

EARLS COLNE & GREAT TEY MEMORIAL



AIRCREW OF LANCASTERS LM167 & LL802



## MEMORIAL TO 15 AIRCREW OF LANCASTERS LM167 & LL802 CRASHED IN EARLS COLNE/GREAT TEY 20 SEPTEMBER 1944

On the 20th September 1944, two RAF Lancasters of 622 Sqn RAF enroute on an operational mission, collided mid-air, and both aircraft crashed to the ground- all 15 aircrew were killed instantly. One, LM167, with 8 aircrew crashed on farmland of Holmwood Farm, in between Americas Road and Tey road. The second, LL802, crashed on farmland of Flories Farm, just into Great Tey Parish.

The bodies of the aircrew were recovered. Four of the crew were from New Zealand, one from Canada, and the remaining 10 British. According to family wishes, the British were repatriated in cemeteries local to their homes. The New Zealanders and Canadian were buried in Mildenhall & Cambridge. They left behind families including parents, siblings, widows and to our knowledge, 3 children.

Over the next 80 years, the knowledge of this crash location, and the death of these aircrew has been gradually lost to memory – they were just a few of the many thousands killed in Bomber Command.

However, a fortuitous discovery of a newspaper article in the Museum concerning the tragedy, and then extensive research including the Essex Record Office in Chelmsford, led the Museum to identify the actual locations. We were then given permission to install a memorial by Robert Prestney owner of Holmwood Farm - close to the junction of Americas Road and Tey Road and opposite Chalkney Wood. This will be installed on 20th September 2024 – the 80th anniversary.

Further research has located relatives of nearly all 15 of the aircrew – physically as close as Brentwood and as far as Dunedin, New Zealand. Two sons and a daughter, now, of course in their 80's have also been located, and we are hoping that two will be able to attend, plus many other relatives. The unveiling will be by invitation only, due to limited space.

There will further updates on the Museum Facebook page – please check. <https://www.facebook.com/earlscolneheritagemuseum> and <https://echm.org.uk/>

The funding for this Memorial is by both business and private donation. If you would like to contribute, please do so at <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/lancastermemorial>