



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

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BRYANSTON 2021

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RAFOC NEW RAMBLINGS

7th SEPTEMBER 2026

NEXT LUNCH – 11th SEPTEMBER 2026:

The lunch will commemorate the Battle of Britain and is a Ladies and Guests lunch. Bring along your friends as a fly-past is being organized. Traditionally this will be overhead the Wanderers at 13.00 where we view it from the lawn outside. Please book you and your guests at bookings@rafoc.org – the cost is still R350 pp which includes a two-course offering and wine on the tables. Book early so we know the numbers that will attend.

Churchill said -

"The gratitude of every home in our Island, in our Empire, and indeed throughout the world, except in the abodes of the guilty, goes out to the British airmen who, undaunted by odds, unwearied in their constant challenge and mortal danger, are turning the tide of the World War by their prowess and by their devotion. Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."
(those immortal words still live on in our lives)

The pilots were not just British; many were from other countries such as Czechoslovakia, Poland, South Africa, Canada, Australia and New Zealand and the RAF Benevolent Fund feel that it is important to recognise the contribution that everybody made to the immense effort involved to protect Britain from invasion and carry the fight against the evils of Nazism.



Looking at the list, it shows the following: -

25 airmen were from South Africa

3 airmen were from South Rhodesia

1 airman who is not recorded from his country but included in the United Kingdom list – he was P/O John Ellacombe who joined the RAF on a short service commission but never returned to Northern Rhodesia, so I guess they claimed him as one of theirs.

We reproduce the list for reference.



Battle of Britain Clasp – 1939-1945 Star

AIRMEN WHO TOOK PART FROM OUR PART OF THE WORLD:

The **SOUTH AFRICAN** airmen were the following: -

F/O	NJM	Barry
F/Lt	WS	Bower
F/O	PRF	Burton
S/Ldr	GF	Chater
P/O	CAG	Clark
F/O	IB	Difford
P/O	GJ	Drake
F/O	CW	Goldsmith
P/O	LW	Graham
P/O	RH	Haviland
F/O	IBDE	Hay
F/Lt	GDL	Haysom
F/O	MR	Hill
F/O	PH	Hugo
S/Ldr	CB	Hull
P/O	AG	Lewis
S/Ldr	AG	Malan
F/O	EJ	Morris
P/O	JRS	Oelofse
F/O	SR	Peacock-Edwards
P/O	FH	Posner
F/O	BG	Stapelton
F/O	B	van Mentz
Sgt	TY	Wallace
P/O	AB	Watkinson

SOUTHERN RHODESIA

P/O	FAG	Chomley
Sgt	CL	Hodson
F/Lt	JB	Holderness

BARRY, F/O N. J. M.	72514.	3 & 501 Squadrons. Killed October 7th 1940
BURTON, F/O P. R. F.	74348.	249 Squadron. Killed September 27th 1940

Follow this link and you can access the history of the airmen in some detail with pictures.

BATTLE OF BRITAIN LONDON MONUMENT <https://bbm.org.uk/> copy and paste to your browser

CHATER, S/L G. F.	34230.	247 and 3 Squadrons
CLARK, P/O C. A. G.	42192.	F.I.U. Killed October 30th 1941
DIFFORD, F/O I. B.	39865.	607 Squadron. Killed October 7th 1940
DRAKE, P/O G. J.	42398.	607 Squadron. Killed September 9th 1940
GOLDSMITH, F/O C. W.	72152.	603 & 54 Squadrons. Died of wounds October 28th 1940
GRAHAM, P/O L. W.	81912.	56 Squadron
HAVILAND, P/O R. H.	76571.	248 Squadron. Killed August 28th 1940
HAY, F/O. I. B. D. E.	39734.	611 Squadron
HILL, P/O M. R.	72467.	266 Squadron. Killed March 12th 1945
HUGO, P/O P. H. DFC	41848.	615 Squadron

HULL, F/Lt. C. B. DFC	37285.	263 & 43 Squadrons. Killed September 7th 1940
LEWIS, P/O A. G.	41303.	85 & 249 Squadrons
MALAN, F/Lt. A. G. DFC	37604.	74 Squadron
MORRIS, P/O E. J.	40132.	79 Squadron
OELOFSE, P/O J. R. S.	42519.	43 Squadron. Killed August 8th 1940
PEACOCK-EDWARDS, F/O S. R.	40747.	615 & 253 Squadrons
POSENER, P/O F. H.	41735.	152 Squadron. Missing July 20th 1940
STAPLETON, F/O B. G.	41879.	603 Squadron. Captured & made POW Dec 23rd 1944
VAN-MENTZ, F/O B. DFC	70826.	222 Squadron. Killed April 26th 1941
WATKINSON, P/O A. B.	42921.	66 Squadron

AIRCRAFT IN THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN:

Royal Air Force (RAF) Aircraft

- **Supermarine Spitfire:** A fast, highly agile single-seat fighter that targeted German fighters.
- **Hawker Hurricane:** A more numerous single-seat fighter that shot down the most enemy bombers.
- **Boulton Paul Defiant:** A turret-armed fighter with rear-facing guns.
- **Bristol Blenheim:** A twin-engine plane used mostly for night fighting.



Let's test your aircraft knowledge. Which one is which.

German Luftwaffe Aircraft

- **Messerschmitt Bf 109:** A fast, advanced single-engine fighter protecting bombers.
- **Messerschmitt Bf 110:** A heavy twin-engine fighter.
- **Heinkel He 111:** The most numerous level bomber used in raids.
- **Dornier Do 17:** A light bomber nicknamed the "Flying Pencil".
- **Junkers Ju 87:** A slow dive bomber known as the Stuka

BATTLE OF BRITAIN MONUMENT:



The **Battle of Britain Monument** in London is a sculpture on the Victoria Embankment, overlooking the River Thames, which commemorates the individuals who took part in the Battle of Britain during the Second World War.

It was unveiled on 18 September 2005, the 65th anniversary of the Battle, by Prince Charles and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, in the presence of many of the surviving airmen known collectively as "The Few", following the Royal Air Force Service of Thanksgiving and Rededication on Battle of Britain Sunday. This service is an annual event, the first of which took place in 1943 at St Paul's Cathedral and since has taken place in Westminster Abbey.

The monument was conceived by Bill Bond, founder of the Battle of Britain Historical Society, who was later appointed an MBE for his services to heritage. He was solely responsible for negotiating with the City of Westminster to secure the site of the monument, as well as appointing Donald Insall Associates as architects. He also formed the fundraising committee after raising over £250,000 through an appeal. The budget was £1.74 million which was funded in the main by private donations. Bill Bond appointed Lord Tebbit as chairman of the fundraising committee.

SOUTH AFRICANS WHO DEFENDED THE UK AIRSPACE IN THE BATTLE:

Historical Impact

- **Strategic Contribution:** Prime Minister Jan Smuts supported the Allied war effort, allowing volunteers to bolster the depleted ranks of RAF Fighter Command during Britain's darkest hour.
- **Tactical Legacy:** Sailor Malan's ten rules of air combat shaped fighter training and tactics across the entire RAF.

THE 10 RULES:

"TEN OF MY RULES FOR AIR FIGHTING"

1. Wait until you see the whites of his eyes. Fire short bursts of 1 to 2 seconds and only when your sights are definitely 'ON'.
2. Whilst shooting think of nothing else, brace the whole of the body, have both hands on the stick, concentrate on your ring sight.
3. Always keep a sharp lookout. "Keep your finger out!"
4. Height gives You the initiative.
5. Always turn and face the attack.
6. Make your decisions promptly. It is better to act quickly even though your tactics are not the best.
7. Never fly straight and level for more than 30 seconds in the combat area.
8. When diving to attack always leave a proportion of your formation above to act as top guard.
9. INITIATIVE, AGGRESSION, AIR DISCIPLINE, and TEAM WORK are the words that MEAN something in Air Fighting.
10. Go in quickly – Punch hard – Get out!



'WE WILL REMEMBER THEM'

THE VERY LAST OF THE FEW HAD HIS FINAL DERARTURE:



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The last pilot who fought in the **Battle of Britain** during **World War II** has died aged 105, the UK's Royal Air Force said.

John "Paddy" Hemingway "passed away peacefully" on Monday 17th March 2025, the RAF said late that evening. It described his death as "*the end of an era*".

John Allman Hemingway was born in Dublin, Ireland on 17th July 1919 and joined the RAF on a short service commission, beginning his training on 7th March 1938.

He was serving with 85 Squadron in France in early 1940 and on 10th May he claimed a He111 destroyed.

He rejoined 85 Squadron at Lille-Seclin on the 15th after being returned by the Army. He flew back to England in an Ensign on the 17th. Hemingway was posted to 253 Squadron at Kirton-in-Lindsey in early June 1940 but rejoined 85 squadron, then at Debden, on the 15th.

On 18th August Hemingway baled out after his Hurricane, V7249, was damaged by return fire from a Ju88, engaged over the Thames Estuary. He fell into the sea and was rescued by a lightship 12 miles east of Clacton.

On the 26th he was shot down by a Me109 over Eastchurch and baled out, unhurt. His Hurricane, P3966, crashed on Pitsea Marshes.

(The site was excavated in March 2019 and the engine, control column and other parts were recovered.)

Hemingway damaged a Me109 on 31st August. He and F/Lt. JE Marshall were led on a patrol by F/Lt. G Allard on 22nd September over the western area of the Church Fenton sector. In poor weather conditions over Lancashire they ran low on fuel and had to make forced-landings, Hemingway and Marshall near Burnley and Allard near Clitheroe. All three Hurricanes were damaged but repairable. In February 1941 85 Squadron was re-equipped with Havocs. During the nights of 3rd/4th May and 5th/6th May Hemingway damaged He111s.

He was awarded the DFC (*gazetted 1st July 1941*).

He was posted to 1452 Flight at West Malling on 7th July 1941, to fly Turbinlite Havocs.

In 1945 Hemingway was again operating in day fighters and he commanded 43 Squadron in Italy from early April until December 1945. On 23rd April 1945 his Spitfire was struck by ground fire and he baled out but was unhurt.

Hemingway retired from the RAF on 12th September 1969 as a Group Captain.

END