspan:** 52 feet 0 inches (15.85 meters)
- **Height:** 14 feet 9 inches (4.50 meters)
- **Wing Area:** 300 square feet (27.87 square meters)

Performance:

- **Maximum Speed:** Approximately 396 mph (637 km/h) at 25,000 feet (7,620 meters)
- **Cruise Speed:** Around 290 mph (467 km/h)
- **Range:** About 1,000 miles (1,609 km) with external fuel tanks
- **Service Ceiling:** Approximately 42,000 feet (12,800 meters)

Powerplant:

- **Engines:** 2 × Allison V-1710-47 or -49 liquid-cooled inline engines
- **Horsepower:** 1,425 hp (1,063 kW) each
- **Propellers:** 2 × Hamilton Standard 3-bladed propellers

Armament:

- **Machine Guns:** 4 × .50 calibre M2 Browning machine guns mounted in the nose.
- **Cannons:** None in the P-38F; later versions included 20 mm or 37 mm cannons
- **Bombs:** Capability to carry up to 1,000 pounds (454 kg) of bombs or other ordnance under the wings

Design Features:

- **Configuration:** Twin-boom with a central nacelle that houses the cockpit and armament
- **Wing Layout:** Straight wings with an inverted gull design
- **Landing Gear:** Retractable, with a tricycle configuration

Operational Use:

- **Roles:** The P-38F was used for various roles including air superiority, interception, and ground attack missions. Its high speed and long range made it effective for both long-range escort missions and tactical operations.
- **Notable Achievements:** The P-38F was used extensively in the Pacific Theatre and Europe. It was known for its versatility and was favoured by many pilots for its performance and armament.

Legacy:

The P-38 Lightning series, including the P-38F, was one of the most distinctive and successful American fighters of WWII. Its design influenced post-war aircraft and it remains a celebrated aircraft among aviation enthusiasts and historians. The Lightning's unique twin-boom design and its effectiveness in combat have made it a memorable part of aviation history.

The Percival Proctor Mk II

The **Percival Proctor** was a British radio trainer and communications aircraft developed by Percival Aircraft during the late 1930s. It served prominently during World War II, providing essential training and liaison services.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Percival Proctor was developed from the Percival Vega Gull, a pre-war civilian touring aircraft. The Proctor was specifically designed to meet the RAF's requirements for a radio trainer and communications aircraft.
- **First Flight**: The prototype Proctor first flew on October 8, 1939.
- **Service Entry**: The Proctor entered service with the RAF in 1939.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Proctor was a low-wing monoplane with a fixed undercarriage and tailwheel. It had a wooden construction with a fabric-covered fuselage and wings.
- **Engine**: The Proctor Mk II was powered by a single de Havilland Gipsy Queen II engine.

Specifications (Percival Proctor Mk II)

- **Crew**: 2-3 (pilot and radio operator or passengers)
- **Length**: 30 ft 9 in (9.37 m)
- **Wingspan**: 39 ft 4 in (12.00 m)
- **Height**: 8 ft 11 in (2.72 m)

- **Empty Weight**: 2,000 lb (907 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 2,900 lb (1,315 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × de Havilland Gipsy Queen II inline piston engine, 210 hp (157 kW)

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 155 mph (249 km/h) at sea level
- **Range**: 600 miles (965 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 15,000 ft (4,572 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 850 ft/min (4.3 m/s)

Operational Use

- **Radio Training**: The primary role of the Proctor Mk II was as a radio trainer. It was equipped with the necessary radio and navigation equipment to train operators and navigators in radio communication.
- **Communications and Liaison**: The Proctor was also used for communication and liaison duties, transporting personnel and important documents between bases.
- **Civilian Use**: After the war, many Proctors were sold to civilian operators and used for private flying, air taxi services, and flight training.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The Proctor played a vital role in training radio operators and navigators during World War II, ensuring effective communication and coordination within the RAF.
- **Production**: Approximately 1,143 Proctors were built, including all variants.
- **Preservation**: Several Proctors have been preserved and are on display in museums or maintained by private collectors. These aircraft continue to be flown at airshows and events, showcasing their historical significance.

The **Percival Proctor Mk II** remains an important part of aviation history, particularly for its contributions to training and communication during a critical period in military aviation. Its robust design and versatility allowed it to serve effectively in various roles both during and after the war.

The Republic P47 Thunderbolt

The **Republic P-47 Thunderbolt** was one of the most important and powerful fighter aircraft of World War II. Known for its rugged construction, heavy armament, and versatility, the P-47 served in various roles including bomber escort, ground attack, and air superiority missions.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The P-47 was designed by Alexander Kartveli of Republic Aviation in response to a 1939 United States Army Air Corps (USAAC) requirement for a new fighter.
- **First Flight**: May 6, 1941.
- **Service Entry**: 1942 with the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF).

Design

- **Configuration**: The P-47 is a single-engine, low-wing monoplane with a robust airframe. It featured a distinctive large, round fuselage to accommodate its powerful engine and turbo-supercharger.
- **Engine**: Powered by a Pratt & Whitney R-2800 Double Wasp, an 18-cylinder, air-cooled radial engine.

Specifications (P-47D Thunderbolt)

- **Crew**: 1
- **Length**: 36 ft 2 in (11.02 m)
- **Wingspan**: 40 ft 9 in (12.42 m)
- **Height**: 14 ft 8 in (4.47 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 10,000 lb (4,536 kg)
- **Max Takeoff Weight**: 17,500 lb (7,938 kg)

- **Powerplant**: 1 × Pratt & Whitney R-2800-59 Double Wasp radial engine, 2,535 hp (1,890 kW)

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 433 mph (697 km/h) at 30,000 ft (9,145 m)
- **Range**: 800 miles (1,290 km) with drop tanks
- **Service Ceiling**: 43,000 ft (13,100 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 2,780 ft/min (14.1 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 8 × 0.50 in (12.7 mm) M2 Browning machine guns, 425 rounds per gun
- **Bombs/Rockets**:
  - Up to 2,500 lb (1,134 kg) of bombs or ten 5 in (127 mm) rockets

Operational Use

- **Roles**: The P-47 was used primarily as a high-altitude escort fighter, a low-altitude ground attack aircraft, and for air-to-air combat.
- **Theaters**: The P-47 saw extensive service in both the European and Pacific theaters of World War II.
- **Ground Attack**: Its heavy armament and ability to carry a significant bomb load made it highly effective in ground attack roles, earning it the nickname "Jug" for its juggernaut-like capabilities.

Legacy

- **Service Life**: The P-47 continued to serve in various air forces after World War II, including in the National Guard of the United States and several South American air forces.
- **Production**: Over 15,000 P-47s were built, making it one of the most produced fighter aircraft in history.
- **Surviving Aircraft**: Many P-47s are preserved in museums and private collections worldwide, with some still flying at air shows and historical events.

Cultural Impact

- **Reputation**: The P-47 was known for its durability and survivability in combat. It could absorb significant damage and still return home, a testament to its rugged design.
- **Recognition**: The P-47 remains one of the most iconic American fighter aircraft of World War II, celebrated for its contribution to the Allied victory and its role in pioneering ground-attack tactics.

Notable Achievements

- **Escort Missions**: The P-47 excelled in bomber escort missions, protecting B-17 and B-24 bombers during their raids over Europe.
- **Ground Support**: Its effectiveness in ground support and interdiction missions significantly disrupted German logistics and troop movements, contributing to the success of Allied ground operations.

The **Republic P-47 Thunderbolt** is remembered as a versatile and formidable fighter of World War II, renowned for its power, resilience, and effectiveness in multiple combat roles. Its contributions to the war effort and its lasting legacy in aviation history highlight its significance as one of the premier fighter aircraft of its time.

The Short 184

The **Short 184** was a British reconnaissance, bombing, and torpedo-carrying seaplane, developed by **Short Brothers** during World War I. It became notable for being the first aircraft to successfully sink a ship using an aerial torpedo, marking a significant milestone in naval aviation.

Development and History

- **Designer**: Horace Short
- **First Flight**: 1915
- **Service Entry**: 1915, with the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS)

The Short 184 was designed as a two-seat seaplane capable of performing reconnaissance missions and carrying bombs or torpedoes. It was primarily used by the British Royal Navy during World War I.

Specifications

- **Crew**: 2 (pilot and observer)
- **Length**: 39 ft 6 in (12.04 m)
- **Wingspan**: 63 ft 6 in (19.35 m)
- **Height**: 12 ft 1 in (3.68 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 3,115 lb (1,413 kg)
- **Max Takeoff Weight**: 5,385 lb (2,443 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Sunbeam Nubian or Rolls-Royce Eagle inline piston engine, 225 hp (168 kW)

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 88 mph (142 km/h) at sea level
- **Range**: 340 miles (547 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 8,400 ft (2,560 m)

Armament

- **Torpedo**: 1 × 14-inch (356 mm) torpedo (in later variants)
- **Bombs**: Could carry up to 520 lb (240 kg) of bombs for reconnaissance and bombing missions
- **Defensive Armament**: 1 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Lewis gun mounted in the rear cockpit for the observer

Operational Use

- **Reconnaissance**: The Short 184's primary role was reconnaissance, where it could scout enemy fleets or coastlines for naval operations.
- **Torpedo Bomber**: It gained historical significance as the first aircraft to sink a ship using a torpedo. In August 1915, a Short 184 launched from the seaplane carrier HMS *Ben-my-Chree* successfully sank a Turkish vessel during the Gallipoli campaign.
- **Naval Support**: The aircraft was deployed from seaplane carriers and sometimes directly from naval ships, extending the reconnaissance and striking capabilities of the Royal Navy.

Legacy

- **First Torpedo Attack**: The Short 184’s sinking of a ship with an aerial torpedo marked the first successful use of air-launched torpedoes in warfare.
- **Versatility**: The aircraft's ability to carry either bombs or torpedoes made it one of the first true multi-role aircraft in naval aviation.

Though technologically modest by later standards, the **Short 184** played a crucial role during its time, pioneering the use of torpedoes in aerial combat and contributing to the development of naval aviation during World War I.

The Short Sunderland

The **Short Sunderland** was one of the most iconic British flying boats of World War II, designed and built by the **Short Brothers**. It was used primarily by the **Royal Air Force Coastal Command** for long-range maritime reconnaissance, anti-submarine warfare, and convoy escort duties. The Sunderland earned a fearsome reputation among German U-boat crews and was one of the most capable flying boats of the war.

Key Features and Development

- **Role**: Maritime patrol, reconnaissance, and anti-submarine flying boat
- **Manufacturer**: Short Brothers
- **First Flight**: 16 October 1937
- **Introduced**: 1938
- **Retired**: 1967 (by the Royal New Zealand Air Force)

The **Short Sunderland** was a large, four-engine flying boat designed to operate from water, with a range and endurance suited to long patrol missions over the sea. The aircraft was based on the earlier **Short Empire** flying boats but was heavily modified for military operations, with an emphasis on self-defence and anti-submarine capabilities.

Design and Features

- **Hull Design**: As a flying boat, the Sunderland had a watertight fuselage (hull) that allowed it to land and take off from water. Its robust design helped it operate in rough seas, often under challenging conditions.
- **Self-Defence Armament**: The Sunderland was heavily armed for a reconnaissance aircraft, with multiple machine guns and a large bomb load, allowing it to defend itself against enemy aircraft and attack submarines.
- **Radar and ASV**: Equipped with advanced radar (Air-to-Surface Vessel, or ASV) later in the war, which significantly enhanced its ability to detect submarines from the air.

Specifications (Short Sunderland Mark III)

- **Crew**: 10 to 11 (depending on mission requirements)
- **Length**: 85 ft 4 in (26 m)
- **Wingspan**: 112 ft 9 in (34.4 m)
- **Height**: 32 ft 10 in (10 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 37,500 lb (17,010 kg)
- **Max Take-off Weight**: 58,000 lb (26,310 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 4 × **Bristol Pegasus XVIII** radial engines, each producing 1,065 hp (794 kW)

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 210 mph (338 km/h)
- **Cruise Speed**: 178 mph (286 km/h)
- **Range**: 1,780 miles (2,865 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 16,400 ft (5,000 m)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 2 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns in the nose turret
  - 2 × .303 in Browning machine guns in the tail turret
  - 4 × .303 in Browning machine guns in waist positions
- **Bombs/Depth Charges**: Up to 2,000 lb (910 kg) of bombs, depth charges, or mines in an internal bomb bay located under the wings.

Roles and Combat History

The **Sunderland** became an essential tool for **RAF Coastal Command** in its fight against German U-boats in the **Battle of the Atlantic**. It patrolled vast stretches of ocean, providing vital protection for Allied shipping convoys.

- **Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW)**: Its radar allowed it to detect and attack submarines, while depth charges and bombs made it a potent threat to U-boats. Sunderland crews were responsible for sinking several German submarines throughout the war.
- **Convoy Escort**: The Sunderland often escorted convoys across the Atlantic, where its long range allowed it to stay airborne for many hours, deterring enemy aircraft and submarines.
- **Search and Rescue**: Post-war, the Sunderland was often used in air-sea rescue missions, particularly in the search for downed pilots or damaged ships.

Notable Variants

1. **Sunderland Mk I**: The first production model, introduced in 1938.
2. **Sunderland Mk II**: Featured improved defensive armament and other small modifications.

3. **Sunderland Mk III**: The most widely produced and most famous variant, with many technical improvements, including better radar and more reliable engines.
4. **Sunderland Mk V**: The final wartime version, introduced later in the war, featuring American-made **Pratt & Whitney** engines for better performance.

Nickname and Legacy

The Sunderland was nicknamed the "**Flying Porcupine**" by German forces due to its heavy defensive armament. Despite its size and relatively slow speed, it was highly capable of defending itself, making it a tough target for enemy aircraft.

After the war, the Sunderland continued to serve in various air forces, including the RAF, Royal Australian Air Force, and Royal New Zealand Air Force, with some versions adapted for civilian transport roles.

Conclusion

The **Short Sunderland** was one of the most effective and versatile flying boats of World War II. Its ability to carry out long-range patrols, its heavy armament, and its advanced radar systems made it a formidable weapon in the Allied campaign against German U-boats. Its legacy is cemented as one of the key contributors to the success of the **Battle of the Atlantic** and as an enduring symbol of British maritime aviation.

The Sopwith Baby Seaplane

The Sopwith Baby was a British naval seaplane designed during World War I. It was a development of the earlier Sopwith Scout and aimed to provide the Royal Navy with a capable reconnaissance aircraft. Here's an overview of its specifications and characteristics:

Overview:

- **Role:** Reconnaissance seaplane
- **Manufacturer:** Sopwith Aviation Company
- **Introduced:** 1916

Specifications:

- **Crew:** 1 (pilot)
- **Length:** Approximately 25 feet 2 inches (7.67 meters)
- **Wingspan:** About 27 feet 6 inches (8.38 meters)
- **Height:** Roughly 11 feet (3.35 meters)
- **Wing Area:** Around 215 square feet (20 square meters)

Performance:

- **Maximum Speed:** Approximately 80 mph (129 km/h)
- **Range:** About 200 miles (320 km)
- **Service Ceiling:** Around 10,000 feet (3,048 meters)

Powerplant:

- **Engine:** 1 × 80 hp (60 kW) Gnome Monosoupape rotary engine
- **Propeller:** Single wooden propeller

Armament:

- **Guns:** Typically, none; the Baby was primarily used for reconnaissance rather than combat. Some variants might have carried small arms or light machine guns, but this was not common.

Design:

- **Construction:** Wooden frame with fabric covering
- **Fuselage:** Single-seat cockpit with an open cockpit design
- **Wings:** Biplane configuration with a top and bottom wing
- **Landing Gear:** Floatplane configuration with two large, single-step floats

Operational Use:

The Sopwith Baby was used for various tasks including naval reconnaissance, spotting for ships, and sometimes as a trainer. It was designed to be launched from and land on water, making it suitable for operations at sea.

While the Sopwith Baby didn't achieve the fame of some other Sopwith designs like the Camel, it played a role in the development of naval aviation during the early years of WWI. Its design influenced later seaplanes and floatplanes used by the Royal Navy.

The SS 42A Sea Scout Airship

The **SS 42A Sea Scout Airship** was part of the **Sea Scout** class of non-rigid airships, developed by the United Kingdom during World War I for anti-submarine and reconnaissance duties. These airships, or "blimps," were designed to patrol coastal waters, detecting and reporting enemy submarines, and guiding naval vessels.

Overview of the Sea Scout Class

- **Role**: Anti-submarine warfare, reconnaissance, and naval patrols
- **Introduced**: 1915
- **Used By**: Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS)

The **Sea Scout** class was developed in response to the increasing threat posed by German U-boats in British waters. These airships provided an effective method for patrolling large areas of the sea, offering extended visibility and range compared to surface ships. They were relatively cheap and quick to produce, and as non-rigid airships, they were essentially balloons with gondolas suspended below.

Key Features and Specifications of the SS 42A (Typical of Sea Scout Airships)

- **Crew**: 2-3 personnel (pilot and observer)
- **Length**: Approximately 143 ft (43.6 m)
- **Envelope Volume**: Around 60,000 cubic feet (1,700 m^3)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × 75 hp Rolls-Royce Hawk or Renault engine, used to power a single propeller.
- **Maximum Speed**: 45-50 mph (72-80 km/h)
- **Endurance**: Around 12-16 hours of patrol time
- **Operational Altitude**: 1,000 to 2,000 ft (300 to 600 m)

Design and Operation

- **Envelope**: The airship consisted of a hydrogen-filled, non-rigid balloon (envelope) with a gondola or car suspended beneath.
- **Gondola**: Contained the engine, fuel tanks, and crew accommodations.
- **Armament**: Typically carried light bombs (often 100 lb bombs) or depth charges to engage submarines.
- **Navigation Equipment**: Included basic instruments, such as a compass, altimeter, and radio equipment for communication with naval vessels.

Role in Anti-Submarine Warfare

The SS class airships, including the SS 42A, were employed mainly for coastal and channel patrols. They were ideal for spotting submarines from above, thanks to their vantage point and slow cruising speed, which allowed them to cover large areas efficiently. Their primary method of attacking U-boats was to radio the submarine's location to nearby ships or, in some cases, drop bombs or depth charges if conditions allowed for an attack.

Variants

The **SS (Sea Scout)** class had several variants, including the SSZ (Sea Scout Zero) and SST (Sea Scout Twin), which were slightly improved versions. The SS 42A was a typical airship of the original SS series.

Legacy

The **Sea Scout airships**, though not as famous as their larger Zeppelin counterparts, played a vital role in early anti-submarine warfare. They were part of the Royal Navy’s evolving strategy to counter the U-boat threat in World War I. The **SS 42A** and its sister ships contributed to safeguarding British shipping lanes by detecting and deterring enemy submarines, helping to reduce the effectiveness of the U-boat campaign. Their use demonstrated the potential of lighter-than-air craft in military applications.

The Supermarine Spitfire

The Supermarine Spitfire is one of the most iconic British fighter aircraft of World War II. Designed by R.J. Mitchell and produced by the Supermarine company, it played a crucial role in the Battle of Britain and other key air campaigns throughout the war.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Spitfire was developed in response to an Air Ministry specification for a new fighter aircraft. It was an evolution of Mitchell's earlier designs, particularly the Supermarine Type 224.
- **First Flight**: The prototype (K5054) first flew on March 5, 1936.
- **Service Entry**: The Spitfire entered service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) in 1938.

Variants

The Spitfire had numerous variants, each with improvements in performance, armament, and role adaptation. Some notable variants include:

1. **Spitfire Mk I**: The initial production version used during the Battle of Britain.
2. **Spitfire Mk V**: One of the most produced variants, equipped with a more powerful Merlin engine and improved armament.
3. **Spitfire Mk IX**: Developed to counter the German Fw 190, featuring the Merlin 61 engine with a two-stage supercharger.
4. **Spitfire Mk XIV**: Equipped with the more powerful Rolls-Royce Griffon engine, offering superior performance at higher altitudes.
5. **Seafire**: A naval variant designed for carrier operations.

Specifications (Spitfire Mk IX)

- **Crew**: 1
- **Length**: 31 ft 3 in (9.53 m)

- **Wingspan**: 36 ft 10 in (11.23 m)
- **Height**: 11 ft 5 in (3.48 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 5,800 lb (2,631 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 7,500 lb (3,402 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Rolls-Royce Merlin 61 V-12 engine, 1,720 hp

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 408 mph (657 km/h) at 25,000 ft (7,620 m)
- **Range**: 434 miles (698 km) with a 85-gallon drop tank
- **Service Ceiling**: 43,000 ft (13,106 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 4,850 ft/min (24.6 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 2 × 20 mm Hispano Mk II cannons
  - 4 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns
- **Bombs**:
  - Capability to carry up to 500 lb (230 kg) of bombs (typically two 250 lb bombs under the wings)

Operational Use

- **Battle of Britain**: The Spitfire, alongside the Hawker Hurricane, was crucial in defending the UK against German Luftwaffe attacks during the Battle of Britain in 1940.
- **Versatility**: Throughout the war, the Spitfire served in various roles, including fighter, interceptor, reconnaissance, and ground-attack missions.
- **Global Service**: The Spitfire was used by numerous Allied air forces and saw combat in Europe, the Mediterranean, Africa, and the Pacific.

Legacy

The Supermarine Spitfire is celebrated not only for its performance and versatility but also for its role in securing Allied air superiority during critical phases of World War II. It became a symbol of British resilience and ingenuity. Post-war, the Spitfire continued to serve in various air forces around the world and remains a popular aircraft in airshows and museums. Its sleek design and historical significance ensure its place as one of the most revered aircraft in aviation history.

The Vickers Wellington

The Vickers Wellington was a British twin-engine bomber developed by Vickers-Armstrong's during World War II. Known for its distinctive geodetic construction, the Wellington played a significant role in the early and middle years of the war, contributing to strategic bombing campaigns and maritime patrols.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Wellington was designed to meet the Air Ministry's Specification B.9/32, which sought a new bomber capable of performing long-range missions. The aircraft was named after the Duke of Wellington, a tribute to the British military leader.
- **First Flight**: The prototype Wellington first flew on June 15, 1938.
- **Service Entry**: The Wellington entered service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) in 1938.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Wellington featured a low-wing monoplane design with a conventional tailwheel undercarriage. Its most notable design feature was its geodetic structure, which used a framework of interlocking strips to create a strong, lightweight structure.
- **Construction**: The aircraft's geodetic construction made it highly durable and capable of withstanding significant battle damage. The frame was covered with fabric, contributing to the Wellington's robustness.
- **Engine**: The Wellington was initially powered by Bristol Pegasus radial engines and later by Rolls-Royce Merlin engines in some variants.

Variants

1. **Wellington Mk I**: The original production version, equipped with four .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns and capable of carrying up to 4,000 lb (1,814 kg) of bombs.
2. **Wellington Mk II**: Featured improved engines and minor design refinements.
3. **Wellington Mk III**: Had further improvements in armament and engines.
4. **Wellington Mk X**: The most widely produced variant, equipped with Rolls-Royce Merlin engines and featuring enhanced defensive armament and bomb capacity.

Specifications (Wellington Mk I)

- **Crew**: 6 (pilot, co-pilot, navigator, bombardier, and two gunners)
- **Length**: 59 ft 4 in (18.09 m)
- **Wingspan**: 88 ft 0 in (26.82 m)
- **Height**: 16 ft 8 in (5.08 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 26,200 lb (11,891 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 39,000 lb (17,690 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Bristol Pegasus XII radial engines, 1,000 hp each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 295 mph (475 km/h) at 15,000 ft (4,570 m)
- **Range**: 1,850 miles (2,980 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 20,000 ft (6,096 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,500 ft/min (7.6 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 4 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns (in the nose, tail, and waist positions)
- **Bombs**:
  - Up to 4,000 lb (1,814 kg) of bombs, typically carried in an internal bomb bay.

Operational Use

- **Strategic Bombing**: The Wellington was a mainstay of the RAF's Bomber Command during the early years of World War II, participating in strategic bombing campaigns over Germany and occupied Europe.
- **Maritime Patrol**: The Wellington also saw extensive use in maritime patrol roles, including anti-submarine warfare and reconnaissance missions over the Atlantic and Mediterranean.
- **Night Attacks**: The aircraft was used in night bombing missions, contributing to the RAF's efforts to disrupt enemy production and logistics.

Legacy

- **Impact**: The Vickers Wellington is remembered for its distinctive design and contributions to the Allied war effort. Its robust construction and effective performance made it a reliable and versatile bomber.

- **Production**: Over 11,000 Wellingtons were built, making it one of the most produced British bombers of the war.
- **Preservation**: Several Wellingtons have been preserved and can be seen in museums and private collections. The aircraft's legacy is celebrated for its role in the strategic bombing campaigns and its enduring impact on military aviation.

The Vickers Wellington represents a significant achievement in bomber design, combining innovative construction techniques with effective performance in various roles during World War II. Its contributions to the Allied victory are remembered as part of its storied history.

The Westland Lysander

The Westland Lysander was a British military aircraft known for its distinctive design and versatile role during World War II. Designed by Westland Aircraft, the Lysander was primarily used for reconnaissance, tactical support, and special operations. It gained particular fame for its role in clandestine missions, including the transport of agents and supplies into and out of occupied Europe.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Lysander was designed to meet Air Ministry Specification T.23/36 for a new reconnaissance aircraft. It was intended to be a high-speed, high-performance aircraft capable of operating from short and rough airstrips.
- **First Flight**: The prototype (K6012) first flew on June 15, 1938.
- **Service Entry**: The Lysander entered service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) in 1938.

Design

- **High-Performance**: The Lysander featured a high-performance design with large, straight wings and a robust landing gear system capable of handling rough airstrips and short takeoffs and landings.
- **Engine**: It was powered by a single radial engine, which provided good performance and reliability.
- **Landing Gear**: The aircraft's main landing gear was designed to absorb shock and enable operations from short, unpaved runways.

Variants

1. **Lysander I**: The initial production version, used mainly for reconnaissance.
2. **Lysander II**: Improved version with a more powerful engine and increased fuel capacity.
3. **Lysander III**: Featured further improvements in armament and equipment.

4. **Lysander Mk IIIA**: Specially modified for special operations, including the transport of agents and supplies.

Specifications (Lysander III)

- **Crew**: 2 (pilot and observer)
- **Length**: 36 ft 8 in (11.18 m)
- **Wingspan**: 43 ft 6 in (13.26 m)
- **Height**: 13 ft 0 in (3.96 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 6,800 lb (3,084 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 10,500 lb (4,763 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Bristol Mercury VIII radial engine, 830 hp

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 260 mph (418 km/h)
- **Range**: 500 miles (805 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 24,000 ft (7,315 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,800 ft/min (9.1 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 2 × .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns in the wings
  - Up to 4 × 20 mm cannon (in later variants)
- **Bombs/Rockets**:
  - Up to 500 lb (227 kg) of bombs or 4 × 60 lb (27 kg) rockets

Operational Use

- **Early War**: The Lysander was initially used for reconnaissance, artillery spotting, and general support roles. Its robust design and ability to operate from short fields made it effective in these roles.
- **Special Operations**: The Lysander is perhaps best known for its role in special operations. It was used extensively to drop and pick up agents from occupied Europe, particularly in France and Belgium. Its ability to land on very short runways in near-darkness made it ideal for clandestine missions.
- **Training**: The Lysander was also used as a training aircraft, particularly for night operations and navigation.

Legacy

The Westland Lysander is remembered for its distinctive appearance and significant role in World War II. Its performance in special operations, where it became an essential tool for intelligence and resistance activities, highlights its unique capabilities. Although it was eventually replaced by more advanced aircraft, the Lysander's contributions to the war effort and its enduring legacy in aviation history are well recognized. Many Lysanders have been preserved in museums and private collections, serving as a testament to this remarkable aircraft's versatility and effectiveness.

The Westland Whirlwind

The **Westland Whirlwind** was a British twin-engine fighter aircraft designed and built by Westland Aircraft. It was notable for its heavy armament and robust design, making it a significant but relatively short-lived player in the early years of World War II.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Whirlwind was developed in response to the Air Ministry's Specification F.37/35, which sought a new, heavily armed fighter. Westland Aircraft, under the design leadership of R. J. Mitchell and his team, produced the prototype. The design aimed to combine powerful armament with strong defensive capabilities.
- **First Flight**: The prototype of the Whirlwind first flew on October 11, 1938.
- **Service Entry**: The Whirlwind entered service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) in 1940.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Whirlwind was a twin-engine, low-wing monoplane with a conventional tailwheel undercarriage. It featured a robust and sturdy design optimized for durability and combat effectiveness.
- **Construction**: The aircraft was constructed with a metal framework covered in stressed-skin aluminium. This construction approach provided strength and structural integrity while maintaining relatively low weight.
- **Engine**: The Whirlwind was powered by two Rolls-Royce Peregrine engines, which were designed to offer high performance, although they were later replaced by more powerful engines in other aircraft.

Specifications (Westland Whirlwind Mk I)

- **Crew**: 1
- **Length**: 37 ft 6 in (11.43 m)
- **Wingspan**: 40 ft 0 in (12.19 m)
- **Height**: 14 ft 0 in (4.27 m)
- **Empty Weight**: 10,000 lb (4,536 kg)
- **Gross Weight**: 14,000 lb (6,350 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 2 × Rolls-Royce Peregrine III V12 engines, 885 hp each

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 330 mph (531 km/h) at 15,000 ft (4,572 m)
- **Range**: 500 miles (805 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 27,000 ft (8,230 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 2,200 ft/min (11.2 m/s)

Armament

- **Guns**:
  - 4 × 20 mm Hispano Mk II cannons (mounted in the nose)
- **Bombs/Rockets**:
  - Limited capacity for bombs, generally carried only in small quantities for specific missions.

Operational Use

- **Early War Operations**: The Westland Whirlwind saw service in various roles during the early years of World War II, including intercepting enemy aircraft and providing ground attack capabilities.
- **Combat Role**: The aircraft was effective in its role due to its heavy armament and robust design. However, its operational use was limited due to various factors, including engine issues and the availability of more advanced aircraft.
- **Service Life**: The Whirlwind was gradually replaced by newer and more effective fighters, such as the Hawker Hurricane and Supermarine Spitfire. It was eventually withdrawn from frontline service in 1943.

Legacy

- **Impact**: Despite its relatively short service life, the Westland Whirlwind was an innovative design that demonstrated the potential of heavily armed twin-engine fighters. Its heavy armament and sturdy construction were ahead of their time.
- **Production**: Approximately 114 Whirlwinds were built, making it a relatively rare aircraft in the history of World War II aviation.
- **Preservation**: Few examples of the Westland Whirlwind have survived. The aircraft's legacy is primarily preserved through historical records and models, as well as a few surviving parts in museums.

The Westland Whirlwind represents an important chapter in the evolution of British fighter aircraft, showcasing early attempts to combine heavy armament with twin-engine design. Its contributions to early war operations and its role in advancing fighter technology are remembered as part of its historical significance.

The Westland Whirlwind HAS 7

The **Westland Whirlwind HAS.7** was a variant of the Westland Whirlwind helicopter, primarily used by the Royal Navy for anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and search and rescue (SAR) operations. It played a significant role during its service period, contributing to the Royal Navy's capabilities in these areas.

Development and History

- **Origin**: The Westland Whirlwind was developed from the American Sikorsky S-55 (H-19 Chickasaw), which Westland Aircraft acquired a license to produce. The helicopter underwent several modifications to meet British requirements.
- **First Flight**: The prototype Whirlwind flew on August 15, 1951.
- **Service Entry**: The Whirlwind entered service with the Royal Navy in the mid-1950s.

Design

- **Configuration**: The Whirlwind HAS.7 is a single-rotor helicopter with a tail rotor, featuring a conventional layout with the engine mounted in the nose, the cockpit above and behind the engine, and the main cabin at the rear.
- **Engine**: Initially powered by a piston engine, the HAS.7 variant was equipped with the more powerful Alvis Leonides Major 755/1 radial piston engine.

Specifications (Westland Whirlwind HAS.7)

- **Crew**: 2–3 (pilot, co-pilot/navigator, and ASW operator)
- **Length**: 42 ft 11 in (13.08 m) (with rotors turning)
- **Rotor Diameter**: 53 ft 0 in (16.15 m)
- **Height**: 15 ft 3 in (4.65 m)

- **Empty Weight**: 5,300 lb (2,404 kg)
- **Max Take-off Weight**: 7,500 lb (3,402 kg)
- **Powerplant**: 1 × Alvis Leonides Major 755/1 radial piston engine, 850 hp (634 kW)

Performance

- **Maximum Speed**: 106 mph (171 km/h)
- **Range**: 334 miles (538 km)
- **Service Ceiling**: 10,000 ft (3,048 m)
- **Rate of Climb**: 1,330 ft/min (6.75 m/s)

Armament and Equipment

- **Anti-Submarine Warfare**: Equipped with sonar systems for detecting submarines, including a dunking sonar.
- **Weapons**: Could carry depth charges or torpedoes for ASW missions.
- **Search and Rescue**: Equipped with a winch and other rescue equipment for SAR operations.

Operational Use

- **Roles**: The Whirlwind HAS.7 was used primarily for anti-submarine warfare, but it also performed search and rescue missions, transport duties, and liaison tasks.
- **Service Period**: It served with the Royal Navy from the late 1950s into the 1960s, gradually being replaced by more advanced helicopters such as the Westland Wessex.

Legacy

- **Service Life**: The Whirlwind HAS.7 contributed significantly to the Royal Navy's ASW and SAR capabilities during its service period. It provided valuable experience in helicopter operations and paved the way for future advancements.
- **Preservation**: Some Whirlwind helicopters, including the HAS.7 variant, have been preserved in museums and by private collectors, serving as reminders of their contribution to naval aviation history.

Cultural Impact

- **Recognition**: The Whirlwind HAS.7 is remembered for its distinctive design and versatility, marking an important step in the development of naval rotary-wing aircraft.
- **Legacy in Training**: The lessons learned from operating the Whirlwind influenced the design and operational procedures of subsequent helicopter models, contributing to the evolution of modern naval aviation.

The **Westland Whirlwind HAS.7** played a vital role in the Royal Navy's operations during its service, providing capabilities in anti-submarine warfare and search and rescue that were crucial during the Cold War period. Its legacy continues through preserved examples and its influence on later helicopter designs.

Airbases in Wales: Strategic Hubs in World War II

Wales played a pivotal role during World War II, not only through the brave efforts of its servicemen and women but also through the strategic importance of its airbases.

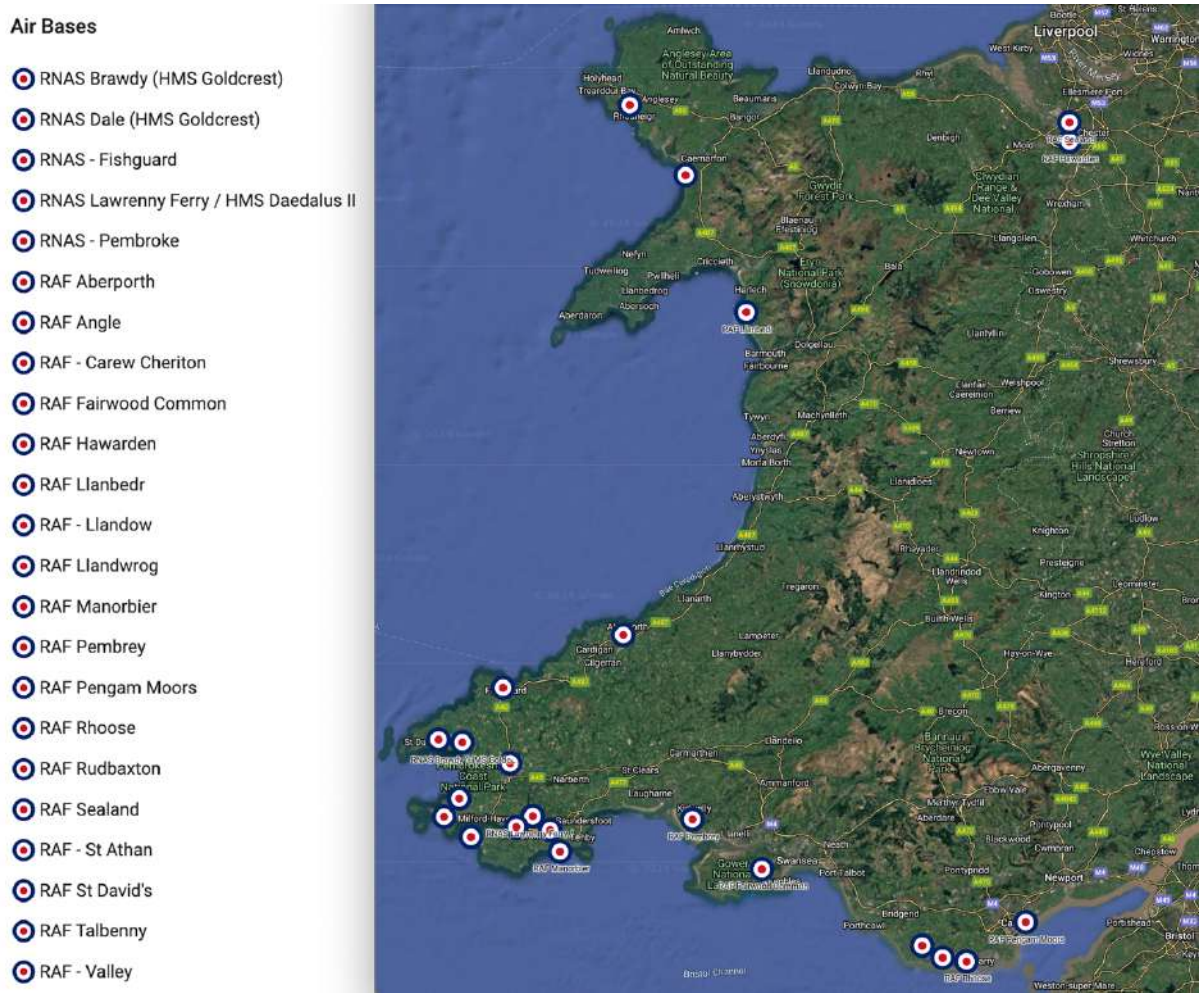
Nestled across the Welsh countryside and coastline, these airbases became vital components of the United Kingdom's defence infrastructure.

Serving as launch points for reconnaissance missions, training grounds for new pilots, and key locations for coastal and anti-submarine patrols, the airbases of Wales contributed significantly to both defensive and offensive operations during the war.

This section delves into the history and impact of these airbases, examining their roles in supporting the Royal Air Force (RAF) and Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) operations.

From the bustling airfields where squadrons were trained and dispatched to the quieter but crucial coastal installations, each airbase played its part in securing Britain's skies and seas.

As we explore their contributions, we also reflect on the legacy these sites leave behind, many of which still bear the marks of the wartime efforts that took place there.



Wings of Defence WW1-WW2

The Legacy of RAF Airbases in South and West Wales During the War

The RAF airbases of Carew Cheriton, Pembrey, St Athan, Llandow, and Valley played crucial roles during World War II, each contributing uniquely to the war effort and leaving lasting impacts on both military operations and local communities. From defending Britain's skies and coastlines to training pilots and maintaining aircraft, these airbases were integral to the RAF's strategy. Their collective efforts ensured that Britain could protect its vital industrial centres, maintain air superiority, and prepare for the eventual Allied victory. Today, their legacies continue to be remembered as essential parts of British wartime history.

The Significance of RAF Carew Cheriton During World War II

RAF Carew Cheriton was a crucial airbase located near Carew in Pembrokeshire, Wales, that played a significant role during World War II. Although it was relatively small compared to other airbases, its strategic importance and the variety of operations conducted there had a notable impact on the war effort, particularly in the defence of the British Isles.

Background and Establishment

Carew Cheriton's history as an airfield date back to World War I when it was initially used by the Royal Naval Air Service. The airfield was repurposed and expanded in 1939, just before the outbreak of World War II, to serve as a Royal Air Force (RAF) base. Given its location near the coast, RAF Carew Cheriton became an essential part of the chain of airfields that protected Britain from enemy incursions, especially from the sea.

Timeline of RAF Carew Cheriton (1939-1945)

1. **1939 - 1940: Establishment and Early Use**
   - RAF Carew Cheriton was reactivated in 1939 at the outset of World War II, having originally been used in World War I.
   - Initially, it served as a base for No. 1 Armament Training Camp, where training on the use of aircraft armament, bombing, and gunnery took place.
   - It also supported Coastal Command's anti-submarine and coastal patrol operations, reflecting its strategic location near the Irish Sea.
2. **1940 - 1941: Coastal Command Operations**
   - In 1940, RAF Carew Cheriton became more actively involved in coastal defence operations under the command of Coastal Command.
   - The station hosted squadrons equipped with aircraft such as the Avro Anson, which conducted reconnaissance, anti-submarine patrols, and convoy escort missions.
   - The airfield was involved in the protection of shipping lanes and the monitoring of German U-boat activities in the Irish Sea and Western Approaches.
3. **1942 - 1943: Training and Anti-Submarine Warfare**
   - Carew Cheriton was heavily used for training purposes, including the training of aircrew in navigation, gunnery, and bombing techniques.
   - The base hosted No. 3 Operational Training Unit (OTU) for a period, which trained crews for Coastal Command roles, particularly in anti-submarine warfare.
   - The training focused on the use of maritime patrol aircraft such as the Lockheed Hudson and the Avro Anson, enhancing the RAF's capability to counter the U-boat threat.
4. **1944: Expansion and Increased Training Role**
   - In 1944, Carew Cheriton's role as a training base was further expanded, supporting the broader Allied war effort, including preparations for D-Day and subsequent operations in Europe.
   - The airfield hosted units that trained for air-sea rescue operations, which were crucial for recovering downed airmen over the sea.
   - It also continued to operate anti-submarine and reconnaissance missions, contributing to the control of the Western Approaches.
5. **1945: Wind-Down and Transition to Post-War Use**
   - As the war neared its end in 1945, the intensity of operations at Carew Cheriton began to decrease.
   - The airfield continued to be used for training and secondary duties as operational needs shifted away from anti-submarine patrols to more training and administrative roles.
   - By the end of the war, the airfield was gradually winding down its wartime activities, eventually closing as an active RAF station in the post-war years.

After the war, RAF Carew Cheriton was eventually decommissioned, and the site was used for agricultural and other civilian purposes. During its operational years from 1939 to 1945, Carew Cheriton played a crucial role in training aircrew and protecting the British coastline from the threat of German U-boats, making it a key component of Coastal Command's wartime efforts.

Role During World War II

Throughout World War II, RAF Carew Cheriton was primarily used as a Coastal Command station. Coastal Command was responsible for safeguarding British waters, conducting anti-submarine warfare, and protecting convoys. Due to its proximity to the Irish Sea and the Atlantic, Carew Cheriton was ideally situated for such missions. Aircraft from the base were frequently dispatched on reconnaissance and patrol missions, searching for German U-boats that threatened the vital supply routes between North America and Britain.

In addition to anti-submarine operations, Carew Cheriton hosted a variety of squadrons that were involved in different facets of the war effort. These included training squadrons, which played a crucial role in preparing aircrew for operational duties. The base was also used for air-sea rescue operations, ensuring that downed airmen over the sea could be recovered, which was vital for maintaining morale among aircrews.

The Aircraft and Operations

Various types of aircraft were stationed at RAF Carew Cheriton, each suited to the different missions flown from the base. The most notable were the Avro Anson and the Lockheed Hudson, both of which were versatile aircraft used for reconnaissance, patrol, and anti-submarine operations. The Avro Anson was crucial in the early years of the war for its role in protecting coastal convoys from German U-boats.

Missions flown from Carew Cheriton were often long and perilous, requiring immense skill from the pilots and crew. These missions were crucial in maintaining control of the seas around the British Isles, ensuring that supplies from allied nations could reach Britain, which was vital for sustaining the war effort.

Strategic Impact

The influence of RAF Carew Cheriton on the war effort can be measured by the success of the Coastal Command missions. By the end of the war, the efforts of bases like Carew Cheriton had significantly reduced the threat posed by German U-boats, ensuring that Britain could receive the supplies it needed to continue fighting. The base also contributed to training

thousands of aircrews who would go on to serve in various theatres of the war, further emphasizing its importance.

Moreover, the presence of RAF Carew Cheriton had a broader impact on the local community. The base brought an influx of personnel and resources to the area, which had lasting effects on the economy and infrastructure of Pembrokeshire. This military presence helped foster a sense of unity and purpose among the civilian population, who supported the war effort in various ways.

Legacy

Today, RAF Carew Cheriton is no longer an active airfield, but its legacy lives on. The site has been preserved as a museum and a memorial, reminding visitors of the crucial role it played during one of the most challenging periods in British history. The museum, housed in the remaining buildings, provides a detailed account of the airbase's history, its operations, and its influence during the war.

In conclusion, while RAF Carew Cheriton may not have been as large or as famous as other airbases, its contributions during World War II were nonetheless significant. The airbase played a vital role in Coastal Command's efforts to protect Britain's shores and sea routes, and its impact extended far beyond its size, influencing both the local community and the broader war effort. The story of RAF Carew Cheriton is a testament to the importance of every part of the war effort, no matter how small it might seem.

WW2 RAF Servicemen from Carew Cheritan Airbase Memorials Virtual Cemetery Link.

https://www.findagrave.com/virtual-cemetery/1840349

RAF Pembrey: A Crucial Outpost in World War II

RAF Pembrey, located in Carmarthenshire, South Wales, played a pivotal role during World War II as a Royal Air Force (RAF) station. Its strategic position along the Welsh coast made it an essential component of Britain's air defence network. While less renowned than other

RAF stations, RAF Pembrey was integral to both defensive and offensive operations throughout the conflict, contributing significantly to the overall war effort.

Early History and Establishment

The airfield at Pembrey was first established in 1937 as a peacetime training base, but with the outbreak of World War II in 1939, it quickly transformed into a key operational airbase. The site's proximity to the Bristol Channel and the industrial areas of South Wales made it an ideal location for defending against potential German air attacks on British infrastructure and shipping routes.

Timeline of RAF Pembrey (1939-1945)

1. **1939 - 1940: Establishment and Early Operations**
    - RAF Pembrey was established as a fighter station and became operational in 1939, shortly after the outbreak of World War II.
    - Initially, it served as a training base and satellite station, supporting various operational squadrons and providing air defence for the region.
    - It was primarily used for coastal patrols and defence of shipping routes in the Bristol Channel.
2. **1941 - 1942: Fighter Command and Operational Squadrons**
    - In 1941, RAF Pembrey came under Fighter Command control and was used for fighter operations.
    - It hosted various squadrons equipped with Supermarine Spitfires and Hawker Hurricanes, providing air cover, and conducting patrols along the Welsh coast.
    - The airfield also served as a forward operating base for squadrons participating in offensive sweeps over the English Channel and occupied France.
3. **1943: Role Expansion and Training**
    - RAF Pembrey expanded its role to include training, serving as a base for the No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU).

    - The OTU focused on training pilots in advanced fighter tactics and ground-attack missions, using aircraft like the Hawker Hurricane.
    - It was also used for air-sea rescue operations and supported anti-submarine patrols, reflecting its strategic coastal location.
4. **1944: Support for D-Day and Allied Invasions**
    - In 1944, RAF Pembrey continued to host fighter and reconnaissance squadrons as the Allied invasion of Europe commenced.
    - The airfield supported Operation Overlord (D-Day) by providing cover for convoys and participating in anti-submarine operations in the Bristol Channel and Western Approaches.
    - During this period, Pembrey also supported the training and preparation of aircrew for deployment to the front lines.
5. **1945: Transition to Post-War Operations**
    - As the war in Europe ended in 1945, RAF Pembrey began transitioning to peacetime roles.
    - The airfield continued to be used for training and some operational activities, but its importance declined as the focus shifted from combat operations.
    - It hosted the No. 595 Squadron, which was involved in target towing for anti-aircraft training, and other support roles.

After the war, RAF Pembrey gradually wound down its wartime activities, eventually closing as an operational base. It was later used for various military and civilian purposes, including as a weapons range and training facility.

RAF Pembrey's role during the war was multifaceted, reflecting the changing needs of the conflict from defensive air patrols to offensive operations and extensive training programs, making it an important part of the UK's wartime air defence network.

Role During World War II

During the war, RAF Pembrey served primarily as a Fighter Command base, with a variety of fighter squadrons stationed there over the course of the conflict. These squadrons were tasked with defending the South Wales coast and intercepting enemy aircraft that attempted to bomb key industrial targets in the region.

One of the most significant squadrons to be based at RAF Pembrey was No. 92 Squadron, which flew the iconic Supermarine Spitfire. The Spitfire's speed and agility made it the ideal aircraft for intercepting enemy bombers and engaging Luftwaffe fighters. RAF Pembrey's Spitfires were frequently scrambled to protect cities like Swansea and Cardiff, which were targets due to their industrial importance.

The airbase also played a role in training new pilots. With the constant demand for skilled fighter pilots, RAF Pembrey became an essential site for training and preparing aircrew for frontline service. This function was vital as the war progressed, ensuring a steady supply of well-trained pilots to replace those lost in combat.

Significant Operations and Events

RAF Pembrey was the site of numerous significant operations during the war. One notable event occurred on June 23, 1942, when a German Focke-Wulf Fw 190 mistakenly landed at Pembrey. The pilot, unaware he had crossed the English Channel, surrendered to a surprised ground crew, providing the RAF with a valuable intact enemy aircraft for study.

The base was also involved in anti-shipping operations. Coastal Command aircraft operated from RAF Pembrey to protect Allied shipping in the Bristol Channel and intercept German,

supply convoys. These missions were crucial in disrupting the enemy's supply lines and maintaining control of the vital shipping routes around the British Isles.

Impact and Strategic Importance

RAF Pembrey's contribution to the war effort was multifaceted. Its defensive role in protecting South Wales from air raids was vital, especially during the early years of the war when Britain faced the constant threat of German bombing campaigns. The base's strategic location along the Welsh coast also provided an important line of defence against any potential seaborne invasion or commando raids, though these threats never fully materialized.

Beyond its military importance, RAF Pembrey had a significant impact on the local community. The influx of military personnel and resources boosted the local economy and left a legacy in the region. The base became a hub of activity, with civilians working alongside military personnel to support the war effort, fostering a strong sense of unity and shared purpose.

Legacy and Post-War Period

After World War II, RAF Pembrey continued to serve as an airbase for a time before being repurposed for other uses. Today, the site is home to Pembrey Airport, a civilian airfield, and a motorsport circuit. Although many of the original wartime structures have been lost, the airfield's legacy endures in the memories of those who served there and in the history of the local community.

RAF Pembrey's contribution to World War II, though perhaps overshadowed by larger and more famous RAF stations, was nevertheless significant. The base played a key role in defending Britain's western approaches, training new pilots, and supporting the wider war effort through its diverse operations. The story of RAF Pembrey is a reminder of the importance of every link in the chain that secured victory during the war.

Many of the Airmen stationed at RAF Pembrey are buried at St Illtyd Church in Pembrey this is a link to their Virtual Cemetery.

https://www.findagrave.com/virtual-cemetery/1855516

RAF St Athan: A Cornerstone of Aircraft Maintenance and Training During World War II

RAF St Athan, located in the Vale of Glamorgan, South Wales, was one of the most important Royal Air Force stations during World War II. Unlike many other RAF bases that were primarily focused on operational flying, RAF St Athan's significance lay in its role as a major maintenance, repair, and training centre. Its contributions were critical to the overall success of the RAF during the war, ensuring that aircraft remained airworthy and that personnel were properly trained to support the war effort.

Establishment and Early History

RAF St Athan was established in 1938, just before the outbreak of World War II, as a training base and maintenance depot. Its strategic location in South Wales, away from the most likely areas of enemy bombing, made it an ideal site for these crucial support activities. By the time the war began, St Athan was already one of the largest and most important RAF stations in Britain.

Timeline of RAF St Athan (1939-1945)

1. **1938 - 1939: Establishment and Early Operations**
    - RAF St Athan was established in 1938, just before the outbreak of World War II, and was intended to serve as a training and maintenance base for the RAF.
    - By 1939, the base was fully operational and began its role in training and maintenance activities. It was one of the largest RAF stations in the UK, reflecting its strategic importance.
2. **1940 - 1941: Expansion as a Maintenance and Training Hub**

- During 1940, RAF St Athan became the main base for No. 4 School of Technical Training (No. 4 SOT), which trained aircraft mechanics and technicians, crucial for maintaining the RAF's growing fleet.
- The base also hosted No. 32 Maintenance Unit (MU), which focused on the repair and overhaul of aircraft. St Athan became one of the largest aircraft maintenance units in the RAF, handling various aircraft, including fighters and bombers.
- The airfield supported numerous operational units, servicing and repairing aircraft that were then returned to active duty.

3. **1942: Development of Training Programs**
   - By 1942, RAF St Athan had further expanded its training programs. The technical training school trained thousands of airmen in airframe and engine maintenance, as well as other technical roles.
   - The station also took on the training of aircrew in basic flight mechanics and engineering skills, contributing to the broader war effort by ensuring a steady supply of skilled personnel for frontline units.
   - Additional units, such as No. 19 Maintenance Unit, also operated from St Athan, handling salvage and repair of damaged aircraft.
4. **1943 - 1944: Continued Focus on Maintenance and Technical Training**
   - Throughout 1943 and 1944, St Athan continued to serve as a crucial maintenance and repair hub, processing and overhauling a wide variety of RAF aircraft, including Spitfires, Hurricanes, and Lancaster bombers.
   - The base remained heavily involved in technical training, with No. 4 SOT continuing to expand its curriculum to meet the increasing demands of the war.
   - St Athan also provided specialized training in airframe and armament maintenance, preparing thousands of personnel for roles in squadrons across the RAF.
5. **1945: Support for Post-War Transition**
   - As the war ended in 1945, RAF St Athan began to shift focus towards peacetime operations, including the demobilization process and continued training of RAF personnel.
   - The base remained a key site for aircraft maintenance and training, supporting the transition of the RAF from a wartime footing to peacetime operations.
   - RAF St Athan also played a role in refurbishing and repurposing aircraft and equipment for post-war use, including for the newly formed British European Airways.

RAF St Athan's extensive facilities and strategic location made it a cornerstone of the RAF's maintenance and training efforts during World War II. Its contribution to training technical personnel and maintaining the operational readiness of RAF aircraft was crucial to the overall war effort. After the war, RAF St Athan continued to operate as a major RAF station, supporting various military and civilian roles.

Role During World War II

During World War II, RAF St Athan's primary role was aircraft maintenance and repair. The base became one of the main sites for the overhaul and repair of a wide range of aircraft, from fighters like the Supermarine Spitfire and Hawker Hurricane to larger bombers such as the Avro Lancaster. The work carried out at St Athan was vital in keeping the RAF's aircraft

operational, especially during critical periods like the Battle of Britain, when the demand for serviceable aircraft was at its peak.

The station housed several Maintenance Units (MUs), which were responsible for the in-depth servicing and refurbishment of aircraft. These units worked around the clock to repair battle-damaged planes, refurbish engines, and update aircraft with the latest technology and modifications. This work was crucial in maintaining the RAF's operational strength throughout the war.

In addition to its maintenance role, RAF St Athan was also a key training centre. The base hosted No. 4 School of Technical Training, which provided essential technical training to RAF ground crew, including engineers, mechanics, and other support personnel. Thousands of airmen passed through St Athan during the war, learning the skills necessary to keep the RAF's aircraft flying. The training provided at St Athan was comprehensive and covered everything from basic aircraft mechanics to advanced avionics, ensuring that the RAF had the technical expertise needed to sustain its operations.

Strategic Importance

RAF St Athan's contribution to the war effort cannot be overstated. By ensuring that aircraft were well-maintained and that technical crews were well-trained, the station played an indispensable role in keeping the RAF's squadrons operational. The ability to quickly repair and return aircraft to service was especially critical during the intense air campaigns of the war, such as the Battle of Britain and the strategic bombing offensive over Germany.

The station's work also extended to supporting the development and deployment of new aircraft types. As the war progressed, RAF St Athan became involved in the preparation and modification of aircraft for special operations and missions, further underlining its importance in the broader war effort.

Impact on the Local Community

The presence of RAF St Athan had a significant impact on the local community in the Vale of Glamorgan. The base became one of the largest employers in the area, drawing thousands of workers from across South Wales. Many local civilians were employed in various roles at the station, contributing to the maintenance and support operations. This influx of personnel and resources helped to boost the local economy during the difficult war years and fostered a strong sense of camaraderie between the military and civilian populations.

Post-War Legacy

After World War II, RAF St Athan continued to serve as a major RAF station, transitioning into the Cold War era as a key training and maintenance centre. The base expanded its operations and continued to play a vital role in supporting the RAF's aircraft and personnel. Although its role evolved over the decades, RAF St Athan remained an essential part of the RAF's infrastructure.

Today, RAF St Athan is part of the Defence Aviation Repair Agency (DARA) and serves as a key site for the maintenance and repair of military aircraft and equipment. The legacy of its wartime contributions lives on, and the station's history is a testament to the importance of support operations in achieving military success.

Conclusion

RAF St Athan's role during World War II exemplifies the critical importance of maintenance, repair, and training in the overall war effort. While the base did not engage directly in combat operations, its contribution to keeping the RAF's aircraft operational and its personnel well-trained was invaluable. RAF St Athan ensured that the RAF could maintain the air power needed to defend Britain and take the fight to the enemy, making it a cornerstone of Britain's air defence strategy during the war.

Many of the Airmen stationed at RAF St Athan are buried mainly at Llantwit Major Cemetery this is a link to their Virtual Cemetery.

https://www.findagrave.com/virtual-cemetery/1861468

RAF Llandow: A Vital Airfield in the Defence of Britain During World War II

RAF Llandow, located near Cowbridge in the Vale of Glamorgan, South Wales, played an important role during World War II as a Royal Air Force station. Although it was smaller and less well-known than some other RAF bases, Llandow was strategically significant for its

role in fighter defence, training, and later as a hub for transport operations. Its contributions were crucial in both the defence of Britain and in preparing for post-war activities.

Establishment and Early Operations

RAF Llandow was constructed in 1940, during a time when the threat of German invasion was at its peak. As part of Britain's expanding air defence network, the airfield was built to house fighter squadrons that would protect the industrial and strategic assets of South Wales. Llandow's location made it ideal for covering the Bristol Channel, safeguarding the nearby cities of Cardiff and Swansea, and intercepting enemy aircraft attempting to raid these vital areas.

Timeline of RAF Llandow (1939-1945)

1. **1939 - 1940: Establishment and Early Operations**
    - RAF Llandow was constructed and became operational in 1940 as part of the RAF's expansion efforts during the early stages of World War II.
    - Initially, it was intended as a fighter base, providing support for operations defending the South Wales coast and the Bristol Channel area.
    - The airfield's early activities included the use of various fighter aircraft such as Hawker Hurricanes for local defence duties.
2. **1941 - 1942: Training and Operational Squadrons**
    - In 1941, RAF Llandow became home to several fighter training units. One of the primary units was No. 53 Operational Training Unit (OTU), which trained pilots on the Supermarine Spitfire and Hawker Hurricane.
    - The OTU was responsible for training new pilots who had completed their basic flight training, focusing on advanced fighter tactics, gunnery, and operational readiness.
    - Llandow also hosted several operational squadrons temporarily, including units transitioning between different aircraft types or undergoing operational workups.
3. **1943: Expansion of Training Role**
    - RAF Llandow continued to expand its role as a training base, with No. 53 OTU taking on increased responsibilities for preparing fighter pilots for front-line service.
    - The training program included intensive courses on dogfighting, navigation, formation flying, and ground-attack techniques, essential skills for fighter pilots during the war.
    - The airfield also supported maintenance and repair facilities to keep the training aircraft in operational condition.
4. **1944: Preparation for D-Day and Beyond**
    - In 1944, RAF Llandow's activities intensified as preparations for D-Day and the Allied invasion of Europe ramped up. The training programs were critical in ensuring a steady flow of combat-ready pilots for the expanding air war.
    - Llandow also temporarily hosted operational squadrons tasked with providing air cover for convoys and coastal defence, complementing its primary training role.
    - Additional training focused on preparing pilots for the evolving combat conditions they would face in Europe, including operations over France and Germany.

5. **1945: Wind-Down and Post-War Transition**
    - As the war came to an end in 1945, RAF Llandow began winding down its wartime training activities. The demand for new fighter pilots decreased, and many training units were scaled back.
    - The airfield continued to be used for training and some operational duties as the RAF transitioned to peacetime operations.
    - Post-war, RAF Llandow was used for various purposes, including demobilization and limited flying training, before eventually closing as an RAF station in the late 1940s.

RAF Llandow's role as a major fighter training base during World War II was critical in preparing the RAF's fighter pilots for combat. Its contribution to the Allied war effort, particularly in the training of Spitfire and Hurricane pilots, helped ensure that the RAF maintained a high level of operational readiness throughout the conflict.

Role During World War II

In its early years, RAF Llandow primarily served as a base for fighter squadrons under Fighter Command. Several squadrons flew from Llandow, including those equipped with the iconic Supermarine Spitfire and Hawker Hurricane. These aircraft were essential in the defence against German bombing raids, which targeted the industrial centres of South Wales, particularly during the Blitz. The squadrons stationed at Llandow were often called into action to intercept enemy bombers and provide air cover for convoys in the Bristol Channel.

One of the most notable squadrons based at RAF Llandow was No. 79 Squadron, which flew Hurricanes during the critical period of the Battle of Britain. While South Wales did not see as heavy air combat as southern England, the presence of these fighter squadrons was vital in maintaining air superiority and deterring German attacks on the region.

Training and Transport Operations

As the war progressed and the immediate threat of invasion diminished, RAF Llandow's role shifted towards training. The airfield became a base for Operational Training Units (OTUs), which prepared pilots for frontline service. These OTUs played a critical role in the continuous need for trained aircrew, especially as the RAF expanded its operations across Europe and the Mediterranean.

In the latter stages of the war, RAF Llandow was also used by Transport Command. The airfield became a hub for transport aircraft, facilitating the movement of personnel and supplies. This role grew increasingly important as the Allies prepared for D-Day and the

subsequent liberation of Europe. The ability to efficiently move resources and reinforcements was crucial to the success of these operations, and RAF Llandow played its part in this logistical effort.

The Llandow Air Disaster

One of the most tragic events associated with RAF Llandow occurred after the war, in 1950, with the Llandow air disaster. A civilian Avro Tudor airliner, returning from Dublin, crashed near the airfield, killing 80 of the 83 people on board. At the time, it was one of the worst aviation disasters in history. Although this event occurred in the post-war period, it remains closely tied to the history of RAF Llandow and is a sombre reminder of the risks associated with aviation.

Impact on the Local Community

RAF Llandow had a significant impact on the local community throughout its operation. The base brought an influx of personnel and resources to the area, boosting the local economy and fostering a sense of shared purpose among civilians and military personnel. The presence of the RAF also helped to protect local communities from the threat of air raids, providing a sense of security during the darkest days of the war.

Legacy and Post-War Use

After the war, RAF Llandow continued to be used by the RAF for a few more years before being decommissioned in 1957. The airfield was later repurposed for civilian use and became the site of Llandow Circuit, a motor racing track, as well as a small private airfield. Some of the original wartime buildings still stand, serving as a reminder of the airfield's historical significance.

Today, RAF Llandow's legacy is preserved through these civilian uses and the memories of those who served there. While it may not have been as prominent as other RAF stations, Llandow's contributions to the war effort were nonetheless vital, particularly in defending South Wales and training the next generation of RAF pilots.

Conclusion

RAF Llandow played a critical yet often overlooked role during World War II. From defending Britain's industrial heartland to training new pilots and supporting transport

operations, the airfield contributed significantly to the overall success of the RAF during the war. Its legacy, marked by both its wartime service and the later tragedy of the Llandow air disaster, remains an important part of the history of South Wales and the broader story of Britain's wartime resilience.

RAF Valley: The Backbone of Fighter and Search and Rescue Training

RAF Valley, located on the island of Anglesey in North Wales, has been a crucial Royal Air Force station since its establishment during World War II. Unlike other RAF bases that were primarily involved in combat operations during the war, RAF Valley played a key role in training and preparing pilots for operational service. Over time, the station evolved into one of the most important training centres for fast jet pilots and, later, for search and rescue operations.

Establishment and Early Operations

RAF Valley was established in February 1941 as a fighter station during World War II. Its location on the northwest coast of Wales made it a strategic site for defending the western approaches to the British Isles, particularly against the threat of German U-boats and bombers targeting the vital shipping lanes and industrial centres of Liverpool and Manchester.

Initially, RAF Valley hosted several fighter squadrons equipped with aircraft such as the Hawker Hurricane and later the Supermarine Spitfire. These squadrons were tasked with providing air cover for convoys and protecting the coastal regions from potential German air and naval threats. The airfield's proximity to the Irish Sea and the Atlantic made it an ideal location for these defensive operations.

Timeline of RAF Valley (1940-1945)

1. **1940: Establishment and Early Operations**
    - RAF Valley was officially opened on 7 February 1941, though construction began in 1940 as part of the expansion of the RAF's capabilities during World War II.
    - The airfield was strategically located to provide defence for the western approaches and to act as a base for air-sea rescue operations, reflecting the RAF's focus on coastal defence and convoy protection.

2. **1941: Fighter Operations and Coastal Defence**
    - RAF Valley initially hosted No. 312 (Czechoslovak) Squadron, flying Hawker Hurricanes, which were responsible for providing air cover over the Irish Sea and protecting convoys from German aircraft and submarines.
    - The airfield also saw the arrival of other fighter squadrons, including No. 615 (County of Surrey) Squadron, which also operated Hurricanes.
3. **1942: Transition to a Training Role**
    - In 1942, RAF Valley's role began to shift primarily towards training as it became home to No. 275 Squadron, which was involved in air-sea rescue operations, and No. 9 Group Pool, which trained fighter pilots.
    - The airfield played a key role in training new fighter pilots in advanced tactics, operational readiness, and air-sea rescue techniques, vital for supporting downed airmen over the Irish Sea.
4. **1943: Expansion of Training Operations**
    - RAF Valley continued to develop as a major training base. It hosted No. 61 Operational Training Unit (OTU), which was responsible for training pilots on the Supermarine Spitfire.
    - The training at Valley included fighter tactics, interception techniques, gunnery practice, and formation flying, preparing pilots for combat roles in Europe.
    - Air-sea rescue operations also continued, providing vital support for pilots and aircrew operating in the western approaches.
5. **1944: Support for Allied Operations**
    - In 1944, RAF Valley's training units continued to support the Allied war effort, especially in preparation for D-Day and subsequent operations in Europe.
    - The focus remained on advanced fighter training and air-sea rescue, with the airfield playing a crucial role in ensuring that RAF squadrons were staffed with well-trained pilots.
    - Training intensified to keep pace with the demands of the war, with pilots often being rapidly deployed to front-line units after completing their courses.
6. **1945: Continued Training and Post-War Transition**
    - As the war ended in 1945, RAF Valley maintained its role as a key training centre, though the scale of operations began to reduce as the demand for new pilots decreased.
    - The airfield continued to support the transition of the RAF to peacetime operations, focusing on retraining and demobilization efforts.
    - RAF Valley remained operational as a training base post-war, transitioning smoothly into a key station for the RAF's continued pilot training programs in the years following World War II.

RAF Valley's strategic location and its role in training fighter pilots and conducting air-sea rescue operations made it a vital component of the RAF's efforts during World War II. Its legacy as a training hub continued well beyond the war, making it one of the RAF's most important training stations.

Role in World War II

Although RAF Valley was not directly involved in large-scale air battles like those seen in southern England, it played a significant role in the broader defence strategy. Fighter squadrons based at RAF Valley conducted patrols and reconnaissance missions over the Irish Sea and the Atlantic, safeguarding the approaches to the British Isles from enemy aircraft and naval activity. These operations were crucial in protecting the convoys that were essential to Britain's war effort, as the nation relied heavily on supplies brought in by sea.

In addition to its defensive role, RAF Valley became increasingly involved in pilot training as the war progressed. The base hosted No. 71 Maintenance Unit, which was responsible for receiving, assembling, and preparing newly delivered aircraft before they were sent to operational squadrons. This ensured that the RAF had a steady supply of combat-ready aircraft throughout the war.

Post-War Evolution: Training and Search and Rescue

After World War II, RAF Valley's role shifted primarily to training. In 1946, the station was designated as a permanent flying training base, focusing on the advanced training of fast jet pilots. The base became home to No. 4 Flying Training School (4 FTS), which trained pilots to fly a variety of aircraft, including jets like the Hawker Hunter and later, the BAE Hawk. The school at RAF Valley became a key part of the RAF's pilot training pipeline, ensuring that the UK's fast jet pilots were among the best in the world.

RAF Valley also played a significant role in search and rescue (SAR) operations. In 1955, the base became the home of No. 22 Squadron, which operated Westland Whirlwind and later, Westland Sea King helicopters. These SAR helicopters were responsible for rescuing downed airmen, stranded sailors, and civilians in distress across the rugged coastlines and mountains of Wales, the Irish Sea, and beyond. The SAR operations from RAF Valley became renowned for their effectiveness, saving countless lives over the decades.

Strategic Importance

The strategic importance of RAF Valley lies not only in its wartime contributions but also in its ongoing role in training the next generation of RAF pilots. The advanced flying training conducted at RAF Valley has been essential in preparing pilots for service in the UK's frontline squadrons, including those flying aircraft like the Eurofighter Typhoon and the F-35 Lightning.

Additionally, RAF Valley's SAR operations, although now transferred to civilian contractors, have left a legacy of excellence and service. The station's role in both defence and humanitarian efforts has made it a vital part of the RAF's overall mission.

Impact on the Local Community

RAF Valley has had a significant impact on the local community of Anglesey. The base is one of the largest employers in the area, providing jobs not only to military personnel but also to civilians in various support roles. The presence of RAF Valley has fostered a strong relationship between the military and residents, with the base often hosting public events and open days. This connection has been vital in maintaining public support for the RAF's mission in the region.

Legacy and Current Role

Today, RAF Valley continues to serve as a premier training base for fast jet pilots, focusing on the advanced phase of pilot training. The station is also home to the UK Military Flying Training System (UKMFTS), which uses the latest aircraft and simulators to prepare pilots for the challenges of modern air combat.

RAF Valley's legacy as a critical training and rescue hub remains strong. Its contribution to the RAF's operational capability and its role in saving lives through SAR missions have made it an enduring symbol of excellence in the Royal Air Force.

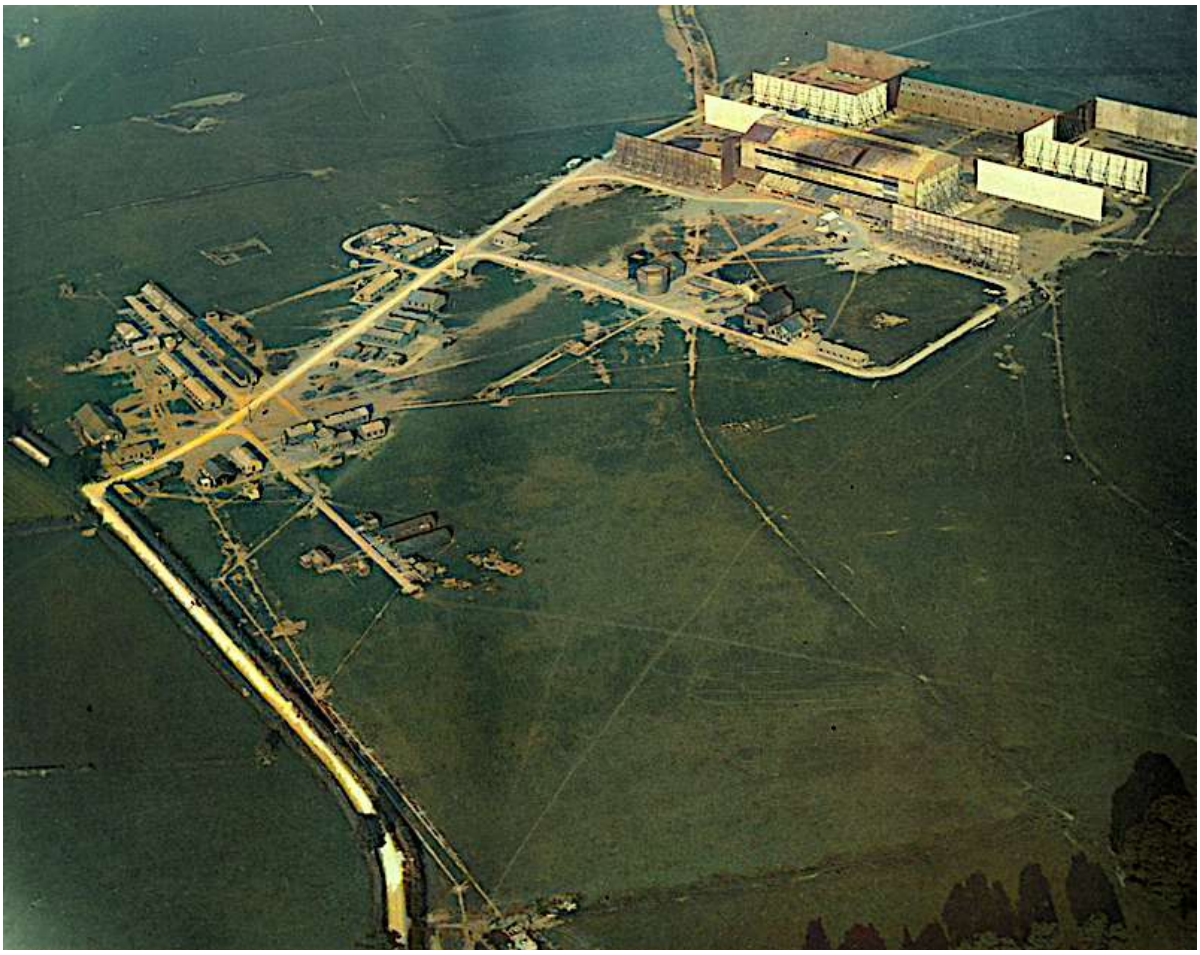
Conclusion

RAF Valley's importance during World War II and its evolution into a premier training and search and rescue base have made it a cornerstone of the Royal Air Force's operations. From its early days defending the western approaches to its current role in shaping the future of RAF pilots, RAF Valley has consistently demonstrated its value to the defence of the United

Kingdom. The station's history and ongoing mission reflect the dedication and professionalism of all who have served there, making it a vital part of the RAF's proud tradition.

In conclusion, the RAF airbases of Carew Cheriton, Pembrey, St Athan, Llandow, and Valley were more than just military installations; they were the backbone of Britain's defence and training efforts during World War II. Each base, with its unique role in safeguarding the nation, training pilots, and maintaining aircraft, played an essential part in the broader strategy that led to Allied victory. The legacy of these airfields is etched not only in the annals of military history but also in the local communities they impacted. As we remember the bravery and dedication of those who served at these bases, their contributions remind us of the vital importance of preparation, resilience, and collaboration in times of crisis.

RNAS Pembroke



The Royal Naval Air Station (RNAS) Pembroke, located near Pembroke Dock in Pembrokeshire, Wales, played significant roles during both World War I and World War II. Its strategic location near the Irish Sea and Atlantic approaches made it a crucial base for naval aviation, especially in roles related to anti-submarine warfare, reconnaissance, and maritime patrol.

Establishment and Early Role:

- RNAS Pembroke was established during World War I as a seaplane station, officially opening in 1914. The base was situated at Pembroke Dock, an area with a long history as a naval dockyard, which made it ideally suited for seaplane operations.
- The primary role of RNAS Pembroke in World War I was to conduct anti-submarine patrols and reconnaissance missions in the Irish Sea and the approaches to the Atlantic, which were critical shipping routes for the Allies.

Operations:

- The station operated various seaplanes, including aircraft such as the Short Type 184 and Felixstowe F.2 flying boats, which were used for long-range patrols.
- RNAS Pembroke was heavily involved in the protection of convoys against the German U-boat threat, which was a significant concern during the war. The seaplanes conducted regular patrols to spot enemy submarines and provide early warning to Allied shipping.
- In addition to anti-submarine warfare, the base also supported search and rescue missions, reconnaissance operations, and the training of naval aviators.

Impact and Challenges:

- RNAS Pembroke's operations helped to mitigate the U-boat threat in the western approaches, though the aircraft were limited by the technology of the time, including relatively short ranges and slow speeds.
- The harsh weather and sea conditions in the Irish Sea posed significant challenges to the aircrews, but their efforts contributed to the overall maritime security of the British Isles.

RNAS Pembroke in World War II

Re-establishment and Role Expansion:

- In World War II, RNAS Pembroke was reactivated in 1939, shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, and was known as HMS Daedalus II.
- During the early years of the war, the base primarily operated as a training facility for naval aircrew, focusing on reconnaissance, anti-submarine warfare, and convoy escort duties.
- As the war progressed, Pembroke Dock became one of the largest flying boat bases in the world, operating aircraft such as the Sunderland and Catalina flying boats, which were crucial for long-range maritime patrols.

Operational Highlights:

- RNAS Pembroke played a vital role in the Battle of the Atlantic, providing critical support in the fight against German U-boats. The flying boats from the station were instrumental in detecting and attacking U-boats, thus protecting vital supply convoys from North America to Britain.
- The aircraft stationed at Pembroke carried out anti-submarine patrols, search and rescue missions, and reconnaissance operations. These missions extended into the

Atlantic, covering a vast area and providing a critical line of defence against the U-boat menace.
- One of the notable aircraft types based at RNAS Pembroke was the Short Sunderland, a large four-engine flying boat renowned for its endurance, heavy defensive armament, and effectiveness in anti-submarine warfare.

Challenges and Legacy:

- The operational challenges of RNAS Pembroke included maintaining operations in adverse weather conditions and the constant threat of enemy action, both from submarines and from the air.
- Despite these challenges, RNAS Pembroke made significant contributions to the Allied war effort, particularly in safeguarding the Atlantic shipping lanes, which were essential for the supply of Britain during the war.
- The base's operations significantly contributed to the reduction in the U-boat threat, playing a pivotal role in the eventual Allied victory in the Battle of the Atlantic.

Post-War Transition:

- After World War II, the importance of flying boat operations diminished with advances in aviation technology and the increased use of land-based patrol aircraft.
- RNAS Pembroke continued to operate in a reduced capacity until it eventually closed in 1959, marking the end of an era for one of the most significant flying boat stations of the 20th century.

Overall Impact

RNAS Pembroke's contributions during both world wars were vital to the maritime security of the United Kingdom. In World War I, it helped defend against the U-boat threat in the Irish Sea, while in World War II, it became a cornerstone of the Allied anti-submarine campaign in the Atlantic. Its strategic role and the brave efforts of its personnel ensured the safety of countless convoys and maintained the vital supply lines that were crucial to the Allied war effort.

RNAS Fishguard

World War I:

Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) Fishguard was established during World War I as a key component of the Royal Naval Air Service, which was part of the Royal Navy. Located in Fishguard, Wales, the air station was strategically positioned on the western coast of Britain, playing a crucial role in maritime patrols and reconnaissance.

The primary mission of RNAS Fishguard during World War I was to conduct anti-submarine patrols and protect the vital shipping lanes from the threat of German U-boats. The base operated a variety of aircraft, including the Short 184, a reconnaissance seaplane used for patrolling and anti-submarine warfare. The base's location allowed it to effectively monitor the waters off the Welsh coast and the approaches to the Irish Sea.

The establishment of the air station at Fishguard was part of a broader effort to expand naval aviation capabilities in response to the growing threat posed by enemy submarines and aircraft. Despite the challenges, including limited resources and the evolving nature of aerial combat, RNAS Fishguard made a significant contribution to the Allied war effort.

World War II:

By the time World War II began, the Royal Naval Air Service had been merged into the Royal Air Force (RAF) in 1918, and the base at Fishguard was operated under the RAF banner. During World War II, Fishguard's role evolved as the strategic needs of the war changed.

In the early years of the war, RAF Fishguard continued to serve as a key location for maritime patrols, but its role expanded to include coastal defence and reconnaissance

missions. The base's location remained strategically important for monitoring the Western Approaches and protecting against potential German incursions.

The introduction of new aircraft types and advancements in radar technology transformed the operational focus of Fishguard during the war. The airfield became an important site for training and operational readiness, contributing to the defence of the UK and the Allied war effort in the Atlantic.

Throughout World War II, Fishguard played a vital role in safeguarding the coast of Wales and ensuring the security of vital shipping routes. Its contributions were integral to the broader efforts of the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy in maintaining maritime security and supporting the Allied campaign.

Legacy:

The history of RNAS Fishguard is a testament to the evolving role of naval aviation and its impact on both world wars. The base's strategic location and operational significance underscored its importance in maritime defence and reconnaissance during a critical period in history.

Today, the legacy of RNAS Fishguard is remembered as part of the broader narrative of military aviation and the efforts of the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force in safeguarding the nation during times of conflict.

RAF Hawarden: Strategic and Operational Role in WWII

Location: Near Broughton, Flintshire, Wales
GPS Coordinates: 53.1745° N, 2.9779° W

Overview: RAF Hawarden, located near Broughton in Flintshire, Wales, played a significant role during World War II as a key aircraft manufacturing and training facility. Originally established as a civilian airfield, it was requisitioned by the Air Ministry in the late 1930s and developed into a fully operational RAF base by the outbreak of WWII.

Role and Operations: During the war, RAF Hawarden became a vital part of the British aircraft production effort, most notably serving as a major assembly and testing site for the De Havilland Aircraft Company. The base was involved in the assembly, testing, and delivery of various aircraft, including the iconic Supermarine Spitfire. From 1941, RAF Hawarden housed No. 48 Maintenance Unit (MU), which was responsible for receiving and testing new aircraft before they were delivered to operational squadrons across the UK.

In addition to its role in aircraft production and maintenance, RAF Hawarden also served as a training base. No. 7 Service Flying Training School (SFTS) operated from the airfield, providing advanced flying training to pilots who had completed their initial flight training. This was a crucial step in preparing pilots for combat operations in Europe and beyond.

Timeline:

- **1939:** RAF Hawarden was officially established, expanding rapidly to support the war effort.
- **1941:** No. 48 MU and No. 7 SFTS were fully operational at Hawarden, marking the base's peak activity period.
- **1940s:** The base played a crucial role in assembling and testing Spitfires, which were essential to the RAF's defence strategy, particularly during and after the Battle of Britain.
- **1945:** Following the end of WWII, RAF Hawarden's role diminished, and it was eventually returned to civilian use, though it continued to be involved in aircraft manufacturing and testing under private companies, notably as the site of BAE Systems and Airbus operations.

Post-War Legacy: RAF Hawarden's legacy extends beyond its WWII contributions. The site remains active today as Hawarden Airport, supporting aviation manufacturing, including the production of wings for Airbus aircraft. The airfield's history is preserved through its continued use in aviation and its recognition as a significant wartime site in Wales.

Through its strategic contributions in aircraft production, pilot training, and maintenance, RAF Hawarden was a critical component of the British war effort, supporting the RAF's capacity to maintain air superiority during WWII.

RAF Sealand: Strategic and Operational Role in WWII

Location: Near Deeside, Flintshire, Wales
GPS Coordinates: 53.2153° N, 2.9780° W

Overview: RAF Sealand, located near Deeside in Flintshire, Wales, was a significant RAF station with a rich history dating back to its establishment in the First World War. Originally a Royal Flying Corps airfield, it became a permanent RAF base and played a crucial role throughout World War II, primarily as a major maintenance and training facility.

Role and Operations: During WWII, RAF Sealand's primary function was as a maintenance unit, specifically handling the repair, refurbishment, and testing of various aircraft types. It housed No. 30 Maintenance Unit (MU), which was responsible for maintaining a wide array of RAF aircraft, including fighters, bombers, and training planes. This work was critical in ensuring that aircraft were quickly returned to operational status, thus supporting the continuous operational capability of the RAF.

Sealand also served as a hub for the distribution of aircraft parts and equipment, making it an essential logistical component of the RAF's overall war effort. The base played a vital role in the supply chain, ensuring that frontline units received the necessary equipment to remain combat ready.

In addition to its maintenance role, RAF Sealand was involved in pilot and aircrew training. It hosted technical training schools, including the RAF School of Technical Training, where aircrew and ground personnel were trained in aircraft maintenance, radio operation, and other technical skills crucial to the war effort.

Timeline:

- **1916:** Originally established as a Royal Flying Corps station during WWI.
- **1930s:** Developed into a permanent RAF station, continuing its maintenance and technical training roles.
- **1939-1945:** Played a critical role in WWII, primarily through No. 30 MU, focusing on aircraft maintenance, repair, and supply distribution.
- **1940s:** Hosted technical training schools that prepared aircrew and ground personnel for service across various operational theatres.
- **Post-WWII:** Continued to serve as a technical training and maintenance site, adapting to peacetime roles and supporting RAF operations during the Cold War period.

Post-War Legacy: RAF Sealand remained active well into the post-war years, transitioning into roles that supported NATO and RAF peacetime operations. Although it ceased to operate as a full RAF station in the late 20th century, parts of the site continued to be used for military and civilian purposes, including as an Army Reserve Centre and commercial operations.

RAF Sealand's legacy is marked by its pivotal role in aircraft maintenance, technical training, and logistical support, which were essential in sustaining RAF operational effectiveness throughout WWII and beyond. The station's contributions to the RAF's capabilities in maintenance and training were critical to the successful air operations of the Allies during the war.

RAF Rhoose: Strategic and Operational Role in WWII

Location: Rhoose, Vale of Glamorgan, Wales (later became Cardiff Airport)
GPS Coordinates: 51.3988° N, 3.3432° W

Overview: RAF Rhoose was established during World War II in the village of Rhoose in the Vale of Glamorgan, Wales. Although it had a relatively brief military operational history, RAF Rhoose played an important role in supporting the RAF's efforts during the war. The airfield was initially developed as a satellite airfield to relieve the pressure on other nearby bases, such as RAF Llandow.

Role and Operations: RAF Rhoose was primarily used as a relief landing ground and training site. It supported several training units, which used the base for pilot instruction and practice flying. The airfield provided additional capacity for operational training, helping to ensure that pilots were adequately prepared for combat missions. While not directly involved in frontline combat operations, RAF Rhoose contributed to the broader training and readiness efforts essential to maintaining the RAF's operational strength.

In the later stages of WWII, RAF Rhoose was also utilized for storage and maintenance of aircraft. As the war progressed, the need for repair and storage facilities increased, and RAF Rhoose helped accommodate this demand. It operated in conjunction with other bases in the region to maintain a ready reserve of aircraft that could be deployed as needed.

Timeline:

- **1942:** RAF Rhoose was established as a satellite airfield, primarily supporting training operations.
- **1940s:** Functioned as a relief landing ground, aiding in the training of RAF pilots and other aircrew.
- **Post-WWII:** The airfield was gradually phased out of military use, and in 1946, it was identified as a suitable site for a civilian airport to serve South Wales.
- **1950s:** RAF Rhoose was officially closed as a military installation, and the site was developed into Cardiff Airport, which opened for civilian flights in 1952.

Post-War Legacy: RAF Rhoose's transition to civilian use after the war marked the beginning of its new role as Cardiff Airport, the primary airport for South Wales. The transformation from a wartime airfield into a commercial airport highlights the adaptability of military infrastructure to peacetime needs. Today, Cardiff Airport continues to serve as a vital transportation hub, with its origins as RAF Rhoose remembered as a part of its historical legacy.

Though its operational role during WWII was limited, RAF Rhoose played a supportive role in pilot training and aircraft maintenance, contributing to the overall war effort and providing a foundation for the post-war development of civilian air travel in Wales.

RAF Pengam Moors: Overview and Historical Significance

Location: Pengam area, Cardiff, Wales
GPS Coordinates: Approximately 51.4855° N, 3.13364° W

Overview: RAF Pengam Moors was an airfield located near the city centre of Cardiff, Wales. It was one of the first civil aerodromes in Wales and played a role in both civilian and military aviation during its operational years. Established in the 1930s, Pengam Moors initially served as Cardiff's primary airport, catering to both passenger and mail flights.

During World War II, it was adapted for military use, although it was not a primary RAF station.

Role and Operations: RAF Pengam Moors was primarily a civilian airfield, operated by the Cardiff Corporation from the early 1930s. It became a hub for civil aviation in South Wales, handling passenger services and air mail routes. The airfield featured grass runways, which limited the types and sizes of aircraft that could operate there, making it less suitable for heavy military operations.

World War II: During WWII, Pengam Moors was requisitioned for military use by the RAF and the Fleet Air Arm. Its strategic location near Cardiff made it useful as a satellite airfield and auxiliary landing ground, providing overflow capacity for nearby RAF bases like RAF Llandow and RAF St. Athan. The airfield supported various military activities, including the temporary accommodation of aircraft and personnel.

Military Activities:

- **Support and Auxiliary Roles:** RAF Pengam Moors served as an auxiliary airfield, primarily used for overflow parking and as a dispersal site to reduce the concentration of aircraft at more critical bases.
- **Air Training and Operations:** The airfield occasionally hosted training operations, including basic flying and navigation exercises for aircrew.

Despite its military use, Pengam Moors was not a heavily fortified or fully equipped RAF station, and its primary function remained civilian aviation. The airfield’s proximity to Cardiff city centre and the limited infrastructure meant that it was not suitable for large-scale wartime operations.

Timeline:

- **1931:** Opened as Cardiff Municipal Airport at Pengam Moors.
- **1939-1945:** Used intermittently by the RAF and Fleet Air Arm during WWII as a satellite airfield.
- **1945:** Continued limited operations post-war but was soon recognized as unsuitable for expanding aviation needs.
- **1950:** Operations began to transfer to RAF Rhoose, due to its better facilities and expansion potential.
- **1954:** Officially closed as an airport following the opening of Cardiff (Rhoose) Airport.

Post-War Legacy: After WWII, the airfield's limitations became more apparent, especially as aircraft technology advanced and the need for longer, paved runways increased. Cardiff's growing urban landscape also made Pengam Moors less viable for continued aviation use. In the early 1950s, Cardiff’s commercial aviation operations were transferred to RAF Rhoose, which had been developed into a more modern airport (now Cardiff Airport).

The site of RAF Pengam Moors was eventually redeveloped, and the area is now occupied by industrial and residential developments. Its role in the early years of Welsh aviation and during WWII is a notable part of Cardiff's aviation history.

RAF St. David's: Overview and Historical Significance

Location: Near Solva, Pembrokeshire, Wales
GPS Coordinates: 51.88635° N, -5.21366° W

Overview: RAF St. David's, located near Solva in Pembrokeshire, Wales, was a significant airfield during World War II. Its strategic position on the western coast of Wales made it an important site for maritime patrol and coastal defence operations.

Role and Operations: During World War II, RAF St. David's was primarily utilized for its role in anti-submarine warfare and coastal defence. The airfield's location was crucial for monitoring and protecting the Atlantic approaches to the UK, particularly against German naval threats.

World War II:

- **Maritime Patrol:** The airfield was equipped with aircraft such as the Catalina flying boats, which were used for long-range reconnaissance and anti-submarine patrols over the Atlantic.
- **Anti-Submarine Warfare:** RAF St. David's played a vital role in tracking and engaging enemy submarines, contributing to the broader Allied effort to secure shipping lanes and protect convoys.

Timeline:

- **1930s:** Initially used as a civilian airfield.
- **1939:** Requisitioned by the Royal Air Force at the start of World War II.
- **1940-1945:** Served as an anti-submarine and coastal defence base. The airfield was involved in regular patrols and operations to secure the western maritime approaches to the UK.
- **Post-WWII:** Continued to be used for various military purposes but gradually diminished in importance as other facilities assumed its roles.

- **1950s:** The airfield was closed and repurposed for other uses.

Post-War Legacy: After its closure, RAF St. David's was redeveloped, and the site has since been used for agricultural and other purposes. The airfield's contribution to WWII, particularly its role in maritime patrol and coastal defence, is remembered as part of Pembrokeshire's wartime history. The site reflects its strategic importance in protecting Allied interests and ensuring the security of vital sea routes during the war.

Today, the former RAF St. David's airfield is a historical marker of the region's wartime efforts and its role in the broader context of WWII maritime defence operations.

RAF Brawdy: Overview and Historical Significance

- **Location:** Near St. David's, Pembrokeshire, Wales
  GPS Coordinates: **Approximately 51.8806, -5.12923**

Overview: RAF Brawdy was a Royal Air Force station located near St. David's in Pembrokeshire, Wales. It was established during World War II and served as a key base for the RAF, the Fleet Air Arm, and later, the United States Navy. RAF Brawdy played significant roles in various military operations, including training, coastal defence, and Cold War activities, making it an important military installation throughout the mid-20th century.

Role and Operations:

World War II: RAF Brawdy was built during World War II, opening in 1944, primarily as a Coastal Command airfield. Its initial role was to support anti-submarine and reconnaissance operations over the Atlantic Ocean. The airfield hosted various squadrons, including those flying the Vickers Wellington, which were involved in long-range maritime patrols to protect Allied shipping lanes from German U-boat threats.

Post-WWII and Cold War: After World War II, RAF Brawdy continued to serve the RAF and, from 1946, the Fleet Air Arm of the Royal Navy. It became a significant base for naval air squadrons, including those flying carrier-borne aircraft such as the Hawker Sea Hawk and de Havilland Sea Vixen. RAF Brawdy was used extensively for training naval pilots, particularly in carrier operations.

In the 1970s, RAF Brawdy was transferred to the RAF once again and was used as a training base for the Tactical Weapons Unit. This unit was responsible for advanced jet training, utilizing aircraft like the Hawker Hunter and, later, the BAe Hawk, to prepare pilots for operational service.

United States Navy Operations: During the late Cold War period, RAF Brawdy was also utilized by the United States Navy as a base for its Oceanographic Air Survey Unit. The unit conducted surveillance and reconnaissance missions over the North Atlantic, contributing to NATO's broader strategic objectives during the Cold War.

Timeline:

- **1944:** RAF Brawdy opened as a Coastal Command base during WWII.
- **1946-1971:** Operated by the Fleet Air Arm, serving as a base for naval air squadrons and pilot training.
- **1971-1992:** Transferred back to the RAF and became home to the Tactical Weapons Unit, focusing on advanced jet training for RAF pilots.
- **1970s-1990s:** Used by the United States Navy for oceanographic and surveillance operations as part of NATO’s Cold War efforts.
- **1992:** RAF Brawdy was closed as an RAF station.

Post-Military Use: After its closure in 1992, RAF Brawdy was handed over to the British Army and became Cawdor Barracks, home to the 14th Signal Regiment. The site has since remained under military use, supporting army communications and training functions.

Legacy: RAF Brawdy’s long operational history reflects its adaptability and strategic importance, from World War II through the Cold War. It served multiple branches of the UK’s armed forces and international allies, playing crucial roles in coastal defence, naval training, and Cold War reconnaissance. Its legacy continues as a site of military significance in Pembrokeshire.

RAF Talbenny: Overview and Historical Significance

Location: Near Talbenny, Pembrokeshire, Wales

GPS Coordinates: Approximately 51.75783° N, -5.14102° W

Overview: RAF Talbenny was established as a Royal Air Force station during World War II. It was an important operational base primarily used by RAF Coastal Command for anti-submarine and maritime patrol missions over the Atlantic. Its strategic location in Pembrokeshire made it a critical site for protecting shipping lanes and engaging enemy submarines during the war.

Role and Operations:

World War II:

- **RAF Coastal Command:** RAF Talbenny opened in 1942 and was used by RAF Coastal Command. It hosted several squadrons that operated aircraft such as the Vickers Wellington, Handley Page Halifax, and Liberators, which were well-suited for long-range patrols and anti-submarine operations.
- **Anti-Submarine Warfare:** The airfield played a crucial role in the Battle of the Atlantic, helping to protect Allied convoys from German U-boat threats. Its aircraft conducted patrols and reconnaissance missions, contributing significantly to the Allied effort to secure vital maritime routes.

- **Support for D-Day Operations:** During the preparations for the D-Day landings, RAF Talbenny also supported missions that helped secure the English Channel and western approaches, ensuring the safety of the invasion fleet.

Post-War Period:

- After World War II, the importance of RAF Talbenny declined as the need for extensive anti-submarine patrols diminished. The base continued to operate in a reduced capacity before being placed on care and maintenance.
- **Closure:** RAF Talbenny was eventually closed as an active airfield in 1946 and was not reactivated during the post-war period.

Legacy: RAF Talbenny's contributions during World War II were critical to the success of Allied maritime operations in the Atlantic. Its role in anti-submarine warfare and coastal patrols helped to protect convoys and secure key shipping routes, making it an important, albeit lesser-known, component of the RAF's wartime strategy. Today, remnants of the airfield can still be found, serving as a reminder of its role in Britain's wartime defence efforts.

RNAS Dale (HMS Goldcrest): Overview and Historical Significance

Location: Near Dale, Pembrokeshire, Wales
GPS Coordinates: Approximately 51.71757° N, -5.19455° W

Overview: Initially established as RNAS Dale (HMS Goldcrest), this airfield was a Royal Naval Air Station before being transferred to the Royal Air Force and renamed RAF Dale. Its strategic coastal location made it an ideal base for both naval and RAF operations during World War II, particularly for maritime patrol and anti-submarine warfare.

Role and Operations:

Royal Naval Air Station (RNAS Dale):

- **RNAS Dale (HMS Goldcrest):** The station opened in June 1941 as a Royal Naval Air Station under the name HMS Goldcrest. During this period, it served as a base for Fleet Air Arm squadrons engaged in convoy protection, anti-submarine operations, and training missions.
- **Aircraft:** The RNAS hosted aircraft such as the Fairey Swordfish and Grumman Avenger, which were used for anti-submarine patrols, convoy escort duties, and reconnaissance missions over the Atlantic Ocean.

Transition to RAF Dale:

- **1942:** In October 1942, control of the airfield was transferred to the Royal Air Force, and it became RAF Dale. Under RAF Coastal Command, the station continued its focus on anti-submarine and maritime reconnaissance missions.
- **RAF Coastal Command:** RAF Dale was used by squadrons operating aircraft like the Vickers Wellington and Handley Page Halifax, which conducted long-range patrols over the Atlantic, targeting German U-boats and protecting Allied shipping routes.
- **Support for Atlantic Convoys:** The airfield played a vital role in safeguarding Atlantic convoys, which were crucial to the Allied war effort, by providing constant aerial surveillance and engagement capabilities against enemy submarines.

Post-War Period:

- **Reduced Operations:** After the end of World War II, RAF Dale saw a decline in operational activity. The reduction in the U-boat threat led to a decreased need for extensive coastal patrols, and the station was gradually phased out of active service.
- **1948:** RAF Dale was officially closed as an RAF station in 1948.

Legacy: RAF Dale's history as both an RNAS and an RAF station highlights its dual service role and strategic importance during World War II. Initially serving the Royal Navy, its transition to RAF control illustrates the collaborative efforts of the UK's armed forces in coastal and anti-submarine operations. Today, the site of the former airfield retains elements of its wartime heritage, reflecting its contribution to the defence of Britain's maritime interests during the conflict.

- in 1948.

Legacy: RAF Dale's history as both an RNAS and an RAF station highlights its dual service role and strategic importance during World War II. Initially serving the Royal Navy, its transition to RAF control illustrates the collaborative efforts of the UK's armed forces in coastal and anti-submarine operations. Today, the site of the former airfield retains elements of its wartime heritage, reflecting its contribution to the defence of Britain's maritime interests during the conflict.

RAF Angle: Overview and Historical Significance

Location: Near Angle, Pembrokeshire, Wales
GPS Coordinates: Approximately 51.67325° N, -5.09875° W

Overview: RAF Angle was a Royal Air Force station located near the village of Angle in Pembrokeshire, Wales. Established during World War II, it played a crucial role in coastal defence, providing air cover for shipping convoys and conducting anti-submarine and search and rescue operations. The airfield's strategic position near the western approaches made it an important base for protecting the vital maritime routes of the Atlantic.

Role and Operations:

World War II:

- **Opening:** RAF Angle was opened in 1941 as part of the expansion of RAF Coastal Command's network of airfields, specifically aimed at bolstering the UK's defences against German U-boats and other naval threats.
- **Fighter and Coastal Patrols:** RAF Angle primarily operated as a fighter and coastal patrol station. It hosted a variety of squadrons and aircraft, including Supermarine Spitfires, Hawker Hurricanes, and later, Bristol Beaufighters, which were used for air defence, convoy escort, and anti-shipping strikes.
- **Anti-Submarine Warfare:** The airfield was heavily involved in anti-submarine operations, using aircraft equipped with depth charges and other weaponry designed to engage and neutralize enemy submarines threatening Allied convoys in the Atlantic.
- **Search and Rescue:** RAF Angle also played a role in air-sea rescue missions, assisting in the recovery of downed airmen and sailors, which was critical given the perilous conditions of the western approaches.

Key Units and Aircraft:

- **Squadrons:** Various RAF squadrons were based at Angle throughout the war, including No. 312 (Czechoslovak) Squadron flying Spitfires, and later, No. 404 (Buffalo) Squadron RCAF with Beaufighters.
- **Aircraft:** Key aircraft operated from RAF Angle included the Spitfire for fighter defence, the Hurricane for both fighter and ground attack roles, and the Beaufighter for long-range strike and anti-submarine missions.

Post-War Period:

- Following the end of World War II, the operational importance of RAF Angle declined. The station was gradually wound down as the need for intensive coastal defence and anti-submarine operations decreased.
- **Closure:** RAF Angle was closed in 1945, shortly after the conclusion of hostilities in Europe, and was subsequently decommissioned as an RAF station.

Legacy: RAF Angle's contribution during World War II was significant in the broader context of protecting the UK's maritime approaches and ensuring the safety of vital supply routes across the Atlantic. Its squadrons and personnel played an essential role in the Battle of the Atlantic, providing air cover, engaging enemy submarines, and safeguarding Allied shipping convoys.

Today, remnants of the airfield can still be found near Angle, serving as historical markers of its wartime significance. The site is remembered as a key part of the RAF's coastal command operations and a vital element of Pembrokeshire's rich wartime history.

RAF Manorbier: Overview and Historical Significance

Location: Near Manorbier, Pembrokeshire, Wales
GPS Coordinates: Approximately 51.64149° N, -4.78359° W

Overview: RAF Manorbier was a Royal Air Force station located near the village of Manorbier in Pembrokeshire, Wales. Established during World War II, it served primarily as an anti-aircraft and weapons training establishment. Unlike many other RAF stations in the region, RAF Manorbier was not an operational airfield for fighter or bomber aircraft but was instead dedicated to the training and development of anti-aircraft gunnery skills, which were critical for the defence of the UK against aerial threats.

Role and Operations:

World War II:

- **Anti-Aircraft Training:** RAF Manorbier was opened in 1933 as an Army anti-aircraft school, but it was taken over by the RAF during World War II. Its primary role was as a firing range and training facility for anti-aircraft gunnery, helping to train personnel in the use of anti-aircraft guns and the tactics required to defend against enemy aircraft.
- **Weapons Development and Testing:** In addition to training, RAF Manorbier was also involved in the testing and development of anti-aircraft weaponry. The station's location near the coast allowed for live firing exercises over the sea, where targets could be towed by aircraft for realistic training scenarios.
- **Support for Coastal Defence:** The skills developed at RAF Manorbier contributed significantly to the coastal defence efforts during the war, enhancing the capabilities of anti-aircraft units stationed around the UK.

Post-War Period:

- **Continued Training Operations:** After World War II, RAF Manorbier continued to serve as a training establishment. The station remained active as an anti-aircraft and missile training facility, reflecting the evolving nature of air defence technology during the Cold War era.
- **Transition to Guided Weapons:** In the post-war years, RAF Manorbier transitioned to the training and testing of guided missile systems, including surface-to-air missiles, which became an increasingly important component of the UK's air defence strategy.

Later Use and Closure:

- The station continued to operate in a training capacity for several decades after the war, adapting to the technological advancements in air defence.
- **Closure:** RAF Manorbier was eventually closed as an RAF establishment and was transferred to the British Army as a missile and air defence training range. It remains under military use, managed as part of the Army's Air Defence Ranges.

Legacy: RAF Manorbier's legacy lies in its contribution to the development and enhancement of the UK's air defence capabilities. From World War II through the Cold War, it played a crucial role in training anti-aircraft gunners and, later, missile operators, ensuring that the UK remained prepared to defend its airspace from evolving threats. The station's

ongoing use as a military training range underscores its enduring importance in the UK's defence infrastructure.

RAF Aberporth: Overview and Historical Significance

Location: Near Aberporth, Ceredigion, Wales
GPS Coordinates: Approximately 52.11468° N, -4.55931° W

Overview: RAF Aberporth was established as a Royal Air Force station during World War II and played a critical role as a weapon testing and training site. Located on the west coast of Wales, its strategic position made it ideal for testing rockets, missiles, and other aerial munitions over the nearby Cardigan Bay. Over the decades, RAF Aberporth evolved into a leading site for the development and evaluation of guided weapons systems, and it continues to operate today, primarily as a testing range under the Ministry of Defence.

Role and Operations:

World War II:

- **Establishment and Early Use:** RAF Aberporth was opened in 1939, originally as an RAF station for training and testing weapons. During World War II, it was primarily used for testing rockets and anti-aircraft missiles, helping to advance the UK's capabilities in aerial warfare.
- **Weapons Testing:** The site was heavily involved in the testing of air-to-ground and air-to-air rockets, which were vital for RAF operations against enemy targets. The isolated coastal location provided a safe environment for these activities, allowing for live firing over the sea without risk to populated areas.

Post-War and Cold War Era:

- **Expansion of Testing Operations:** After World War II, RAF Aberporth expanded its role in missile testing, becoming a key site for the development of the UK's guided weapons systems. This included testing early surface-to-air missiles, air-to-air missiles, and later, more advanced precision-guided munitions.
- **Partnerships and Technological Advancements:** Throughout the Cold War, RAF Aberporth collaborated with other military and defence industry partners, including the Royal Navy and various defence contractors, to test and evaluate cutting-edge weapons technologies.

Modern Use:

- **MOD Aberporth:** In the post-Cold War period, the site was rebranded as MOD Aberporth and continues to function as one of the UK's primary missile and UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) testing ranges. It is managed by QinetiQ, a defence technology company, under contract with the Ministry of Defence.
- **UAV and Missile Testing:** Today, MOD Aberporth is involved in the testing of advanced weapons systems, including unmanned aerial systems (drones), complex missile systems, and other guided weapons. It provides a secure and controlled environment for both live and simulated weapons trials.

Key Functions:

- **Flight Trials and Testing:** The site supports a wide range of testing activities, including flight trials, telemetry tracking, and weapons evaluation for both UK and international defence projects.
- **Research and Development:** MOD Aberporth also plays a role in the research and development of new weapons technologies, supporting the UK’s efforts to maintain cutting-edge defence capabilities.

Legacy: RAF Aberporth's legacy is rooted in its contributions to the UK’s military strength through the testing and development of advanced weapons systems. From World War II rockets to modern-day guided missiles and UAVs, the site has continually adapted to meet the evolving needs of the UK’s armed forces. It remains a key asset in the UK’s defence infrastructure, reflecting decades of technological progress and strategic importance.

RAF Rudbaxton: Overview and Historical Significance

Location: Near Rudbaxton, Pembrokeshire, Wales
GPS Coordinates: Approximately 51.83435° N, -4.9601° W

Overview: RAF Rudbaxton was a Royal Air Force station located near the village of Rudbaxton in Pembrokeshire, Wales. Established during World War II, it primarily served as an airfield for anti-aircraft training and gunnery practice. Its role was integral to the development of anti-aircraft defence tactics, helping to prepare RAF and other Allied forces for the air defence of the UK.

Role and Operations:

World War II:

- **Anti-Aircraft Training:** RAF Rudbaxton was opened in 1943 as part of the RAF's efforts to enhance the training of anti-aircraft gunners during the height of World War II. The airfield provided a base where anti-aircraft units could practice live firing and train in the use of various anti-aircraft guns and associated equipment.
- **Target Towing Flights:** Aircraft based at RAF Rudbaxton were often used to tow aerial targets for anti-aircraft gunnery practice. This was crucial for simulating

realistic combat conditions, allowing gunners to hone their skills against moving targets.

- **Aircraft Operations:** The airfield hosted several types of aircraft for training and support roles, including planes modified for towing targets and for observer duties. Common aircraft types included the Miles Martinet and the Hawker Henley, which were specifically adapted for target towing missions.

Post-War Period:

- **Reduced Operations:** After the end of World War II, the need for extensive anti-aircraft training decreased, and RAF Rudbaxton's operational activities were significantly reduced. The station continued to be used for training purposes but on a much smaller scale.
- **Closure:** RAF Rudbaxton was officially closed as an RAF station in 1946, shortly after the war ended, as part of the post-war downsizing of the UK's military infrastructure.

Legacy: RAF Rudbaxton's primary legacy lies in its role as a training ground for anti-aircraft defence during World War II. The station contributed to the RAF's broader strategy of preparing personnel to defend the UK against aerial attacks, particularly from German aircraft. Although it was not a front-line operational base, its importance in the training and development of anti-aircraft tactics was significant.

Today, little remains of the original airfield, but its contribution to the UK's wartime efforts is remembered as part of Pembrokeshire's rich aviation history. The site exemplifies the numerous smaller, specialized airfields that played crucial support roles in the broader context of World War II.

RNAS Lawrenny (HMS Daedalus II): Overview and Historical Significance

Location: Near Lawrenny, Pembrokeshire, Wales
GPS Coordinates: Approximately 51.71887° N, -4.87991° W

Overview: RNAS Lawrenny, also known as HMS Daedalus II, was a Royal Naval Air Station located near Lawrenny in Pembrokeshire, Wales. Established during World War II, it served as a base for the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm, primarily for training and operational purposes related to coastal defence and anti-submarine warfare.

Role and Operations:

World War II:

- **Establishment and Naming:** The airfield was commissioned in 1942 and was initially known as RNAS Lawrenny Ferry. It was later renamed HMS Daedalus II. The name "HMS Daedalus II" was part of a series of names used for naval air stations and was designated to signify its role as a secondary or auxiliary site related to the main HMS Daedalus, a key naval air station located at Lee-on-Solent.
- **Training and Operations:** The primary function of RNAS Lawrenny was to serve as a training establishment for naval aviators. It played a crucial role in preparing pilots and crews for anti-submarine and coastal defence operations. The airfield supported Fleet Air Arm squadrons engaged in maritime patrols and reconnaissance missions.
- **Aircraft:** The airfield hosted various aircraft types used for training and operational missions. These included the Fairey Swordfish, used for anti-submarine warfare, and other aircraft suited for coastal defence roles.

Post-War Period:

- **Operational Changes:** After World War II, the need for extensive naval aviation training and coastal defence operations diminished. RNAS Lawrenny continued to operate in a reduced capacity, focusing on training and support roles for a time.
- **Closure:** The airfield was officially closed in 1945 as part of the post-war reduction in military infrastructure. The site was subsequently decommissioned and repurposed for other uses.

Legacy: RNAS Lawrenny's contribution as HMS Daedalus II was significant during World War II, serving as a key training base for the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm. Its role in anti-submarine warfare and coastal defence was important for the protection of maritime routes and the training of naval aviators.

Today, the site has been repurposed, but its historical significance remains a part of Pembrokeshire's military heritage. The name HMS Daedalus II reflects the broader efforts of the Royal Navy to maintain and enhance its aviation capabilities during a critical period of conflict.

RAF Llanbedr: Overview and Historical Significance

Location: Near Llanbedr, Gwynedd, Wales
GPS Coordinates: Approximately 52.81078° N, -4.1236° W

Overview: RAF Llanbedr is a former Royal Air Force station located near Llanbedr in Gwynedd, Wales. Established during World War II, it served multiple roles throughout its operational life, including as a base for coastal defence, anti-submarine warfare, and, later, as a training facility. The airfield's strategic location along the western coast of Wales made it an asset during the war and in the subsequent years.

Role and Operations:

World War II:

- **Establishment:** RAF Llanbedr was opened in 1941 as a Royal Air Force station. Its location was strategically chosen for its proximity to the Irish Sea and the western approaches, which were important for maritime patrols and anti-submarine operations.
- **Anti-Submarine Warfare:** During World War II, the airfield was primarily used by RAF Coastal Command for anti-submarine warfare (ASW). It hosted several squadrons that conducted patrols over the Irish Sea to protect Allied shipping lanes from German U-boats.
- **Aircraft:** Key aircraft stationed at RAF Llanbedr included the Vickers Wellington and the Handley Page Halifax, which were used for long-range maritime patrols and anti-submarine operations.

Post-War Period:

- **Training and Other Roles:** After World War II, RAF Llanbedr continued to operate in various capacities. It was used as a training base for several years and later became involved in different military and civil aviation roles.
- **Jet Testing and Development:** In the post-war period, the airfield was used for testing and development of jet aircraft and other advanced aviation technologies. It played a role in the UK's efforts to develop and refine its jet-powered aircraft capabilities.
- **Closure:** RAF Llanbedr was officially closed as an active airfield in 1994. After its closure, the site was transferred to civil use and has been repurposed for various purposes.

Current Status:

- **Commercial and Recreational Use:** The former RAF Llanbedr site is now used for commercial aviation activities, including aircraft maintenance and training. It also supports recreational flying and is home to a flying club.
- **Airfield Preservation:** Efforts have been made to preserve the historical aspects of the airfield while adapting the site for modern uses. Some original buildings and infrastructure from the RAF era remain on-site.

Legacy: RAF Llanbedr's legacy is significant due to its role in coastal defence during World War II and its subsequent contributions to aviation technology and training. The airfield's strategic location and varied use throughout its operational life highlight its importance to both military and civil aviation history.

Today, RAF Llanbedr is remembered as a key site in the UK's defence infrastructure during the war years and continues to serve as a valuable aviation asset in its current role. Its history reflects the broader efforts of the Royal Air Force in protecting maritime routes and advancing aviation technology.

RAF Colwyn Bay: Overview and Historical Significance

Location: Near Colwyn Bay, Conwy, Wales
GPS Coordinates: Approximately 53.2960° N, -3.7270° W

Overview: RAF Colwyn Bay was a Royal Air Force station located near Colwyn Bay in Conwy, Wales. Established during World War II, it was primarily used as an auxiliary airfield and played a role in both coastal defence and training operations. Although not as prominent as some other RAF stations, it contributed to the broader efforts of the Royal Air Force during the war.

Role and Operations:

World War II:

- **Establishment:** RAF Colwyn Bay was opened in 1941 as a satellite airfield for nearby RAF stations. Its role was mainly to support operational activities and provide additional facilities for various RAF squadrons.

- **Training and Auxiliary Role:** The airfield was used primarily for training purposes and as a base for auxiliary operations. It supported operational squadrons by providing additional resources and facilities, including accommodation and maintenance support.
- **Aircraft and Units:** During its operational period, RAF Colwyn Bay hosted several types of aircraft, including trainers and light fighters. It was used by squadrons from other nearby RAF stations for various training and support activities.

Post-War Period:

- **Reduced Use:** After World War II, RAF Colwyn Bay's operational role diminished. The airfield saw a reduction in activity as the need for additional satellite facilities decreased with the end of the war.
- **Closure:** The airfield was officially closed in the late 1940s or early 1950s. Following its closure, the site was repurposed for other uses, and most of the original RAF infrastructure was dismantled or repurposed.

Current Status:

- **Repurposing and Development:** The site of the former RAF Colwyn Bay has since been developed for various civilian uses. The airfield's land has been repurposed, and there are few visible remnants of the original RAF facilities.
- **Legacy:** While RAF Colwyn Bay may not have been as prominent as other RAF stations, its role in supporting the broader RAF operations during World War II remains a part of its historical legacy. Its contributions to training and auxiliary support were important for the effectiveness of RAF squadrons during the war.

Legacy: RAF Colwyn Bay's history reflects the broader network of auxiliary and satellite airfields that supported the RAF during World War II. These smaller airfields were integral to maintaining operational readiness and providing support to front-line units. Though it has been repurposed, the site’s historical significance as part of the UK's wartime infrastructure is remembered as a part of Colwyn Bay’s aviation heritage.

RAF Llandwrog: Overview and Historical Significance

Location: Near Llandwrog, Gwynedd, Wales
GPS Coordinates: Approximately 53.1032° N, -4.33833° W

Overview: RAF Llandwrog was a Royal Air Force station located near Llandwrog in Gwynedd, Wales. Established during World War II, it served various roles including operational and training functions. Its location in North Wales made it a strategically important site for the RAF during the war, especially for coastal defence and training operations.

Role and Operations:

World War II:

- **Establishment:** RAF Llandwrog was opened in 1941 as an operational airfield. It was used by the RAF for a range of functions including training and coastal defence operations.
- **Coastal Defence:** During World War II, the airfield played a role in coastal defence, supporting operations aimed at protecting the western approaches of the UK from potential enemy threats, including submarines and aircraft.
- **Training:** RAF Llandwrog was also used for training purposes. The airfield supported various RAF squadrons and provided facilities for pilot and crew training. This included basic flight training as well as more specialized training in anti-submarine and coastal defence tactics.

Post-War Period:

- **Operational Changes:** After World War II, the need for the airfield's operational and training roles declined. RAF Llandwrog continued to be used for a period in a reduced capacity, focusing on support and reserve functions.
- **Closure:** The airfield was officially closed in the early 1950s. After its closure, the site was gradually decommissioned, and the infrastructure was dismantled or repurposed.

Current Status:

- **Repurposing:** The site of the former RAF Llandwrog has been repurposed for various civilian uses. The airfield's land has been developed for other purposes, and most of the original RAF facilities have been removed or converted for new uses.
- **Legacy:** Although RAF Llandwrog is not as well-known as some other RAF stations, its role during World War II in training and coastal defence was important. The airfield contributed to the broader efforts of the RAF in maintaining air and coastal security during a critical period.

Legacy: RAF Llandwrog's legacy is reflective of the many smaller and auxiliary airfields that supported the Royal Air Force during World War II. These airfields were crucial for maintaining operational readiness and supporting various facets of the RAF's mission. While the site has been repurposed, its historical role as part of the RAF's wartime infrastructure remains an important part of Gwynedd's aviation heritage.

The RAF and RNAS airfields stationed across Wales during the World Wars were crucial to the United Kingdom's military efforts and strategic operations. These airfields, scattered across the Welsh landscape, played a significant role in both defensive and offensive operations. From providing essential training for aircrew to executing pivotal coastal and anti-submarine patrols, their contributions were instrumental in securing the nation's air and maritime defences.

The Enduring Legacy of Wales's World War Airfields

Each airfield, whether serving as a base for reconnaissance, a hub for training, or a centre for operational missions, was a key component in the broader war effort. Their locations and functions reflected the strategic needs of the time, supporting both the Royal Air Force and the Royal Naval Air Service in their critical roles.

The legacy of these airfields is a testament to the dedication and resilience of those who served. They were vital in shaping the outcome of the World Wars and continue to be an important part of Wales's rich aviation history. As we remember their contributions, we honour the pivotal role they played in maintaining air and maritime security during a time of great global conflict.

Graham T Emmanuel 2024

Honouring the Fallen:

Airmen Who Died in World War II Plane Crashes in Wales

At the heart of the **Wings of War Project 2024** lies the memory of the brave airmen from various nations who tragically lost their lives in World War II plane crashes across Wales.

Each crash site, meticulously documented through extensive research, represents not just a point on a map but a solemn place where lives were lost in service to their respective countries. To preserve their legacy,

I have created a **Virtual Cemetery** on **Findagrave** titled **WW2 Plane Crashes Wales**, where the stories of these fallen servicemen are memorialised.

https://tinyurl.com/WW2-RAF-Wales-Memorials

This virtual cemetery is more than a collection of names; it's a tribute to the courage and sacrifice of airmen from a wide array of nationalities. Among the fallen were British, Canadian, Polish, Australian, Czechoslovakian, New Zealand, and American airmen, all of whom played vital roles in the war effort.

Additionally, the project honours a few German airmen who perished in crashes over Welsh soil. Despite the wartime divisions, their inclusion in this memorial serves as a reminder that the loss of life was a shared tragedy, affecting families and communities on both sides of the conflict.

The database provides detailed information about these airmen, including their ranks, roles, and personal stories, where available.

By gathering and sharing these details, the project ensures that these individuals are remembered not just as casualties of war but as individuals who made sacrifices for their nations. Whether through virtual memorials or physical crash sites, the memory of these airmen is preserved for future generations, offering a poignant reminder of the human cost of war across national borders.