



**A Special Memorial Service for
The Crew of Lancaster ED470**

Royal Air Force

**11:00 am Tuesday 24 September 2019
Zelhem General Cemetery, The Netherlands**

**Service conducted by The Reverend (Wing Commander)
Ian Brown RAF, Senior Chaplain, RAF Waddington**

Lancaster ED470 of 61 Squadron, Royal Air Force, took off from RAF Skellingthorpe, Lincolnshire at 1920 hours on 23 September 1944 on an operation to Munster, Germany. Lancaster ED470 was one of 929 aircraft dispatched and one of 141 aircraft to form "The Munster Force" their target was to bomb the Munster Dortmund Emms Kanal near Gravenhorst. This canal was an essential transport link for the German industry.

The Munster Force lost 14 of their 141 aircraft including ED 470 which crashed in Holland near the German/Dutch border. It is believed ED470 exploded a few minutes after crashing as there were explosives on board. Only one member, Sergeant Miller RAFVR of the 7 strong crew survived.

There are 16 graves at Zelhem General Cemetery in the care of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. All these casualties served with the Air Forces of Britain, Canada and Australia and died in the surrounding area, predominantly in June and September 1944.

The Crew of Lancaster ED470:



Flying Officer John Condon RAAF



**Flying Officer Albert Hornibrook
RAAF**



**Flying Officer Derek Heather
RAFVR**



Sergeant Thomas Brown RAFVR



Sergeant Robert Meachen RAFVR



Sergeant Tegwyn Roberts RAFVR



Lancaster of 619 Sqn based at RAF Conningsby, Lincolnshire in flight
14 Feb 1944

The Gathering

Chaplain

Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me will live, even though they die, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.

Words of Introduction

Chaplain

We are gathered in the presence of God, to give thanks for those who through triumph and adversity have fought for peace, remembering all who lost their lives during the Second World War, and especially today the crew of Lancaster ED470.

Opening Prayer

Chaplain

Heavenly Father, in your Son Jesus Christ you have given us a true faith and sure hope: Strengthen this faith and hope in us all our days, that we may live as those who believe in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection to eternal life through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

A Reading from the Book of Isaiah, Chapter 40

To whom then will you liken God,
or what likeness compare with Him?
Have you not known? Have you not heard?
Has it not been told you from the beginning?
Have you not understood from the foundations of the
earth?

It is He who sits above the circle of the earth,
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
and spreads them like a tent to live in;
who brings princes to naught,
and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,

‘My way is hidden from the Lord,
and my right is disregarded by my God’?
Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary;
His understanding is unsearchable.

He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.

Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;

but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their
strength,

they shall mount up with wings like eagles,

they shall run and not be weary,

they shall walk and not faint.

This is the Word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Address

*The Reverend (Wing Commander) Ian Brown RAF
Senior Chaplain, RAF Waddington*

High Flight poem by John Gillespie Magee Jr.

*Read by John McCarthy,
Nephew of Flying Officer John Condon*

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds — and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of — wheeled and soared and
swung

High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air . . .

Up, up the long, delirious burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or ever eagle flew —
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.

Flying Officer Charlotte-Lucie Bowers RAF

We remember the Crew Members of ED470 who died near this site in September 1944:

Flying Officer John Condon, Navigator,
Royal Australian Air Force

Flying Officer Derek Heather, Air Bomber,
Royal Air Force

Flying Officer Albert Hornibrook, Captain,
Royal Australian Air Force

Sergeant Thomas Brown, Mid Upper Gunner,
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

Sergeant Robert Meachan, Wireless Air Gunner,
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

Sergeant Tegwyn Roberts, Flight Engineer,
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

The Exhortation

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old.
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.

All **We will remember them.**

The Last Post

Silence

Reveille

Kohima Epitaph

When you go home tell them of us and say:
'For your tomorrow, we gave our today.'

Laying of Wreaths

Prayer

Chaplain

Almighty God, we remember those whom you have gathered from the storm of war into the peace of your presence; may that same peace calm our fears, bring justice to all peoples and establish harmony among the nations, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Collect of the Royal Air Force

Almighty God, who has promised that they who wait upon thee shall renew their strength and mount up with wings, as eagles, we commend to thy fatherly protection all who serve in the Royal Air Force. Uplift and support us in our endeavour, that we may be a safeguard unto our most gracious Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth and a sure defence to our homeland. Help us to fulfil our several duties with honour, goodwill and integrity, and grant that we may prove to be worthy successors of those who by their valour and sacrifice did nobly save their day and generation; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

All **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

The Blessing

Chaplain

May God grant to the living grace, to the departed peace, to us and all people, life and hope. And may the blessings of God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be among you and remains with you now and always.

All **Amen.**



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