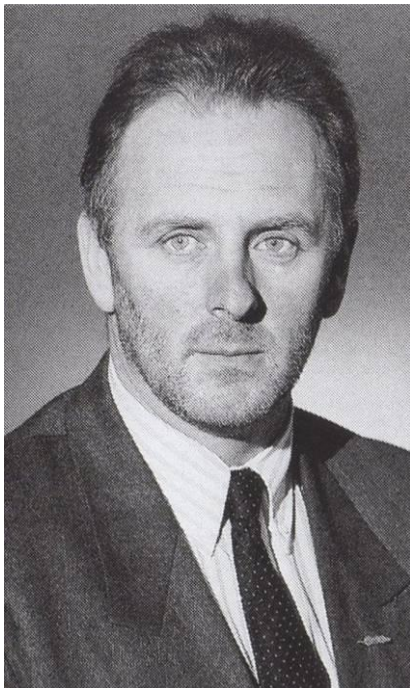


## In Peace and War

### Awards for Bravery to police officers serving Surrey



**PS 651 G Breckell, DC 394 W Spencer and PC 364 A. Newman:** awarded the **Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct** for their actions in October 1965 when they prevented a mentally deranged youth from throwing himself from the top of a 70-foot high cinema roof. During the rescue the officers fell through the roof sustaining minor injuries.



**DC John Brake** 1987 May awarded the **Queens's Commendation for Brave Conduct** for his actions during an attempt to arrest three offenders. A vehicle was driven directly at the officer and although badly injured he managed to arrest them. Frank Austin: John and I went

to the High Street, Reigate following the report of shoplifters. We found the car parked and watched for their return and one suspect eventually ran from the castle grounds jumped into the car. We ran back, I went to the driver's side and John towards the passenger. The car drove off and attempted to run John down but he jumped onto the bonnet and held onto the wipers whilst the car swerved from side to side at high speed trying to throw him off. I followed in the CID car and could only watch whilst the car deliberately rammed a parked car and John went flying through the air. I didn't think John could have survived. I ran from my car and was amazed to see that John had beaten me to the offender. I dragged him out and threw him over the bonnet of the CID car where I had to forcibly restrain him causing damage to the police car bonnet and his face. Members of the public started to interfere as they assumed it was just a fight caused over the accident. Once assistance arrived amazingly John only suffered bruising and lacerations to his hands caused by the wipers. The offenders I believe came from the Coulsdon area but I cannot remember the outcome.

**Henry Brand**, Police Constable Egham – Gunner, Military Medal First World War



**Paul Cady**: 1978 5 October 2200: Police Constable 1124 Paul Cady when on patrol saw several acts of dangerous and reckless driving by the driver of a tractor unit. Several vehicles were rammed including two police vehicles and at one stage the vehicle crossed the central reservation of a dual carriageway and drove against the flow of traffic. The vehicle drove at up to seventy miles an hour was forced to stop in traffic enabling PC Cady to run to the vehicle, open the door and struggle with the driver. The vehicle was deliberately driven in to a stationary car crushing the officer's leg causing severe damage. The unit again drove off at high speed eventually crashing into a shopping precinct when the driver was arrested. In October 1980 PC Cady was awarded the **Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct**

following comments from the trial judge that included: I think you behaved with great courage. You are deserving of the highest commendation.”<sup>1</sup>

**Wilfred St. G Chandler: Distinguished Flying Cross; Police Constable** aka Flight Lieutenant W. St. G. Chandler Second World War

Photographic Reconnaissance Unit pilot's Flight Lieutenant W. St. G. Chandler, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, who flew nearly 90 solo missions in unarmed, stripped-down P.R.U. Spitfires, and latterly Mosquito aircraft as part of a Photographic Reconnaissance Unit

Additional medals: 1939-45 Star; Africa Star; Italy Star; Defence and War Medals; Police Exemplary Service Medal, E.I.R. (Sergeant), together with Royal Life Saving Society and S.J.A.B. medals / badges from the 1950s.

D.F.C. London Gazette 2 January 1944. The original recommendation states: ‘This pilot completed an operational tour in eleven months, flying 86 sorties amounting to 300 hours. These missions over Greece, Crete, the Dodecanese and Cyclades entailed long hours in a single engine unarmed aircraft, and often a complete front as high as 35,000 feet was encountered but with determination this pilot continued to his target.

On one occasion he was intercepted by a twin engine enemy aircraft which he evaded. He continued his mission and was then attacked by two Me. 109s. These he also evaded and returned to base. On another sortie he was again attacked by a twin engine enemy aircraft over Thera. He managed to break away from this enforced combat and continued his sortie, returning to base with valuable and detailed visual information of Candia harbour.

He is recommended for the honour of the Distinguished Flying Cross.’

Wilfred St. George Chandler, who enlisted in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in September 1941, commenced pilot training at No. 29 E.F.T.S. in January 1942 and qualified for his “Wings” at No. 22 E.F.T.S. at Thornhill exactly one year later. Commissioned as a Pilot Officer, he was posted to the Middle East and attended No. 74 Operational Training Unit, gaining flying experience on Hurricanes and Spitfires, prior to being sent to No. 680 (P.R.) Squadron. Given the importance of a pilot's high altitude capabilities if he was to be at all effective in a Photographic Reconnaissance Unit unarmed Spitfire, Chandler was quickly assessed in a decompression chamber, and, showing no ‘evidence of bends’ and good ‘eustachian clearance’, he went operational four days later, flying a mission to Candia on 17 September 1943. As evidenced by his Flying Log Books and D.F.C. recommendation, over the next eleven months he was constantly on active service, flying nearly 90 solo operational sorties. And nor were prowling enemy aircraft the only danger, his entries making mention of intense flak opposition at several “targets”. In June 1944, he started to fly his first missions in Mosquito aircraft, in addition to Spitfires, and it was not until the end of July 1944 that he completed his last sortie to Greece. Chandler returned to the U.K. in October 1944 and served as an instructor at assorted training units for the remainder of the War.

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<sup>1</sup> Annual Report 1980

Sold with a quantity of original documentation, including the recipient's Flying Log Books (2), covering the periods January 1942 to November 1943, and December 1943 until August 1945; Buckingham Palace forwarding letter for the D.F.C. and Air Council campaign medal forwarding slip; R.A.F. Service and Release Book and Medical Card Record; eight wartime photographs; and his R.A.F. officer's peaked cap and two pairs of uniform "Wings".



**PS 72 Reginald Callingham** May 1961 awarded the **British Empire Medal for Gallantry** for brave conduct when he was shot trying to make an arrest. Jeff Hemmings: I have spoken with Reg Callingham, who tells me: "I was in charge of a section of seven at Warlingham- It was about midday. I was off duty, although in fact you were on duty all the time. I received a telephone call to report, two 'tearaways' in the village. I put my uniform on and went to the village and was told that Roland (a step-son of one of the Bobbies on my section) and Lake were driving around in a car and had been on drugs. I went to the property where I knew they'd be and arrested them. One of them said, 'get the gun' I was struggling with one. The other returned with a twelve bore shot gun. I grabbed the barrel and pointed it towards the floor. The gun went off. Assisted by others, the youths were arrested and I drove myself to hospital. En-route I felt something warm down my leg and discovered I had been shot in the groin. Both youths were charged with attempted murder-reduced to grievous bodily harm with intent." On the same day a similar incident occurred in the Metropolitan Police area. The bobby, in this case, was awarded the George Medal. Reg goes on to say. "The BEM (no longer in existence) has a rosette to distinguish it as an award for gallantry as opposed to those 'councillors who got theirs for good work' It was presented by the High Sheriff ('not the Queen') at Caterham Social Club." Reg is recognised as 'grizzled' and an acerbic character by those who know him. (Reg died in January 2010)

30 May 1961: The Times: Derek John Rowland aged seventeen a labourer of Batts Farm caravan site Warlingham was remanded in custody for a week by the magistrates at Caterham yesterday on a charge of shooting at Police Sergeant Reg Callingham with intent to murder. Inspector Denis Wilson said that when questioned, Rowland said "Yes I regret it now. I only meant to scare him."

**PC Cook:** 1982 11 October attended a Road Traffic Accident at Albury where the driver was trapped in a burning vehicle. With the assistance of the members of the public a rescue was made and the driver removed to hospital where she recovered. PC Cook and two members of the public were awarded a certificate of the **Society for the Protection of Life from Fire.**<sup>2</sup>



**Kareen Edminston:** Woman Police Sergeant 1242 Edminston was awarded the **Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct** when in July 1984 she disarmed a drunken man who was threatening to kill his wife and others with a firearm.

**C. A. Emery MC 1918:** Police sergeant Guildford Borough: By 1918 promoted to the rank of major and awarded the **Military Cross** for bravery.

**PC 171 Albert Edwin Enticknap; King's Police Medal for gallantry**



Albert Edwin Enticknap was born in 1912, in Hascombe in Surrey. He joined the Surrey Constabulary on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May 1936. He was sworn in on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May 1936 at Guildford Magistrates Court, before Magistrate Captain Petsy. PC Enticknap was allocated collar number 171. His previous trade was a Farm worker employed by his father at Crab Tree Farm in Dunsfold, Surrey.

PC Enticknap's record shows the following information under the heading "Removals":

<sup>2</sup> Annual Report 1983

14<sup>th</sup> November 1936 moved from Woking to Horley.

28<sup>th</sup> March 1938 moved from Horley to Weybridge.

22<sup>nd</sup> February 1940 moved from Weybridge to Henshaw.

15<sup>th</sup> April 1940 moved from Henshaw to Weybridge beat,  
(But still lives at Rodney Road, Walton-on-Thames)

26<sup>th</sup> April 1941 moved from Weybridge to Walton-on-Thames.

9<sup>th</sup> January 1950 moved from Walton-on-Thames to Englefield Green.

17<sup>th</sup> February 1957 moved to own house.

**The circumstances behind PC Enticknap being awarded the Kings Police Medal for Gallantry:** About 1.20 pm on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September 1944, a message was received at Walton Police Station that a man had broken into a house in Rydens Avenue. An Inspector, a Sergeant and two Constables, one of whom was PC Enticknap, immediately went to the scene of the occurrence. The Inspector posted one Constable at the back of the house and one at the front, the latter being joined by the Sergeant. The Inspector made two attempts to enter the house, but though he was able to get into rooms on the ground floor he found that the hall doors were locked. The man had already shown that he had a revolver and it seemed from the noise inside the house that he was barricading one of the upstairs rooms. The Inspector decided to go and get assistance from some soldiers who were nearby. Meanwhile the Sergeant went to the front door where there was a broken pane of glass and called to the man to come downstairs. He did so, pointing his revolver at the Sergeant. The officer dodged to the side and the man disappeared into one of the rooms at the back. It was then that

PC Enticknap, who was posted at the back of the house, saw him through a window. The man pointed his revolver at the Constable and he moved aside. The next thing that happened was that the Constable heard a window being opened at the other end of the house and saw the man running across the lawn. PC Enticknap immediately gave chase, shouting to the other officers, who followed him. The man jumped into the garden of the adjoining house, continuing to run for about 150 yards until he came to a hedge, where he stopped and turned round to face the Constable, pointing his revolver at him. Without hesitation the Constable closed with the man, who fell to the ground, dropping the revolver. By the time the other officers and the military had caught up, the thief was arrested.

Shown below are PC Enticknap's medals. The first is the Kings Police medal for Gallantry, it has engraved around the rim ALBERT E. ENTICKNAP CONSTABLE SURREY JOINT POLICE.



### **Kings Police Medal**

The Kings Police medal is in Silver. It was originally instituted on the 7th of July 1909. The Obverse has the monarch's effigy. The reverse has a standing figure with a sword and shield inscribed TO GUARD MY PEOPLE. In 1933 two different reverses were introduced and the words FOR GALLANTRY or FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE were placed in the exergue. Gallantry awards have thin crimson stripes superimposed on the silver stripes



Above is shown the type of Police Long Service medal awarded to PC Enticknap, although it is not his actual medal. PC Enticknap's service record shows that he was awarded the Kings Police medal, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June 1945. He was awarded the Defence medal, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February 1946. He was awarded his Police Long Service and Good Conduct medal, on the 1st of July 1959.

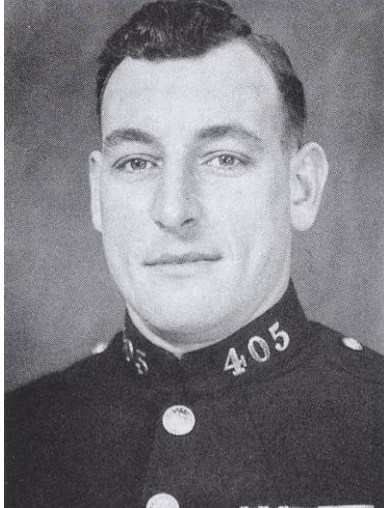
Additionally PC Enticknap was awarded the following Commendations:

20<sup>th</sup> of October 1954 – Commended for smart work in the case of Young (CR/1186/54)

13<sup>th</sup> of August 1959 - Commended by the Chief Constable for zeal and perseverance leading to the arrest of three shop breakers at Egham on the 24/6/59

20<sup>th</sup> of October 1960 – Commended by the Chief Constable for exceptional persistence and initiative leading to the arrest of a Housebreaker

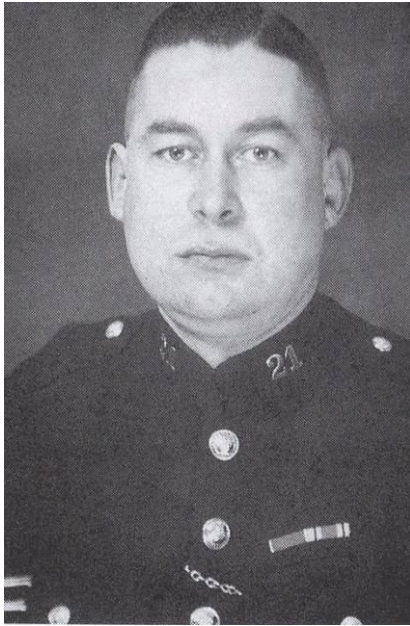
PC Enticknap retired from the Surrey Constabulary on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February 1967, having completed 30 years service; his conduct during his service, being described as Exemplary.



**PC 405 Alfred James Everitt; King's Police Medal :** In June 1941 for arresting an armed soldier who attempted to shoot him at close range from the top of a railway carriage in Dorking

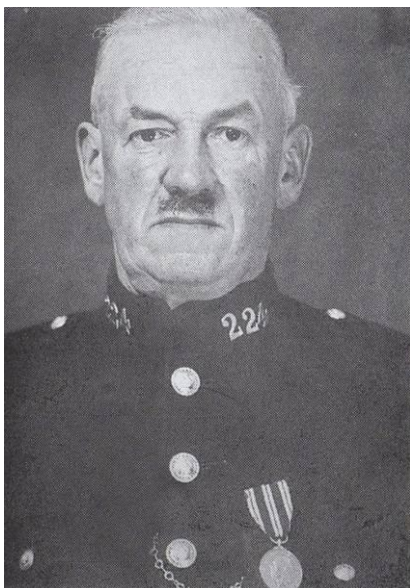


**PS 356 Harley Findlay:** PS Findlay was awarded the **Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct** after being wounded by a gunman who had shot two other officers in July 1974, fatally wounding one. Although injured he sought help and pursued the gunman.



**PS 21 William Forehead:** Awarded the **Medal of the Order of the British Empire** in June 1935 after suffering severe injuries trying to arrest two housebreakers (**MBE**)

**PC 23 Henry John Gascoyne; DCM** Guildford Borough: Sergeant Major 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards; killed in Action age 35 on the 1 January 1917 (**Distinguished Conduct Medal** – the next below the Victoria Cross)



**1919 PS224 Arthur George Gunner** awarded **King's Police Medal for Gallantry** when in the darkness on the bank of the River Wey at Godalming tackled and arrested a drunken soldier who immediately before had threatened to shoot a military policeman and who was

believed to be armed with a revolver. In 1971 at a Reunion at Camberley PC Gunner was guest of honour when aged 85

**Stanley Harland: 1980 26 February:** 0500 an **RTA** on the A3 at Guildford when a car overturned and caught fire. Inspector Harland arrived on the scene and with members of the public made an attempt at rescuing the driver but were driven back by the heat, smoke and fumes. Inspector Harland had a second try and was this time successful in releasing the driver and pulling him clear of the flames saving the life of the driver. The Chief Constable commended the inspector and the **Society for the Protection of Life from Fire** awarded certificates to the officer and the members of the public Messrs Bennell, Hudson and Beales.<sup>3</sup>

**Lionel Norman Head, Inspector and Police Constable Brian Gunning** 1944 faced the greatest danger rescuing some of the crew from a blazing RAF bomber which had crashed at Dunsfold. (Were Commended but this is believed to be the equivalent to the modern **Queen's Commendation**)<sup>4</sup>

**Cyril V Hearn British Empire Medal:** Hearn, C. (1964). *With Royal Military Police Special Investigation Branch in North Africa & Italy during WWII*. London: The Adventurers Club.

From a policeman extraordinary and one of England's most decorated men, C.V. Hearn, here is a racy account and graphic portrayal of the thrilling stories of wartime crime, when the author was a member of the Army's little known Special Investigation Branch. Of the many battlegrounds of WWII none gripped the British public's imagination as strongly as North Africa. In this fast-moving story of a fast-moving, fluid war, the author has chosen the more exotic, the more bizarre and the more un-English types of crime committed abroad. *Desert Assignment* bristles with exciting incident involving murderers, arms traffickers, drug peddlers, espionage, dope, vice and intrigue on a grand style. C.V. Hearn was known as a tough, plain-speaking policeman, who upheld the traditions of law and order, honestly and impartially. He pulled no punches in his work and pulls none in this book. The qualities of British policemen are well known throughout the world - quiet, helpful, efficient, stolid, and calm in the face of chaos, with the ability to make big decisions when the occasion demands. Instead, Hearn became a tough and ruthless breaker of international gangs and excelled as a fast-shooting law enforcement officer, allied with a Cockney wit, a determined spirit and a profound respect for British justice and police methods. Appropriately, he dedicates this book to policemen everywhere.

**John Hebdon police sergeant, and Malcolm Sutton** police constable of Woking in 1978 were awarded the **Royal Humane Society Testimonial on Parchment** for their actions at West Byfleet station. They heard a woman screaming and discovered she had come in contact with the live rail. They managed to remove her and conveyed her to hospital.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Annual Report 1980

<sup>4</sup> Durrant History of the Surrey Constabulary

<sup>5</sup> Off Beat May 1978

## BRAVERY AWARDS

P.C. John Young and P.C. John Humphris of Dorking have been awarded certificates of high commendation for their courage in apprehending a man armed with a rifle following a burglary. Constables Young and Humphris attended the scene of a recent burglary and after Constable Humphris and police dog Dylan had been tracking for some time found a man hiding in undergrowth armed with a rifle. The officers tackled and restrained the man without regard to their own safety. Subsequent enquiries led police to property in the Metro to a value of £100,000.

Royal Humane Society awards went to Constable Graham Kendal, of Woking. He received the Society's Resuscitation certificate following an incident in which a young boy had been involved in a road traffic accident and was unconscious with serious head injuries.

Graham applied mouth to mouth resuscitation and cardiac massage and the doctor who arrived on the scene found he had achieved a good airway and needed to do no more than maintain it until the ambulance arrived. Unfortunately the child died in hospital some time later but medical opinion was that he could well have died at the roadside had it not been for P.C. Kendall's action.

Sergeant John Hebdon and Constable Malcolm Sutton also of Woking were awarded the Royal Humane Society Testimonial on Parchment for their actions when at West Byfleet railway station

they heard screams and discovered a woman on the railway line who had come into contact with the live rail. They

managed to remove her from the line and had her conveyed to hospital, where she made a complete recovery.



*Photo shows:— Back row: P.C. Young, P.C. Kendal, P.S. Hebdon; Front: P.C. Humphris and P.C. Sutton.*

### **PC 248 William Thomas Herrett (33) King's Police Medal 22.10.1928**

PC Herrett was run down when stopping a runaway horse and dustcart in Bagshot where he was stationed and lived with his wife and son. PC Herrett was coming off duty as the children were leaving school. A dustman dropped a bin, which caused a horse to bolt. PC Herrett threw his bicycle down and grabbed the reins of the horse in an attempt to stop it but lost his footing on the wet road and was run over by the cart. He was taken to Windsor Hospital by horse and cart where he died of his injuries. He had served in the Grenadier Guards during the First World War when he was gassed. As a result of his actions he was awarded the King's Police Medal and Carnegie Heroes Trust Certificate posthumously.

Mrs Minnie Herrett returned to live out her life in Elstead and gave birth to a son after her husband's death. This son became a Junior Police Clerk in Surrey and was conscripted into the Grenadier Guards in about 1947/48. He was sent to Malaya where he was killed on active service fighting guerrilla forces in the jungle in 1949. **See below.**

The following are newspaper cuttings held by the family and copied to retired PS Fitcher in June 2004. They are undated and the newspapers are not known.



### **Constable's Sad End**

#### **Run over in an attempt to stop Runaway horse**

The death occurred in tragic circumstances in Windsor hospital on Monday evening of PC William Thomas Herrett, formerly the village constable at Elstead. Constable Herrett received the injuries from which he subsequently died in a gallant attempt to stop a runaway horse at Bagshot earlier in the day. The horse, attached to a dustcart, took fright at the noise caused by something falling from the cart, and dashed down the main street, where a number of children were at play. Constable Herrett, in attempting to stop the runaway, slipped and fell in the track of the cart, one of the wheels of which passed over his body. He was removed immediately to Windsor Hospital, where he died at 6 o'clock.

Police Constable Herrett was born in Babs Mead, Farnham, 33 years ago, and was educated at West Street School. On leaving school he was employed by the Farnham dairy Company and afterwards by Messrs. W. Kingham and Sons. Upon the outbreak of hostilities in 1914 he

enlisted in the Grenadier Guards, and served throughout the war. After his demobilisation, he joined the Surrey Constabulary. Up to two years ago he was stationed at Elstead. While in that village he married Miss M. H. Perry the daughter of the late Mr Perry and Mrs Perry, of “Merriewood”, Peat Common, and almost immediately afterwards was posted to Bagshot where he had been ever since.

During the two years that he was at Elstead Constable Herrett interested himself in the social activities of the village and was very popular and highly respected. He will be remembered for his work in connection with the R.A.O.B. for he was responsible for the foundation of the Loyal Elstead Lodge, and did all that was in his power to make it a “live” and flourishing assembly. His work for Buffaloism was not confined to Elstead, for he paid a leading part in the activities of the Order throughout the county of Surrey. His untimely death came as a great shock to a host of his friends in Elstead, and also in Farnham. His mother lived for a period in Castle View, Farnham.

By his death the Police Force has lost a tried and valued servant, and one whose memory will be honoured by all who knew him. He leaves a widow and one child in bereavement.

At an inquest held at Windsor on Wednesday afternoon the Coroner returned a verdict of death from shock and haemorrhage as a result of being knocked down and run over by a dust cart belonging to the Windlesham Urban District Council while attempting to stop the horse, which had run away owing to the “negligence of the said Council in not keeping the said horse under proper control. The funeral takes place this Friday.

### **Bagshot Policeman Killed; Dragged 50 yards by runaway horse; Jury finds negligence against Council**

#### **Yesterday’s Funeral at Elstead**

In an attempt to stop a runaway horse at Bagshot on Monday afternoon. PC William Thomas Herrett who lived at 6 Church Road, Bagshot, was knocked down and carried 50 yards along the road beneath the dust cart to which the animal was attached. He was so severely injured that he died in Windsor Hospital the same evening.

The circumstances of the fatality were investigated at an inquest at Windsor on Wednesday, when the jury returned a verdict of civil negligence against Windlesham Urban District Council, the owners of the horse and cart.

PC Herrett was in the High Street at the time of the accident, and having finished his period of duty, was about to go home to tea. When taken from beneath the cart he was found to be suffering from terrible head and internal injuries. After attention by Dr A.T. Crutwell the Bagshot ambulance took him to Windsor Hospital where he passed away at about six o’clock. Mrs Herrett arrived at the hospital just after husband died.

#### **The Funeral**

Capt. M. L. Sant, Chief Constable, and over 120 officers and men of the Surrey Constabulary attended the funeral at Elstead yesterday (Friday) afternoon. All the divisions in the county were represented and among the officers were Superintendents W.R. Lucas, (Farnham), A. Dawes (Chertsey), Inspectors Gray (Egham), Evans (Woking) Dibley (Hersham) Pickard (Farnham) and Rendall (Caterham). There were also present large a number of special constables from Bagshot and other districts, a contingent of men from the Hants Constabulary, and members of the Bagshot Division of the St John Ambulance Brigade.

The bearers from the Bagshot section of the Chertsey Division were Sergeant Holloway, PCs Bright, Newman, O'Donnell, Tarrott, and Wood. Mrs Holloway, wife of Sergeant Holloway represented the wives of officers and men of the Bagshot Division. Windlesham Urban Council were represented by Mr. H.W. Penford, a member and Mr Cyril Gray, surveyor. Two Guardsmen represented the Grenadier Guards. -----.

The police and representatives of other bodies lined the pathway to the church, and the service was conducted by the Venerable J.G.S. Syme (rector).



PC 248 William Herrett.

**PC Kendall** 1948 28 September now an ex- Guildford Borough officer serving with the Surrey Constabulary was on night duty and called to a woman suffering from the after effects of childbirth and who was reported at 0100 to be in the River Wey at Farnham. Along with another officer he was able to save the woman from drowning. For this action PC Kendall was awarded a **Royal Humane Society Award on Vellum**.



**Inspector and later Deputy Chief Constable William Kenward:** William Kenward King's Police Medal (Bravery) Inspector Surrey Constabulary 1921. Awarded the King's Police Medal in December 1921 for courageous conduct in the apprehension of an armed lunatic

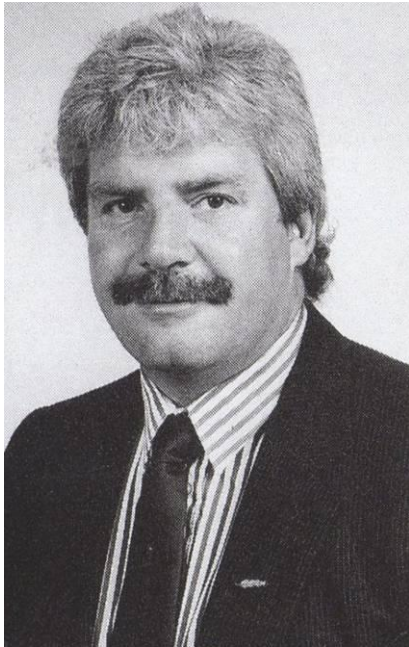
Inspector William Kenward was awarded **King's Police Medal for Gallantry** after he tackled and arrested a madman armed with a rifle at Woking who had already wounded a constable. (Held the rank of superintendent and deputy chief constable 1922-1931 – when appointed superintendent at Godalming there were no police vehicles just a pony and trap)

**1921 June 27:** The Scotsman: His Majesty the King bestowed the **King's Police Medal** upon Inspector William **Kenward** Surrey Constabulary for acts of special gallantry.

**Robert Porter Kimm Distinguished Flying Medal;** No 156 Squadron - Pathfinder

In February 1942, 156 Squadron reformed at RAF Alconbury in Huntingdonshire as a medium bomber squadron equipped with Wellingtons and operated under 3 Group. A few months later when the Pathfinder Force formed in August 1942, No 156 was one of the four squadrons selected to form the nucleus of the new force, with the object of securing more concentrated and effective bombing by marking targets with incendiary bombs and flares dropped from aircraft flown by experienced crew and using the latest navigational equipment. It remained with the Pathfinder Force for the rest of the European war and, still flying Wellingtons at first and then Lancasters, played a major part in Bomber Command's Offensive. In over a span of 38 months of operations it dropped 16,017 tons of bombs and lost 45 Wellingtons and 117 Lancasters.

When it had finished operations against Germany, No 156 marked the dropping zone at Rotterdam and The Hague for the bombers engaged in dropping food supplies to the starving Dutch people, also repatriated British ex- P.O.W.'s to Great Britain and transported British troops from Italy to Great Britain also dropped unwanted incendiary bombs into the sea. The squadron disbanded in September, 1945

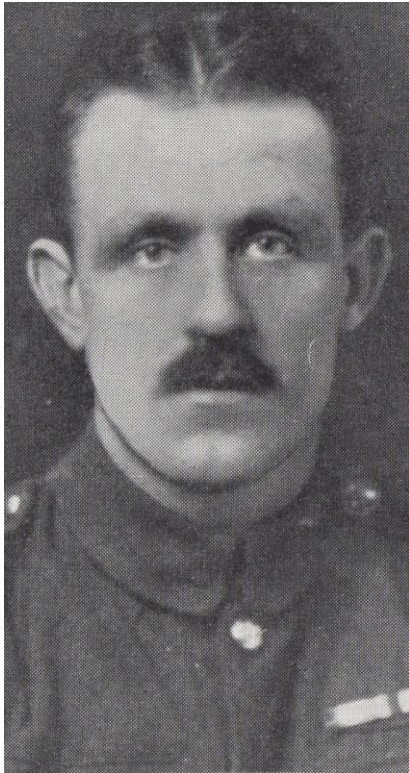


**Simon Lane Police Constable: Awarded the Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct** for his actions in September 1984 when he tackled a gunman whilst off duty. Despite being sprayed with CS gas PC Lane managed to hold onto the offender until assistance arrived.

**PC Edwin Lawty KPM for Gallantry:** Guildford Borough<sup>6</sup> In 1913 awarded the King's Police Medal for Gallantry for arresting a housebreaker at Newlands Corner. During the severe and prolonged struggle the Constable was injured when struck by a golf club. In July the homes of Lt Col Grier and Dr Arthur Bryan were burgled and £50 worth of property stolen. Following a three mile chase across Pewley Downs PC Lawty caught the burglar at Newlands Corner where a severe and prolonged struggle took place during which Lawty was injured having been struck by a golf club. However he hung onto his prisoner until help arrived. For his gallant and determined action PC Lawty was commended by the judge at the Assizes and was awarded the King's Police Medal for gallantry. Monetary awards were made by the Watch Committee to MR William Lee and MR W H Brown who assisted in the arrest. The householders who had been burgled presented the force with £10 for the purchase of pistols and shields (possibly trophies) and three were purchased along with a thousand rounds of ammunition and four shields and leg guards. The weapons would be used for range practice and would not be carried unless an emergency arose.

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<sup>6</sup> Surrey Police Roll of Honour Robert Bartlett



**Police Constable Lawty KPM**



**Inspector William Locke (PS):** Awarded the **King's Police Medal** in May 1946 (when a sergeant) for gallantry in arresting an armed prisoner who during an attempted escape fired a pistol at point blank range. The bullet struck the bottom button of Sergeant Locke's jacket. Guildford Borough

PS William Locke placed himself in front of a prisoner who was displaying an automatic pistol and attempting to escape from Guildford Police Station. The prisoner fired at point blank range but the bullet struck the bottom button of the sergeant's uniform jacket and was deflected. Sergeant Locke thereupon closed with the prisoner and overpowered him. In

February 1946 PC Wilson on patrol in Guildford stopped a man who gave unsatisfactory answers and aroused the officer's suspicions and so he was arrested. He was wearing a coat several sizes too large and whilst being searched at the police station by Sergeant Almond the man suddenly produced an automatic pistol. Both the policemen moved very fast PC Wilson out of the line of fire and Sergeant Almond out of the door. Meanwhile Sergeant Locke having heard the disturbance came at the gunman from behind. Sergeant Almond who must have returned shouted a warning and the gunman turned when the sergeant was about four feet away the gun was fired. The bullet blew a metal button off the sergeant's tunic. On further investigation it was found that the gun had four more bullets but the gun had jammed. The man was sentenced to seven years<sup>7</sup>

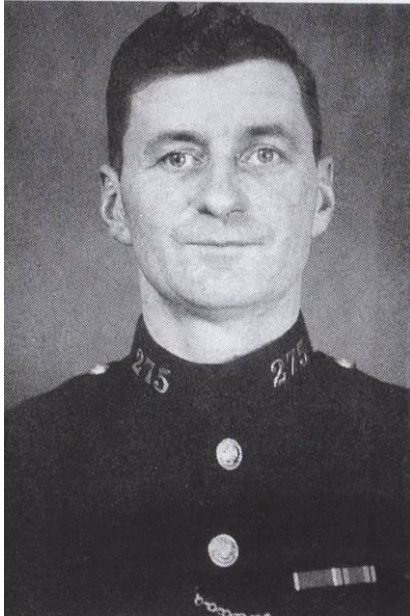
From Mrs Thompson, Guildford: April 2009<sup>8</sup>: Daughter of George Locke: When my father challenged this man he struck him hard with his left hand as his right hand was injured. He then fell on him and an outline of the gun was found on his stomach. Later that evening he was brought home by the police surgeon as he was quite shaken by the event and later that night the police surgeon attended again and I remember him saying "Locke, you are on fire!" The following day he was fine and returned to work. My father was a Borough man who never gave up his rights as he wanted to stay in Guildford. His KPM is in a display cabinet in HQ along with a letter from him in his beautiful handwriting. I remember being told that in about 1926/1927 on his very first night on patrol in Guildford with a senior man they captured a man who had a pistol. On another occasion he was checking an unoccupied house and found a window open. He entered and searched and found a man hiding in one of the beds. He was a big tough man and one night he gave chase, leaping a five barred gate to catch a criminal something he could never normally do!

**Mansfield Detective Constable; Guildford Borough** - 1918 First World War had been promoted sergeant in the Royal Garrison Artillery and **mentioned in despatches** for courage and devotion to duty in rescuing wounded and saving ammunition under shell fire.

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<sup>7</sup>Tom Roberts P 91 Friends and Villains Hodder and Stoughton 1987

<sup>8</sup> Conversation with Robert Bartlett



**PC 275 Robert McBrien:** Awarded the **British Empire Medal** in April 1941 for courage shown when rescuing a woman trapped under the debris of a house demolished by a bomb at Horsley



**PC 783 Paul Mizzi** was awarded the **Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct** for confronting an armed robber in June 1992. PC Mizzi stopped to buy petrol on his way to work. At the petrol station he saw a man threatening the cashier with a handgun. He challenged the man as he left and there was a violent struggle before he was arrested. The gun turned out to be an imitation. The trial judge highly commended PC Mizzi.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Annual Report 1992

PC 783 Paul Mizzi awarded the Queens's Commendation for Brave Conduct for confronting an armed robber. Paul Mizzi: I was off duty, in plain clothes on my way to work when I drove into a petrol station. There I saw a man in the garage shop wearing a black hood. The man was pointing a gun at the cashier's head. I took up a position outside the door and as the offender came out of the shop jumped on him. The suspect was still carrying the handgun and also had a knife. A violent struggle then ensued as I tried to disarm the suspect eventually managing to get hold of the gun, but the suspect continued to struggle. I subsequently managed to overpower the man and ripped off his mask and managed to restrain him until uniformed officers arrived and handcuffed the offender.



**A/PS117 Peter Moore:** Awarded the **Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct** for his actions in August 1992 when he was stabbed while trying to stop an armed robbery in Brockham Post Office.



WPC 55 Jackie Parrish.

**WPC 55 Jackie Parrish:** Awarded the **Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct** when in January 1974 she disarmed a woman wielding a knife.

**Punter Police Constable: Guildford Borough** promoted to Squadron Sergeant Major and **mentioned in despatches** by 1918 First World War.

**Clifford Alfred Robinson**<sup>10</sup> PC 54 and later Sergeant Clifford Robinson was born in Guildford on the 21 June 1917 and on leaving school he became a toolmaker. He joined the Borough on the 5 October 1938 as PC 54 (his wife's father was a retired superintendent in the police). He was to work beat and motor cycle duties transferring to the Surrey Constabulary and moving to Godalming in 1953, the information room in 1957 where he was promoted sergeant in 1960. Cliff was awarded a medal of the **Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire**.

**Thomas Runnegar** – Surrey Constabulary **Military Medal** First World War

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<sup>10</sup> Notes by Cliff Robinson early 1980s



**PC D Shepherd, DI L Phillips, DS G Smith and PC G Queen** awarded the **Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct** in recognition of their courage in the arrest of an armed man. **Len Phillips:** Chris Rowe was in charge of this operation, the culprit had been given a bottle of whiskey by his mother whilst in hospital he drank it discharged himself and went on a rampage with a loaded shotgun. He eventually holed up in a social centre. Me, Gordon Smith, Dave Sheppard and Gerry Queen went in at the rear and made the arrest. Unfortunately the police dog was mortally wounded. I believe that during the incident a police car had its windows blown out. The shooting was at Egham I think it was Hythe Social Centre. Gordon Smith and I had just got back from Wales where we had been for some weeks investigating cattle rustling and theft of JCBs and other large items of earth moving equipment which was being taken to Haverforwest by a pair of ex-Chertsey brothers who had a farm there. We picked up the incident on the force radio and just went along to see what was happening.

**Mick Juniper:** The incident happened at Pooley Green, Egham at a social club. It came about as a result of some sort of domestic dispute and the first officer on the scene before he



became a dog handler was John Davey. As he approached the club the offender discharged the weapon at him, which was a single barrelled shotgun. The incident developed and an ACC took charge of the operation, I believe it was Rowe. By this time the offender was outside the premises, still armed but stationary. Dave Shepherd was instructed to deploy Idol who ran to the man but hesitated on his approach. As Dave relates the story Idol was intending to stand out on the offender who then shot at the dog at close range, the shot entering at the top of the dog's muzzle

shattering his lower jaw. I was called out from home at that time but prior to my arrival Dave and another officer had "dealt" with offender and he was in custody with check chain injuries to his face and was hospitalised. Idol was taken to a vet who decided his injuries were such

that the only course was to put the dog down. Dave was subsequently honoured along with other officers and I also believe Idol got some sort of canine award.

**‘Timber’ Wood:** The story was that the dog was sent in against a man with a shotgun. Instead of going in for the arm, it was thought that the dog circled and barked thinking it was a stick. The dog, named Bowesmoor Idol, was shot and later destroyed. We were offered a gift puppy, which David and I went to look at and we bought it home. It was trained but David never got on with it because it was a little soft as a youngster and after his experience he wanted a harder dog. Dave came off the section and resigned and later joined BAA Police at Gatwick. The gift dog was to become John Worgan’s first police dog with which he had great success both operational and in police dog trials.

**PC Jack Skingley Distinguished Flying Cross** Reigate Borough Flight Lieutenant RAFVR  
Died aged 29, 21 July 1944: Pathfinder

Jack Skingley was reported missing from night operations with the RAF during an attack on Courtrai. On the 23 May 1945 the Air Ministry stated that Flight Lieutenant Skingley lost his life on the 21 July 1944.

PC Skingley joined the Reigate Borough Police on the 27 April 1936 aged 19 having been born on the 7 July 1916 in Watford. He had previous military service with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment in which he served for 2 years and 14 days. PC Skingley’s job when he joined the police was a furniture remover. He was living at 8 Clifton Road, Watford. His mother was Winifred Maude and his father was deceased. The officer was described as being 5 feet 11 inches tall with a fresh complexion, brown hair and grey eyes.

**Service:**

18 November 1936 passed First Aid exam

5 December 1936 Discreditable conduct fined £1 on each of 3 charges and £2 on another charge.

27 April 1937 Second Grade

4 April 1938 Appointment confirmed as from 27 April 1938

27 April 1938 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

27 April 1939 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

10 July 1939 Disobedience to Orders fined £2 by the CC

27 April 1940 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

27 April 1941 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

11 August 1941 Joined the RAF

27 April 1942 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

1 February 1943 transferred to the Surrey Joint Police Force

27 April 1943 8<sup>th</sup> Grade



**Jack Skingley married Marjorie Henderson 18 November 1940**

PC Skingley's father was a police officer as was his grandfather, and on his wife's side was a policeman who was present at the Sidney Street siege in 1900. He was a member of the Reigate Borough Police where he lived with his wife and where their son Ross was born.



From Ross Skingley in April 2004: "My father was a Bomb aimer in No 97 Squadron Pathfinders and flew in Lancasters. He joined the RAF in 1942 (records show 1941) and

trained in Canada. Between August 43 and July 44 he flew on 40 missions over Germany, France and Belgium, many of these over Berlin. I have no DFC citation as this was posthumously awarded. However I shall send for his records as all the other information was gathered from photos and the ops records from Kew. He and his crew went missing on a short raid from Coningsby to Coutraui in Belgium on the night of 20 July 44 out of the 14 Lancasters to go out his was the only one that did not return. His Pilot was P/O Edwards.

I am now 60 and have served in 27 years in the Army and Army Air Corps. I have flown as aircrew and as a pilot since the age of 16 and still fly my old Auster out of Bourne Airfield Cambridgeshire, which of course was the base for No 97 Squadron during part of the war”

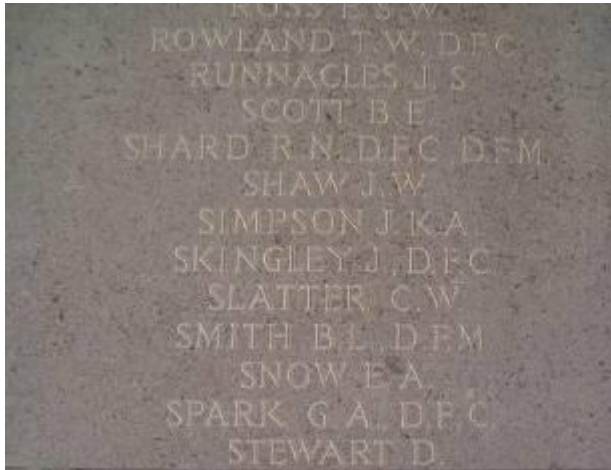
PC Skingley served with the Pathfinders who were volunteers for this particularly dangerous role. He was killed in a night operation in Lancasters with the RAF and is remembered on the Runnymede Memorial. No 97 Squadron were based Bourne Airfield Cambridgeshire and were Squadron were on the Berlin Raids 1943-1944.

FLT/LT Jack Skingley D.F.C. Bomb Aimer trained in Canada 1943 after which was posted to 7 Sqdn Oakington in 1943 and also served with 207 Sqdn and transferred as F/O with P/O W.H.Benton and P.O J.I. Rogerson to 97 Sqdn in late '43. Jack was most likely on his second tour when he took part in ops to Courtraï on 1/7/44. His aircraft, piloted by P.O Edwards was lost in the raid. (Stan Warren's WWII Ex-RAF Ground Crew Services Web Site Notice Board Page 3)

From: Gavin Maude to Rob Davis Bomber Command Losses Database

My grandfather came from Camberley in Surrey and was a member of the local constabulary. He resigned to join the war effort (which he was not required to do as a policeman as I understand that conscription did not apply to them. This is what my great-grandmother used to say when she was alive as Jack was her only child and she was quite bitter about his loss) He trained in Canada in 1943 as a Pathfinder. I have no idea when he actually joined up and with which squadron. From Canada he was posted to Oakington and also that year served with No 207 squadron. He transferred from 207 with 2 other crewmembers (P/O Benton and P/O J I Rogerson) to 97 Squadron. He was most likely on his 2<sup>nd</sup> tour when his Lancaster (aircraft PA979) flown by Pilot Officer Edwards went missing in a daylight raid to Courtria (Belgium). The target was bounced (being train yards and a triangular rail junction. I think that the area had something to do with V2 manufacturing or entraining). Of the 302 aircraft that took part only 9 were lost which is an unusually low number. The plane was second to last to take off at 17.42 from Conningsby airfield. The notes from one of the squadron log books I viewed at Kew mention light enemy fighter activity on the way out and my uncle who is also helping me tracked down an aircrew member who went on the raid who (having looked at his log book) recalled that there was an air explosion over the target as his aircraft waited to go on its bomb run and the pathfinders to do their target marking. The plane went missing

without trace or record and my grandfather is remembered at the Runnymede memorial and in the squadron book at Norwich Cathedral. Before he died I believe that Jack may have voiced some concern in a letter to his cousin as to the state of his aircraft. Jack was known amongst his peers as uncle as he was 29 when he died and the average crew age was 21/22. I also understand from my grandmother that he was friends with Guy Gibson and that Guy (who was small in stature) and my grandfather (who was over 6 ft) did a double act on the piano in the mess...I do not know how true this is, but it is a nice story! The DFC was posthumous



#### **RAF Memorial Runnymede**



**PC 1203 B Rajikumar and PS 202 M Powell- Bristow:** These officers were awarded the **Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct** after an incident on the roof of a large country house. Helped by ambulance man Mr Wood they detained a drunk, violent man after jumping a seven-foot gap to reach him.

**PC Leonard J. Saltmarsh DFC and bar 7 Squadron Pathfinder; Squadron Leader Leonard James Saltmarsh**

Leonard Saltmarsh served before and after the war in the Surrey Constabulary. In December 1942 he trained in a Tiger Moth and went on to fly Wellingtons and Lancasters with 7 Squadron, Pathfinders. He was awarded the DFC for actions on the 26th of August 1944 in a raid over Kiel. He flew 99 Operational sorties.

D.F.C. London Gazette 3 October 1944. The original recommendation states:

‘Flying Officer L. J. Saltmarsh has so far completed 17 successful sorties as Pilot and Captain of Lancaster aircraft, and has been most conspicuous at all times for his extremely high standard of courage and resoluteness. On two difficult occasions during daylight attacks on Vaires on 12 July 1944 and on Emieville on 18 August 1944, he observed a crippled bomber proceeding at a very reduced speed away from the target. On both occasions he dropped behind the main bomber stream in order to escort the damaged bomber safely back to England. On 15 August, during a daylight attack on the airfield at St. Trond, one of his engines became unserviceable on the way to the target and the propellor had to be feathered. But in spite of the fact that he was getting behind the main stream, owing to his reduced speed, he pressed on and bombed the target, and secured an aiming point photograph. On the way back from the target another engine became unserviceable but did not deter Flying Officer Saltmarsh from proceeding to and bombing an alternative airfield target with a bomb that had failed to be released over the primary target, and once more he secured an aiming point photograph. He eventually arrived safely over base and made a perfect two-engined landing. It was not until after he had landed that he reported the fact that two engines had become unserviceable during the sortie. This very gallant pilot is strongly recommended for the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross.’

Bar to D.F.C. London Gazette 16 November 1945. The original recommendation states:

‘This officer has completed 53 operational sorties, of which 28 have been carried out in the squadron, in the Path Finder Force, 18 of them as Captain of a Marker Crew. Flight Lieutenant Saltmarsh is an efficient and skilful pilot who has always shown a strong devotion to duty and a cheerful confidence which has always inspired a high standard of morale in his crew. He has always displayed exceptional fearlessness in the face of danger, complete disregard for personal safety and has pressed home his attacks against the enemy with the utmost determination.’

Leonard James Saltmarsh commenced pilot training at No. 31 E.F.T.S. at De Winton, Alberta in December 1942, and graduated from No. 34 E.F.S. at Medicine Hat in June 1943. Back in the U.K., he attended No. 11 A.F.U. at Shawbury, prior to joining No. 26 O.T.U. at Little Harwood in early January 1944, where he gained experience on Wellingtons, and then attended a conversion unit for Lancasters at Waterbeach, at which place he joined No. 514 Squadron that June.

Thus ensued his first tour of operations, commencing with a strike against L'Hey on the 23 June and ending with another against Emmerich on 7 October, the intervening period witnessing him attack numerous French targets in support of the Allied invasion, but also a number of heavily defended German targets, including Bremen, Dortmund, Saarbrücken, Stettin and Stuttgart. And as confirmed by the recommendation for his D.F.C. after 17 sorties, several of these trips were not without incident, his flying log book further stating that his Lancaster received flak damage during strikes against enemy panzers and transport at Villiers Bocage on 30 June and against a supply depot at Beauvoir on 2 July. Similarly, too, during a visit to Bremen on the night of 18-19 August.

In October 1944, Saltmarsh attended the Path Finder Force's training centre at Warboys, as a result of which he was transferred to No. 7 (P.F.F.) Squadron at Oakington in the following month, flying his first such sortie on the night of the 11th-12th, against Dortmund. A daylight strike against enemy communications at Julich, in support of General Patton's troops, followed on the 14th and a night operation to Sterkrade on the 21st, Saltmarsh's flying log book again noting flak damage. Then on the 29th he flew as support aircraft to the Master Bomber on a raid to Dortmund, a role that he would fulfil with growing regularity over the coming months. Such heavily defended targets as Duisburg, Essen (twice) and Karlsruhe formed the backbone of his operational agenda in December, while January 1945 saw him attacking, among other locations, Hanover, Magdeburg, Munich and Stuttgart, his flying log book noting an encounter with a Ju. 88 on the Munich run. February witnessed his Lancaster carrying out strikes against Dortmund, Gelsenkirchen, Ludwigshaven and Pforzheim, in addition to participating in the famous "firestorm" raid on Dresden on the 13th, an action that Saltmarsh would robustly defend in years to come.

March saw him completing five more sorties to German targets, three of them in daylight, and April another four, two of these in daylight, including Bremen on the 21st, which latter operation marked the end of his operational tour. He did, however, fly three "Cook's Tours" to the Rhur in May, and ended his career with an appointment in Transport Command in December 1945. Over and above all of this, however, it would appear that he flew 56 "unspecific" sorties of a secret nature, evidence for which is to be found in the following endorsement from "Bomber" Harris. He also flew: Diversions, experimentation of special equipment, including radar, photographic reconnaissance, these top secret sorties and others. In May 1945 he was selected and volunteered to form a new squadron for the continuation of hostilities against Japan.'



**PC 683 David Stark:** Awarded the **Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct** for his action in May 1975 when he arrested an armed intruder. The gun was later found to be a replica.

PS Stark went with other officers to an incident and talked a man who was threatening him with a gun into surrendering. The man was arrested and admitted twenty five other offences and was sentenced to eleven and a half years in prison. After the trial His Honour Judge Bolland said: "I would like to say that the police officers, particularly Sergeant Stark, behaved in the most courageous way and in the best traditions of the British Police."

**PS Anthony Suter PC Roger Grimble:** 1982 19 January: Police attended an incident on a bridge over the M25 at Chertsey where a young woman was threatening to jump. **The girl jumped** as the officers were speaking with her and she was grabbed by one of the officers who in turn was restrained by another as he was in danger of falling. The girl was brought to safety.<sup>11</sup> **1982 19 January:** Traffic officers Sergeant Anthony Suter and PC Roger Grimble were sent to a bridge over the M3 at Chertsey where a young woman was **threatening to jump**. As she started to jump PC Grimble grabbed her and was nearly dragged off but was held by PS Suter who also managed to take hold of the woman. Both officers received **Royal Humane Society Awards**.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Annual Report 1982

<sup>12</sup> Annual Report 1983



A teenage girl who plunged off a bridge was recovering in hospital yesterday, thanks to the strong arm of the law.

As she began to fall, policeman Roger Grimble grabbed her wrist and clung on desperately until help arrived.

He said, "She was crying and kicking her legs about. I could feel her jacket slipping on her and my legs were slipping a bit. There was a stage when it occurred to me that we might both go down. I must admit I was a bit shaky afterwards".

The drama started when a taxi driver spotted the 18 year old girl sitting on the parapet of a bridge that carries the M25 25 feet above the A320 at Chertsey, Surrey. PC Grimble, 37, arrived, stopped the traffic and talked the girl into letting him come up.

"I managed to get one leg over the crash barrier and on to the ledge where she was sitting", he said. "The tears were streaming down her face and she was sobbing. Then she just went. It was not a leap, she just seemed to slip from the edge and start to fall">

As he held on, another policeman, Sergeant Tony Suter, scrambled up the bank and pulled them both to safety.



**DS W Tappern, PC K Simmons, PC P Buss, PC R Holland and PC T Anglim** were awarded the **Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct** for service exceeding the bounds of duty at the scene of the Gatwick air disaster in January 1969

**Keith Thomson Sergeant and Police Constable Andrew Simkins 1979 December 18:** discovered a serious fire in Walnut Tree Close, Guildford. They broke into the house and heard groaning from a man about twelve feet into the room. Both officers made repeated attempts to cross the room and rescue the man but on each occasion were beaten back by the intense heat and smoke. Suffering from the effects of smoke inhalation, singeing to the eyebrows, hair and clothing they were eventually forced to retreat. A body of a 70 year old man was later recovered. Both officers were awarded certificates by **The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire.**<sup>13</sup>

**William Charles Tucker Police Constable and Special Constable William Douglas Reffell:** Commendation for showing great bravery in attempting to rescue an aged woman from a burning building at Gomshall (Believed to be more than a local commendation – possibly the equivalent of the modern day **Queen's Commendation**)<sup>14</sup>

**Walter Tuppen** – Surrey Constabulary; **Distinguished Conduct Medal** First World War

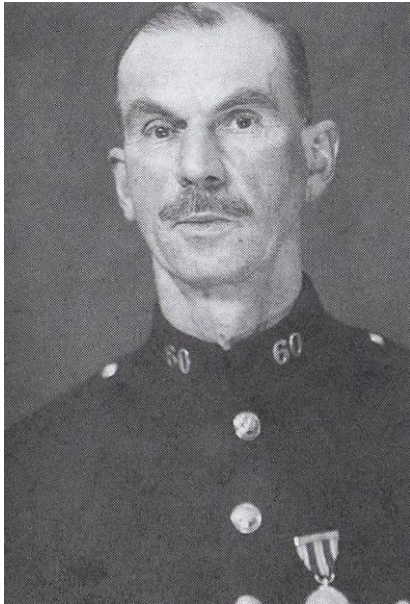
**Turner Police Constable:** 1903: Following a petition from thirty tradesmen PC Turner Guildford Borough was awarded the **Royal Humane Society Testimonial** for courageously rescuing a boy named Woods from the River Wey. At the same time PC Turner was commended in a letter from Scotland Yard for his valuable services in affecting the arrest of a jewel robber.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Annual Report 1979

<sup>14</sup> Durrant A Hundred Years of the Surrey Constabulary

<sup>15</sup> They Guarded Guildford by Richard Ford Surrey 1969 internal publication Surrey Constabulary



**Harold Weller Police Constable:** Awarded the **King's Police Medal** in 1914 for conspicuous action trying to stop a runaway horse.

**Eric Norman "Timber" Woods** Police Constable Reigate Borough, Wing Commander **DFC and Bar**. RAFVR; died age 33, 16 December 1943



Wing Commander Woods DFC and Bar RAFVR served in No126 (Persian Gulf) Squadron. He died aged 33 the son of William H. Woods, and of Kate Dora Woods, of Harborne, Birmingham. Killed whilst on operations with the RAF and remembered on the Malta Memorial.

PC Woods joined the RAF on the 28 June 1940 although the records show he resigned from Reigate Borough Police on the 15 November 1940.

PC Woods joined the Reigate Borough Police on the 25 August 1939 when he was aged 26 having been born on the 8<sup>th</sup> May 1913 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He was described as being

6feet 1-¼ inches tall with fair complexion, brown hair and blue eyes. PC Woods was single and had been employed as a cable tester with Southern Telephone Cables, Essex.

Distinguished Flying Cross recognises acts of bravery during combat operations in the air and is awarded *“for gallantry during active operations against the enemy.”*

WOODS, F/L Eric Norman (60119) - Distinguished Flying Cross - No.72 Squadron awarded London Gazette dated 14 July 1942.

This officer has participated in 74 sorties over enemy territory. He has led his flight, and occasionally the squadron, with courage, skill and judgement. His resourcefulness in difficult circumstances has helped to promote and maintain the high morale of the squadron. Flight Lieutenant Woods has destroyed one and damaged a further two enemy aircraft

On 16 December 1943 Wing Commander Woods was in Spitfire VC JK643 when he went missing. Air-Britain says he went missing from an air sea rescue search in the Gulf of Drin. They also have the same for MA905. This would appear to be incorrect as ' 249sqn at War 'show: - Whilst searching for a missing pilot, a pair of 249 Squadron Spitfires encountered two BF109s of 10/JG27 (operating from Kalimaki, northern Greece) off the headland west of Bize. The news of the encounter got back to Grottaglie and Woods took off from Grottaglie, Italy with 126 Squadron's new CO Squadron Leader K. Debenham (MA905) but both failed to return and it was believed that they had collided over the sea. It was thought that they were going to slip across the sea to Yugoslavia and under cover of the hills, wait for the BF109s to come into land and strike. ASR aircraft and launches failed to find anything. He was the Wing leader of 286 Wing when he went missing. He had left 249sqn when he was promoted to Wing leader on 30 November 1943. He is listed in 126 Squadron's Operational Record Book (Squadron Diary) for this sortie, so presume he was either with 126 Squadron as well as being Wing Leader or just listed in 126 Squadron's Operational Record Book because he flew their aircraft. He was on his 301st operational sortie and had been credited with nine victories plus three others shared. (Malcolm Barrass "Air of Authority")

Wartime Rank: Wing Commander 60119 seeing service with the Royal Air Force in Squadrons: 249, 72 and 126. This must have been a remarkable short career but there are no other remotely similar names or dates of death other than for the Wing Commander within the CWGC database.

From Ross Skingley April 2004: "My father had a good friend in the police his name was Eric Woods he was so my mother says, in Reigate. Eric joined the RAF at the same time as Dad and became a spitfire pilot he was killed in a battle of Albania in December 1943 his rank then was Wing Commander with a DFC and bar. He was godfather to my sister who was born in 1941. He was a pilot officer in 42 so he must have been an outstanding pilot and commander to achieve wing commander and 2 DFC's in a year. My mother (who went out with Eric before meeting and marrying my Father Jack) says that Eric was in Canada as a Mounty. I have various photos of Eric one of which shows him (from a war paper cutting)

looking at his Spitfire's propeller which was badly damaged and the captions says "although his spitfire was damaged Wing Cdr Eric Wood took his aircraft on to shoot down a JU88"

Born in England (Shores) or Buenos Aires (Blatherwick), 8 May 1910 Father joined Royal Navy in 1914. Family moved to Victoria in 1920 then to Vancouver in 1924, where he was educated.

Woods moved to England in 1936, working for a phone company and for the Reigate Borough Police Force. Enlisted in RAF, May 1940 but was placed in reserve until August 1940 when he began pilot training at No.10 EFTS (August to October, Tiger Moths) and No.15 FTS (Harvards).

Received wings and commission in January 1941; served at Central Flying School and No.58 Operational Training Unit (Grangemouth). Promoted to Flying Officer effective 14 January 1942 and joined No.124 Squadron in May 1941 to March 1942 when posted to No.72 Squadron as a flight commander (Flight Lieutenant) until the end of July.

On 10 August 1942 he flew off HMS Furious for Malta where he took command of No.249 Squadron. Rested in February 1943 when he was posted to Egypt and No.73 Operational Training Unit, Abu Sueir.

Took command of No.249 Squadron again in July 1943 and was promoted in November 1943 to lead No.286 Wing of Balkan Air Force, Brindisi. Missing in action 16 Dec 1943 while flying with No.126 Squadron (believed shot down by Bf.109s or collided with S/L K. B. L. Debenham, who also did not return)

#### Victories Are As Follows:

- 13 March 1942, one FW-190 damaged, St. Omer area, France
- 23 March 1942, one FW.190 destroyed, St.Omer-Hardelot  
- (No.124 Squadron, Spitfire BL918);
- 28 April 1942, one FW.190 damaged, Calais-Gris Nez  
- (No.72 Squadron, Spitfire BL773);
- 8 May 1942. one Bf.109 probably destroyed, Dieppe  
- (No.72 Squadron, same Spitfire);
- 17 May 1942, one FW.190 damaged, Gris Nez  
- (No.72 Squadron, Spitfire BM516);
- 5 June 1942, one Bf.109F destroyed, Le Crotoy  
- (No.72 Squadron, Spitfire BL773);
- 27 August 1942, one MC.202 destroyed on ground, Gela airfield  
- (No.249 Squadron, Spitfire TE867);
- 2 October 1942, one MC.202 damaged, Syracuse area  
- (No.249 Squadron, Spitfire TR466);
- 10 October 1942, one Bf.109 damaged, north of Gozo  
- (No.249 Squadron, Spitfire TR466);

- 12 October 1942, one Ju.88 destroyed and  
- one Bf.109 damaged, Luqa, plus  
- one Bf.109 destroyed and  
- one Ju.88 damaged off south Sicilian coast  
- (all with No.249 Squadron, Spitfire TR466)
- 13 October 1942, two Bf.109F's destroyed 20 miles north of Gozo  
- (No.249 Squadron, Spitfire TR466);
- 14 October 1942, one Ju.88 probably destroyed, Grand Harbour  
- (No.249 Squadron, Spitfire TR466);
- 15 October 1942, one Bf.109F destroyed and  
- one Ju.88 damaged off Kalafrana  
- (No.249 Squadron, Spitfire TR466);
- 16 October 1942, one Ju.88 damaged, Halfar (No.249 Squadron, Spit TR466  
- Woods was shot down in this engagement);
- 22 October 1942, one MC.202 probably destroyed plus  
- one Bf.109 damaged north of Grand Harbour  
- (No.72 Squadron, Spitfire AD529);
- 27 October 1942, one Bf.109 probably destroyed, Malta  
- (No.72 Squadron, Spitfire AD529);
- 11 December 1942, one Bf.110 destroyed plus  
- 1/3 Ju.88 destroyed (both near Lampari Island  
- (No.72 Squadron, Spitfire AR559)
- 14 December 1942, 1/3 Ju.88 destroyed (west of Lampedusa  
- (No.72 Squadron, Spitfire AR559);
- 19 December 1942, one Do.24 destroyed near Delimara  
- (No.72 Squadron, Spitfire EP728);
- 4 December 1943, one Ju.87 destroyed at Podorica airfield  
- (No.286 Wing, Spitfire MA701).

WOODS, S/L Eric Norman (60119) - Bar to DFC - No.249 Squadron awarded as per London Gazette dated 3 November 1942.

In the recent heavy air fighting over Malta this officer has led his squadron against enemy formations with great success. Between 12th and 17th October 1942, 27 aircraft were destroyed by the squadron, and much of this success can be attributed to Squadron Leader Woods' outstanding leadership. In one engagement, on the 13th October, he shot down two enemy aircraft, bringing his victories to six. His example of courage and devotion to duty has inspired his fellow pilots.

#### **From CWGC Site**

**Name: WOODS, ERIC NORMAN**

**Initials: E N**

**Nationality: United Kingdom**

**Rank: Wing Commander**

**Regiment: Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve**

**Unit Text: No126 Squadron.**

**Age: 33**

**Date of Death: 16/12/1943**

**Service No: 60119**

**Awards: DFC and Bar**

**Additional information: Son of W. H. Woods, and of Kate Dora Woods, of Harborne, Birmingham.**

**Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead**

**Grave/Memorial Reference: Panel 6, Column 1.**

**Cemetery: Malta Memorial**