

**Looking for “Captain Davis” the story of ME846  
This is a synopsis of the Story of ME846**

**Lancaster 1, PG-C, Registration ME846 – 21<sup>st</sup> /22<sup>nd</sup> June 1944**



On the night of 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> June 1944, one of the shortest nights of the year, 16 Lancasters of 619 Squadron at Dunholme Lodge, were to be included with aircraft from 44 Squadron and 49 Squadron in a task force of 133 Lancasters and 6 Mosquitos to attack the oil and fuel dumps at Wesseling, to the south of Cologne. This was considered a tough target, deep into enemy territory and new crews were not included.

Lancaster ME846, delivered to the squadron on 11<sup>th</sup> June, had only flown 8 hours and was to carry a big load of both fuel and bombs for this raid. For the first time in the seven missions completed by the chosen crew, the bomb load was to include a “Cookie” (4,000lb bomb) plus 16 x 500 lb bombs and the bombing height for this raid was fixed at 20,000 feet.

The crew to fly the aircraft on this mission was made up of:  
Pilot: Pilot Officer Mark Anthony Hamilton “Dave” Davis, RAFVR.  
Flight Engineer: Sergeant W. Dennis “Geordie” Belshaw, RAF.  
Bomb Aimer: Flight Sergeant Peter Edmund “Pete” Knox, RAAF.  
Navigator: Flight Sergeant Leslie E. J. “Tag” Taylor, RAF.  
Wireless Operator: Sergeant Thomas A, “Tom” Newbery, RAF  
Mid-Upper Gunner: Sergeant George Harry Moggridge, RAFVR.

Rear Gunner: Pilot Officer John Ernest Ralf “Porky” Bowering, RCAF.

From the diaries of Peter Knox, Leslie Taylor and Dennis Belshaw; from RAF records as well as the official report submitted by the crew of the German fighter that shot down the Lancaster, we know some of the events that took place that night.

The route for this raid was to take the bomber stream in various dog-legs, in order to confuse the enemy, to the eventual target at Wesseling, south of Cologne, starting from an assembly point over the North Sea for all the aircraft involved, which was at 5230N/0300E.

At 2301 hours the fully fuelled Lancaster lumbered off the runway carrying its crew of seven and 12,000lbs of bombs, rising slowly over the Lincolnshire countryside with its heavy load. Like the other pilots of his squadron, Dave struggled to climb to meet with all the aircraft in the raid and as they moved out towards the North Sea, he watched as other squadrons joined the bomber stream from their respective airfields.

Leslie Taylor, as navigator, had set the course to the assembly point and then on reaching this, had given a new heading to Dave to the next marker at 5145N/0350E, just south of the island of Walcheren, where the whole bomber stream was to be at 14,000 feet.

As they flew over the North Sea towards Europe, they ran into a problem. Flight Engineer, Dennis Belshaw takes up the story. *“Initially the trip was quiet & uneventful, then just after the first hour had passed we started to have our first trouble. It was nothing serious just a spot of overheating in two of our engines so I, as flight engineer of the aircraft, advised the Skipper to level out, for at that time we were still climbing on course. The Skipper taking my advice, levelled out and so, for the next 15 minutes, we flew along that way. When I decided that the engines were cool enough to resume climbing, I passed on the information to the Skipper and we started once more to climb. It was through this method of climbing in slow and easy stages that we got to 14,000 feet when we crossed over the Dutch island of Walcheren, close to the Belgium border.”* On reaching this next marker, Leslie Taylor gave a new heading to Dave, which would take them, together with the rest of the formation, clear of much of the known anti-aircraft batteries. All the aircraft were to climb to 18,000 feet.

A short while later Peter Knox, the bomb aimer, reported: *“Fighter planes were dropping flares which lit up the sky between the Lancasters and the ground, silhouetting us for their attacks. Before we came under fire from that quarter, I reported seeing flashes from anti-aircraft guns on the ground and in accordance with established routines we started to weave.”*

On reaching the next turning point at 5140N/0505E, a few kilometres north of Turnhout in Belgium, the bomber stream split, some carrying on 090 degrees whilst ME846 turned to the south with the remaining bombers onto a new heading on 170 degrees, heading to the next turning point at 5100N/0525E just north of Hasselt in Belgium. However the aircraft never made this position, for, as it was approximately 20kms south west of Eindhoven and probably still below the main formation due to the earlier engine problems, it was picked out by a Messerschmitt Bf 110 G9+BC night fighter of No. 1 Night Fighter Squadron, piloted by Hauptman Eckhart von Bonin, with navigator, Staff Sergeant Johrden and Gunner, First Private Zerbach. This aircraft has, in its armament, four upward firing guns that can be used to great effect when flying directly beneath an enemy aircraft. The tactic adopted was called “Schrage Music” where the Messerschmitt would slowly creep up underneath an unsuspecting bomber and shoot straight upwards into the wing tanks. The success rate was very high and the RAF had no idea for some months why so many aircraft were being lost. The reports subsequently made by

the Messerschmitt crew, indicated that they took off on a night sortie at 0042 hours in “undirected tame boar” mode. “ungefuerter zahmer Sau” (“Undirected tame boar” was a tactic used by night fighters with Liechtenstein Radar, without direction from ground radar, searching in groups and co-ordinating themselves by radio. The name derives from “Raging Boar”, a tactic used by day fighters who, when flying at night, attacked on eye sight alone without external or internal radar direction.). They soon located the bomber stream flying south-west of Eindhoven at 6,000 metres (19,700 feet) on a course of 170 degrees. At 0109 hours the radio operator identified and directed the pilot to a four engine bomber flying at 5400 metres (18,000 feet). The pilot of the Messerschmitt moved into the assault position beneath the Lancaster, he continues; “...at 0112 hours I did shoot a good laying, long salvo from the fuselage to the right inner engine, the enemy plane instantly began to burn bright in the hit area....” The Gunner reported; “...the fire also covering the rear fuselage....”

Peter Knox comments: “... there was the sound of a muffled explosion and a jolt. The pilot was momentarily startled and said “!!!!”. Our plane had been hit by ack-ack (he and the rest of the crew had no idea that they had in fact been targeted by an enemy aircraft) and one of the starboard engines was on fire.”

Dennis Belshaw: “We were hit in the starboard outer engine which caught fire immediately and even though I feathered the engine and then pressed the fire extinguisher button, the fire still continued to spread rapidly towards the fuel tanks.”

Peter Knox: “Immediately we reverted to the language drilled into us in the many hours of practice for just such an emergency. In a very few seconds he (the Skipper) clearly recognised that the fire was out of control. In a calm clipped voice he said “abandon aircraft-emergency, jump, jump.” We now went into the automatic response stage. I was lying over the front exit through which the bomb-aimer, navigator, wireless-operator, flight-engineer and pilot had to make their escape. The two gunners had escape routes at the rear. As soon as the pilot gave the orders to abandon the plane, we each had to confirm over the inter-com that we were jumping. As I had to lift up the escape hatch I responded first, “air-bomber jumping”. I heard the others starting to confirm that they were going too. There was no shouting, no calls for help. In a numbed state, I moved into the escape routine. I scrambled to my feet, grabbing and fixing the parachute onto the harness by clips in front of the chest and sneaking a look at the fire engulfing the wing. I was now disconnected from the inter-com. Since we were at close to 20,000 feet, we had to keep using oxygen until the very last seconds. For this we had individual supplies. I undid the clips of the escape hatch and lifted it for jettisoning. The force of the rush of air twisted it as it dropped vertically through the hatch. For a horrible second it was jamming the escape route. I kicked it clear, saw the gaping hole with a sense of enormous relief and rolled out head first.”

Dennis Belshaw recounts that “On hearing this, (the order to abandon the aircraft) I went into a panic for a short while, but managed to calm down enough to be able to carry out my duties. I divested my helmet & oxygen mask, clipped on my parachute then handed the Skipper his parachute. By this time the navigator was pushing me from behind, hurrying me on. So seeing there was nothing else I could do and knowing that Pete the bomb aimer had already jumped, I moved down into the bomb aimer’s compartment and, after checking my ‘chute and harness, I jumped from the aircraft.” Years later, the widow of Dennis Belshaw said that Dennis had told her that he was reluctant to leave the aircraft. He apparently elected to assist Dave in the flying of the crippled plane, but Dave had had to order him to jump. This delay in leaving the aircraft is perhaps why the navigator was pressing him from behind

Leslie Taylor was equally shocked and reports on hearing the instruction to abandon the aircraft: “My God, I’m a dead man I thought to myself. However, I seemed to move away from my navigation table

*as if it were all part of the usual routine. I clipped on my parachute pack, discarded my helmet and moved forward to the nose in readiness for the “bailing out”. From the cabin I could see that our starboard outer engine had gone and that we were blazing furiously aft. I tapped the pilot on the shoulder and waved cheerio. Once in the nose, without losing a single second, I plunged through the escape hatch.”* The wireless operator, Thomas Newbery followed Leslie out of the aircraft. Unfortunately we do not have his account.

Peter Knox continues: *“It takes no courage to leave a burning aircraft with a load of bombs and fuel aboard. The instinct for survival is strong and the sky stretching out below represented safety. All this time the pilot was holding the plane steady. As I tumbled clear of the plane, I fumbled for the ripcord. At first my hand found the cloth strap of the parachute bag. Quickly it moved to the ripcord. I pulled it and almost instantly the parachute opened and, with a violent jerk, my fall was broken. I found myself floating. This was an environment for which there had been no rehearsal. I was no longer responding like a robot to in-built commands. The disaster which had hit us struck me and, although I have never been a hard swearer, my first conscious thought was to say “fuck it”. Then I recollect thanking God I had escaped and rather desperately willing that my mother and father should somehow know I was alive. I could hear the droning of the Lancasters above as they pushed on towards the target.”*

Meanwhile, as the aircraft had rapidly descended out of the main stream of the formation, Dave had turned the aircraft to port and onto a reciprocal course and, although uninjured, had been holding the lurching plane as steadily as possible to allow all of the crew to escape. What happened next is not clear. It is known that the flight engineer, the navigator and the wireless-operator left the aircraft after the bomb aimer, but the fifth to leave by that exit, Dave, did not follow and it would appear the two gunners never made it from their exit either, despite a clear indication from the mid-upper gunner, George Moggridge, that he was jumping. However, both Peter and Leslie were sure that the rear-gunner, John Bowering, already lay dead in his turret as nothing was heard from him over the intercom before they jumped. It is therefore likely that whilst Dave stayed at the controls of the aircraft, George Moggridge, on clipping on his parachute in the rear of the plane, noticed that the rear-gunner had not left the aircraft and went to his aid, telling Dave of the problem at the same time. However, with the starboard wing and the rear of the fuselage now on fire, it is also possible that the escape exit for the gunners was blocked by these flames, as their exit was on the starboard side of the plane.

The crew of the Messerschmitt reported that after being hit, the Lancaster went into a left curve and into a steep dive, burning brightly. At the upper layer of cloud cover at about 1,000 metres (3,300 feet) there was a small explosion and the aircraft broke into two parts with the right wing falling away from the fuselage. The two parts crashed at 0114 hours with the impact fire seen as a sudden illumination through the thin cloud cover. They reported the wreck site to be about 20-30 km south-south west of Eindhoven.

This reported “sudden illumination” would have been when the aircraft’s bomb load finally exploded, for, according to RAF records, the aircraft exploded in mid-air with the crash site in the Bladel Woods on the Dutch side of the border with Belgium, but nothing to identify it has ever been recovered by the RAF. Peter Knox, Leslie Taylor & Dennis Belshaw indicated that it exploded below them whilst they were still on their parachutes above the cloud cover, so, like the crew of the Messerschmitt, all they would have seen would have been the illumination of the explosion through the cloud.

Note: The explosion was confirmed by the Parish priest in Postel on the Belgian side of the border.

Peter Knox again, whilst still descending by parachute: *“Within a very short space of time I saw the explosion as our plane plummeted into the ground. I wondered if the others had got out and I shouted*

*out the name of "George", our mid-upper gunner. I thought he might have jumped about the same time as me. My voice seemed to be lost in the vast dark space around me and I realised there was no possibility of making any form of human contact. I calculated that it took me some 15 minutes to reach the ground. At first I found it hard to stop myself from swinging as the wind blew the parachute around and at one point I was sick. Then I entered calmer air and the descent became quite smooth. Looking back I cannot recall worrying about the landing. I knew we were over land and that our flight path had kept us clear of major cities. I passed through some clouds and before I had time to realise it I had hit the ground on the fringe of a pine forest and my parachute was snagged on a small tree. Luck was on my side. I was unhurt. The weather was fine. It was dark and I was in an isolated area."*

*On leaving the aircraft, Dennis Belshaw comments, "I had no trouble whatsoever with my parachute, it opened smoothly and quickly and so I started my slow descent to the earth or the black unknown below me. On the way down I had one or two scares. First of all there was a rocket coming for me or at least so I thought, then there was Flak bursting on all sides of me, but to crown it all, fighter flares were dropping on my left and through the illumination I could see a fighter coming towards me. On seeing this I slumped in my harness as though I was dead and it seemed to work for on seeing this he banked sharply to my port and left me alive to continue down to earth. My actions may have been foolish, but it is best in my opinion to take no chances these days. I was slowly descending and at that moment I hit the cloud, which in my opinion was about at 10,000 feet. It was then that I realised I was on my own and in a rotten predicament coming down in enemy territory. For the next few minutes I forgot all about that because my descent was ending and I was about 50 feet from the ground before I realised it was so near. The next thing that happened was as I was getting ready for the impact, I felt something whipping passed me and it wasn't until I became stationary that I realised that my parachute had caught itself in the branches of a large poplar tree and that I had been dragged through the branches. I also realised at that moment that I was suspended by my parachute about 10 or 15 feet from the ground and that though having all my weight on my harness, I could not release myself from the chute. On seeing this I started to swing about until my right foot rested on a branch and then taking my weight on my right leg, I managed to release myself from the harness and parachute. Immediately this happened I fell to the ground and after recovering from the shock of the impact, discovered I had come through all my adventures without a scratch."*

*Leslie Taylor had a similar experience, "...the next thing I knew I was floating down to earth. It was an exhilarating feeling after the stuffy atmosphere of the aircraft, but the constant anti-aircraft shells bursting all around me were rather worrying, also the fact that I was over enemy occupied territory and wondering what was going to happen to me. Whilst I was still coming down, I heard a terrible explosion beneath me and when I saw the flames shooting up, I realised that it was the end of "C" Charlie, our faithful Lancaster Bomber. Through the darkness I was just able to make out some vague shadows; it looked like a wood and before I realised just what it was, I hit the ground with a bump, certainly not in the approved fashion. I picked myself up and after releasing my harness, said to myself, "You're safe on terra firma, you lucky blighter". When I thought of what might have happened to my crew, a lump came to my throat."*

*This explosion of the aircraft is confirmed by the Parish priest from Postel who says "1944, night of 20 June; (it is thought that he has the incorrect date as no aircraft were reported lost over Postel on 20th) heavy firing from Flak to squadrons of RAF-planes flying direction Germany. A loaded bomber exploded in the air in the vicinity of the border-markers on the Bladelse weg. The explosion was so violent that all the windows of the houses were broken. Two "pilotes" (airmen) were found dead, very heavy wounded ("vermorzeld"= "crushed"?). Others were saved by parachute. One of them with a "sprained ankle" gave himself up to the Germans, after landing at "Steenovens" (a location about 4km*

south of the presumed crash site. This man is thought to be the fourth crew member to bail-out, the wireless operator, Thomas Newbery.) *On June 23, 14 German soldiers arrived in the abbey. Their task: to clean up all the plane-wreckage in the entire region...*"

From Leslie Taylor we know that the aircraft was shot down at approximately 0120 hours on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, near Postel and close to the Belgium/Dutch boarder. He estimated his position when he landed as 15kms southeast of Postel but to the northeast of a canal or river which blocked his movements to the west. Peter Knox, bailing out first, had landed further to the south-east, but on the southern side of this obstruction and therefore had an easier route towards the west. German reports confirm the crash site to be 4kms north of Postel.

Leslie Taylor, Thomas Newbery, and Dennis Belshaw were eventually captured and spent the next 11 months until the end of hostilities, as prisoners of war. Peter Knox made contact with the Belgium resistance movement and eventually arrived back in England, where he immediately insisted on meeting with all the British families of the crew to inform them of the circumstances of that night. On his way home to Australia, he stopped in Canada to meet with the parents of John Bowering too. These families have always been most grateful to Peter for this selfless act in taking the time to explain to them what had occurred that night.

The RAF losses for this raid were very high, with 37 aircraft failing to return, a loss rate of nearly 28%. For 619 Squadron the loss rate was even higher as 6 aircraft failed to return out of 15 (one aircraft had to abandon the raid due to technical problems), a loss rate of 40%. The comment in the squadron Operation Log says "Six aircraft did not return, a very black blot in the history of the squadron. Never before have so many failed to return from one operation".

The bodies of the two gunners from ME846, Sergeant George Moggridge and Pilot Officer John Bowering were recovered and were moved to Deurne and then re-buried side by side after the war at the Schoonselhof cemetery in Antwerp in Plot IVa, Row F, Graves 16 & 17.

But of Dave there was nothing. One year later his mother still not knowing if her son was alive or dead, wrote to the mother of Dennis Belshaw, "*My son was the pilot of the aircraft in which your son was the engineer. The Air Ministry say they can find no trace of my son and if you have any news of your son or any information as to how the aircraft was abandoned, will you please let me know? I know nothing and the suspense is beyond words! Please let me know all you can.*" Despite the information supplied by the surviving members of the crew, she died 8 years later, resigned to the fact that Dave had died that night, but still not knowing where her beloved son's body lay at rest.

The families of the crew will not forget the actions of Dave and all the crew that night in those vital two minutes between being hit and the aircraft eventually exploding. Of the four who escaped and subsequently married, three produced offspring who in turn have married. There are now over 35 people who owe their lives to the courage of Dave remaining at the controls of the aircraft and many live in the hope that his final resting place will eventually be found.

The closure of this would be the recovery of Dave's remains for a formal burial. However, this seems highly unlikely, as the records held by the RAF confirm the total disintegration of the aircraft, a not uncommon occurrence for a plane fully laden with fuel and bombs which is also crippled by fire. For me the final chapter of this story will to be the recovery of Dave, as he was my mother's youngest brother, aged just 20 years.

Paul M Stevenson  
5<sup>th</sup> June 2005

### **Updated information.**

On 11<sup>th</sup> June 2005 a plaque was dedicated to the crew at Newark Air Museum as it was on this site when it was RAF Winthorpe 1661 Heavy Conversion Unit, at which the crew converted to four engined Stirlings in March 1944 (see attached photo on page 9) before being posted to their squadron at Dunholme Lodge. Many of the relatives of the crew attended this event.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2006 my wife and I and 55 relations and friends of the crew of Lancaster ME846 and over 200 local people were present at a ceremony in Belgium to commemorate the crew and also members of the Belgian Resistance who helped so many stranded allied airmen return to the UK at a considerable risk, not only to themselves, but also to their families. A monument to both the crew and the Resistance personnel has been erected by the mayor and people of nearby Mol. This is situated in the Bladel Woods close the Dutch border and as near to the probable crash site as possible, although no information as to the exact location has yet emerged. (See attached photo on page 10)

On 20<sup>th</sup> October 2010, Jane Kiepura has received an email from a Belgian, Koen Peeters, telling her that in the past 10 days he had discovered bits of aluminium and “broken bullets” in an area north of Postel Abbey on the Belgian side of the border with Holland.

On 21<sup>st</sup> October 2010 Koen Peeters identified a large crater in the Bladel Woods with more debris and he wonders if this might be the crash site of ME846. He has spoken to Kamiel Mertens who is one of our Belgian contacts investigating all the leads to where ME846 crashed. On 22<sup>nd</sup> October Koen Peeters found what he believed to be a metal buckle from a parachute, which is significant because there were possibly three parachutes in the aircraft when it crashed. On 23<sup>rd</sup> October Koen Peeters decided to stop digging any further and to leave this to the proper authorities and out of respect for the possible remains of the pilot that may lie at this location.

On 26<sup>th</sup> October 2010 Wim Govaerts visited the site and confirmed that a British aircraft had crashed at that location and that it was most likely to be ME846. In their opinion, the crater was consistent with the explosion of a 4,000lb bomb. So perhaps the aircraft had not exploded in the air as previously thought, but on the ground.

On 5<sup>th</sup> April 2011 Howard Heeley and I visited Postel Abbey in Belgium to meet with Father Ivor Billiaert, Kamiel Mertens, Wim Govaerts, Koen Peeters and Cynrik De Decker, to discuss if a search of the surrounding area was feasible. We visited the site, which is a peaceful location within the Bladel Woods about 300 metres from the Dutch border. The crater is 14 metres across and 4 metres deep. This has been deepened by the forestry authorities to hold water for fire fighting purposes. Pieces of aluminium are evident all around and some ferrous metal parts are buried more deeply, which are going to be investigated, as these could possibly be unexploded munitions. British ammunition of .303 calibre used in Lancaster guns turrets was also found. It was agreed that members of BAHAAAT would conduct a survey of the area this summer to investigate if there is any evidence to justify a major excavation in the area of the crater.

On returning from Belgium, I again wrote to the RAF to enquire as to any further information related to the crash of ME84 as the records held at The National Archives of the survey made by the RAF after the war to identify sites where airmen were still “missing”, is it’s self missing from the archives. I

received a reply dated 19<sup>th</sup> May 2011, which indicated that the records still held by the RAF confirm that the aircraft did indeed explode in mid-air. This would explain why only small parts of aluminium have been found that are scattered over a wide area, but does not explain the large crater. (This letter is reproduced in full on pages 11 & 12)

On 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2011 the BAHAAT and Belgian Plane Hunters completed a survey of the crash site and in the crater. Various significant parts were unearthed, some with serial numbers, which could be used to identify the aircraft. These included: cockpit light; armour plate from pilot's seat; parachute harness buckle; tail fin balance weight; engine parts; metal surround from rear gun turret; various aluminium parts and cabling. Further analysis of some of these parts will be undertaken off site. However, no remains of the pilot were found during this survey.

Towards the very end of 2011, an exhibition was mounted in Belgium to show the general public many of the items found at the crash site during the survey and over 1000 people attended this exhibition. The site has still not been confirmed as the crash site of ME846.

Paul M Stevenson  
6<sup>th</sup> February 2012

#### **Acknowledgements:**

**Jane Kiepura – Daughter of Peter Knox, Bomb Aimer**  
**Gerald Moggridge – Brother to George Moggridge, Upper Gunner**  
**Chris Bowering – Nephew to John Bowering, Rear Gunner**  
**Father Norman Taylor – Son of Leslie Taylor, Navigator**  
**Lettie Belshaw – Wife of Dennis Belshaw, Flight Engineer**  
**Kamiel Mertens – Flemish Researcher and author/publisher**  
**Johan Claes – Flemish University Professor and Author**  
**Howard Heeley – Trustee, Newark Air Museum, Northamptonshire**  
**Wim Govaerts – Belgian Aviation History Association Archaeological Team (BAHAAT)**  
**Neil Webster – Aviation expert**  
**Paul Petersen – Netherlands Air Force Recovery Unit**  
**Dave Greenley – Translators from Dutch to English and visa versa**  
**Koen Peeters – Belgian Author**  
**Cynrik de Decker – Chairman, Belgian Aviation History Association Archaeological Team (BAHAAT)**  
**Father Ivor Billiaert – Archivist at Postel Abbey**



**Photograph of the crew taken at RAF Winthorpe, 1661 Conversion Unit, in early March 1944 in front of their Short Stirling after ground training at Scampton. (Note the snow in the fields on the left of the picture)  
(Left to Right)**

1. Flight Sergeant, Peter Edmund "Pete" Knox – A418433 RAAF – Bomb Aimer
2. Sergeant, Thomas. A. "Tom" Newbery – 1602063 RAF – Wireless Operator
3. Sergeant, W. Dennis "Geordie" Belshaw – 1808996 RAF – Flight Engineer
4. Pilot Officer, Mark Anthony Hamilton "Dave" Davis – 174023 RAFVR – Pilot
5. Flight Sergeant, Leslie E. J. "Tag" Taylor – 1585057 RAF – Navigator
6. Sergeant, George Harry Moggridge – 1896779 RAFVR - Mid-Upper Gunner
7. Pilot Officer, John Ernest Ralph "Porky" Bowering – J/88199 RCAF – Rear Gunner

**On the night of 21/22 June 1944, their aircraft (Lancaster 1 – ME846, Reg. PG-C) suffered severe night fighter damage and the starboard outer engine caught fire. Whilst the pilot held the aircraft steady, he instructed his crew to jump. Four of the crew are known to have bailed out and survived. According to RAF records and ground reports, the aircraft exploded in mid-air, close to the ground. An intensive search located the bodies of the rear and upper gunners, but failed to find the remains of the pilot or indeed much of the aircraft.**

1. Flight Sergeant, P. E. Knox – Evaded capture and escaped back to England.
2. Sergeant, T. A. Newbery – POW.
3. Sergeant, W. D. Belshaw – POW
4. Pilot Officer, M. A. H. Davis – Killed in action– No known grave.
5. Flight Sergeant, L. E. Taylor – POW
6. Sergeant, G. H. Moggridge – Killed in action – Buried: Schoonselhof Cemetery, Antwerp, Belgium in Plot IVa, Row F, Grave 16.
7. Pilot Officer, J. E. R. Bowering – Killed in action – Buried: Schoonselhof Cemetery, Antwerp, Belgium, in Plot IVa, Row F, Grave 17.



**Memorial to the crew of Lancaster ME846 and to the members of the Belgian Resistance, erected by the people of Mol, Belgium and unveiled on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2006**