



77 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION

NICKEL No 59

SPRING ISSUE 2017



Derek Oakley at the 2015 Reunion

Derek flew on at least 33 Operations in Halifaxes as an air gunner
but sadly passed away last year

This date has been selected to commemorate our member **Derek Oakley**, rear gunner in the crew of **C J C Manning**. The mission also included the **Braund twins**, who were both to lose their lives before the war was over.

Target – Hanover. Area bombing

Route – Base – Hornsea – 5400N 0500E – Enemy coast – 5306N 0700E – 5250N 0900E – Target – 5150N 0912E – 5220N 0705E – 5210N 0420E – Southwold – Base

Load: Aircraft F, H, K, U, Y, D, O

10 x 500lb ANM64. 6 x 500lb GP

Aircraft A, B,

2 x 1000lb ANM59. 11 x No 14 Cluster I.B.

Aircraft J, L, T, W, X, P, C

1 x 2000lb HC. 11 x No 14 Cluster I.B.

OPERATIONS RECORD

5 JANUARY 1945

Camera – All aircraft, 29 secs delay, 3' f/tilt, day camera in D

Opposition and general remarks

The attack was successful and the bombing was well concentrated but with slight undershooting. Flak opposition was slight to moderate and with being directed to some extent at flares. One of our crews is missing.

Halifax III. MZ379 KN 'H' 'Y' Type

Flt Lieutenant J P Braund, Pilot; Flying Officer J Ritchie, Navigator;
Flying Officer A Wood, Bomb Aimer; Sgt M Eddleston, Wireless Operator;
Sgt R L LeFort, Flight Engineer; Sgt D S Watson, Mid Upper Gunner; Sgt R E Russell,
Rear Gunner.

Up at 1645 hours. Down at 2150 hours.

Target was bombed on centre of 3 R/P flares at 1922 hours from 18,500 feet. A glow on cloud below flares was seen.

Halifax III. MZ769 KN 'U' 'Y' Type

Flt Lieutenant M P Braund, Pilot; Flying Officer A J Hewett, Navigator;
Flying Officer J A Masheder, Bomb Aimer; Sgt L F Connell, Wireless Operator;
Sgt G Rutherford, Flt Engineer; Sgt J Donaldson, Mid Upper Gunner;
Sgt D Atkinson, Rear Gunner.

Up at 1700 hours. Down at 2220 hours.

Target was bombed on 2 R/P flares at 1925 hours from 17,800 feet. Red glow was seen on cloud.