



remembrance ni



Bench honouring Wing Commander Thomas C. Pinkerton RAF at the National Museum of the United States Air Force.

## **Ballymoney RAF WW2 pilot in Vietnam War**

**Tom Pinkerton flew photographic missions, took the surrender of Hamburg airfield, and later went to Vietnam in order to repair the fire control systems of USAF gunships which were going down.**

Tom was a former pupil at the Coleraine Inst. who gained a Mechanical Engineering degree from Queens, Belfast. He joined the RAF in 1942 at about the mid point of the Second World War. He was sent to the US to learn to fly, a common practice once the US had joined the war in December 1941.

When he became operational as a pilot he flew photographic missions sometimes at quite low levels. He was active during the Battle of the Bulge in 1945 and the movements in Holland at about the same time, when he photographed broken dykes and large numbers of tanks. He also took many personal photographs, which are very interesting and unusual.

At the end of WWII, he was instrumental in taking the surrender of Hamburg airfield on his own. During the Second World War the airport was closed to civil aviation. The Luftwaffe thoroughly camouflaged the site with huge mats and trees. As a result, the Royal Air Force was able to take control of a fully functional airport in May 1945.

He continued in the RAF after the war and was sent to Dayton, Ohio, where he worked on fire control computers. Later, during the Vietnam War, the by then, Wing Commander Pinkerton went to Vietnam in order to repair the fire control systems of gunships which were going down.

He asked permission of the RAF for this mission but the reply, a negative, took so long in coming that he had been to Vietnam and returned by the time he received it. He was given a US Air force civilian award for meritorious service for the Gunship work. Resigning from the RAF in 1986 he moved to Dayton where he had spent so much time. He died in 1991 just a few months after remarrying.

Outside the RAF, his particular interests were the bagpipes, which he took with him on all operations, and the novels of Agatha Christie. He was also interested in computation, which eventually was applied to computer systems.

There is a memorial to Wg. Cdr. Pinkerton at the National Museum of the USAF.

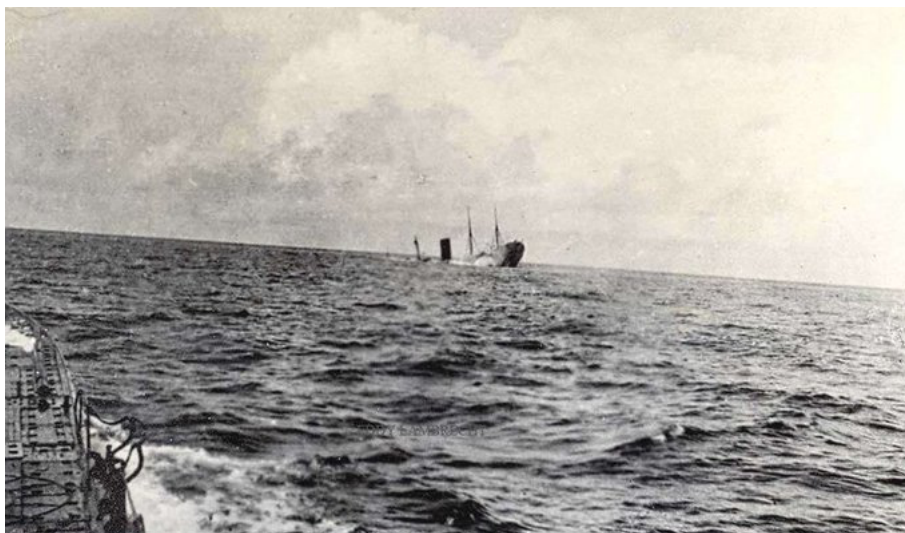
## On this day – July 17

### 1917

The British storm and capture the German second line positions on a front of 1,500 yards and take the Waterlot Farm east of Longueval, and clear Ovillers of the remaining Germans.

HM Submarine C34 was torpedoed and sunk by German submarine U-52 while surfaced off Fair Isle. There was only one survivor from C34's crew of 16.

### 1918 - HMS Carpathia



The RMS Carpathia sinks off Ireland's west coast with a loss of five crew members after being torpedoed by a German submarine U-55. The vessel won worldwide fame just six years earlier for being the first ship to respond to the Titanic's distress signal.

## 1936



Nationalist elements within the Spanish military led by right-wing generals Francisco Franco and Emilio Mola rise up to overthrow the country's democratically elected Republican government. The coup triggers a three-year civil war that leaves hundreds of thousands dead. The war was also used by Nazi Germany to try out tactics such as blitzkrieg.

## 1940

The German Army presents its plan for the invasion of Britain. Six divisions are to land between Ramsgate and Bexhill in the southeast corner of England, four will land



between Brighton and the Isle of Wight and three on the Dorset coast. Two Airborne division's will also be deployed, with follow up forces including six Panzer and three Motorised divisions.

The first anti-Jewish measures are taken in Vichy France.

Under extreme diplomatic pressure, Britain agrees to close the Burma Road, a vital supply route for the Chinese army.

## **1941**

Submarine HMS Phoenix was depth-charged and sunk with all hands (53 men) by Italian anti-submarine vessel Albatros off the east coast of Sicily. Albatros counter-attacked after a failed torpedo attack by Phoenix.

In Finland the old 1939 border is crossed by Finnish forces

## **1942**

Italians repulse British attack at Miteirya Ridge at El Alamein.

Himmler visits Auschwitz-Birkenau for two days, inspecting all ongoing construction and expansion, then observes the extermination process from start to finish as two trainloads of Jews arrive from Holland. Kommandant Hess is then promoted. Construction includes four large gas chamber/crematories.

Australian 24th Brigade and British 44th Royal Tank Regiment, supported by RAF fighters, attacked Miteirya Ridge (also known as Ruin Ridge to Australians) between Tel el Eisa and Ruweisat near El Alamein, Egypt; the offensive initially overran the line held by Italian Trento

Division and Italian Trieste Division, but would ultimately be driven back by German tanks and Italian Trento Division.

**1943**

An allied military government (Amgot) is set up in Sicily.



Photo # NH 96821 Damage at Port Chicago, Ca. View looking south from ship pier.

**1944**

Two ammunition-laden transport ships explode whilst docked at Port Chicago, California. 320 sailors and other military personnel are killed in what is the worst stateside disaster of the war. Most of the sailors were African-Americans, who had received no training in ammunition handling. Many of the survivors refused to load any more ships until proper safety procedures were put in place. The so-called "Port Chicago Mutiny" resulted in numerous court martials and imprisonments, but the publicity surrounding the event led directly to the end of racially segregated assignments in the Navy two years later.

Rommel is severely wounded by a Spitfire attack after his inspection of defenses Southeast of Caen.

The Germans say they will hold Baltic States 'at all costs', as the Russian advance approaches the Latvian border.

Admiral Shimada, the Japanese Navy Minister is sacked, Nomura takes over.



57,000 German prisoners of war march through Moscow to demonstrate the success of the Soviet Operation Bagration. Most of these prisoners never returned to Germany alive.

**1945**



British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, US President Harry S. Truman, and Soviet leader Josef Stalin began meeting at Potsdam in the final Allied summit of World War II and to map out the post-war world. Behind the scenes, relations between the Western Allies and Moscow are beginning to unravel.

## Roll of Honour – July 17

*Representing their comrades who died on this day*

**1916**

### **+BRATTY, George**

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 9th Btn. Private. 22679. Died 17/07/1916. Born in Lisburn, where he lived at 12 Barrack Lane with his wife and three small children, he was employed by the Inland Navigation Company. He enlisted at Moy, Co. Tyrone. St. Sever Cemetery, Rouen, France



**+CAHOON, C**

Royal Irish Rifles, 1st Btn. Lance Corporal. 9126. Died 17/07/1916. Age 27. Son of Charles and Annie Cahoon, of 17, Liffey St., Belfast. St. Sever Cemetery, Rouen, France

**+DOWNEY, James**

Royal Irish Regiment. 6th Btn. C Coy. Private. 2406. Died 17/07/1916. Age 23. Husband to Margaret Downey, of 3, St. Patrick St., Londonderry. Londonderry (Derry) City Cemetery. Londonderry WM

**+HILL, Robert**

Royal Irish Fusiliers, Depot, B Coy. Depot. Private. 16431. Died 17/07/1916 at the Norfolk War Hospital, England of wounds received at the Somme on July 1. Age 22. Brother of Moore Hill, Royal Irish Fusiliers. 9th Btn. D Coy. Private. 14299. Died 10/05/1916 at the Military Hospital, Edinburgh, Scotland, of a disease picked up in the trenches in France. Age 19. Sons of Mary Lindsay (formerly Hill), of 27, Cumberland St., Belfast, and the late William J. Hill. Born at Portadown. Both brothers are buried in the same grave in Drumcree C of I Parish Churchyard, Portadown. Portadown WM

**+LYNN, Wiliam Edward**

1st Bn. Royal Irish Fusiliers. Serjeant. 5700. Died 17/07/1916. Aged 21. Son of James and Elizabeth Lynn, of Mousetown, Coalisland, Co. Tyrone. One of four brothers who died on service, two are buried in Belgium, one in France and the fourth in Israel. Auchonvillers Military Cemetery, Somme, France



**Vimy Ridge  
Canadian  
Memorial**

**1917**

**HMS NEWMARKET**

**+FITZPATRICK, William**

RN. Leading Seaman. 174638. HMS Newmarket. Died 17/07/1917. Age 41. Newmarket was lost in the eastern Mediterranean. Son of Patrick and Anna Fitzpatrick, Victoria Road, Bangor. Bangor WM. Bangor RBL Memorial plaque. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 24

### **+MITCHELL, Charles**

Seaman. 3762B. HMS Newmarket. Died 17/07/1917. Age 36. Son of Charles and Mary Ann Mitchell, Ballintoy. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, panel 37. Ballintoy Parish Church RH

**1917**

### **+HARPER, James**

Royal Engineers. P Special Coy. Pioneer. 220339. Died 17/07/1917. Born Ballycraigy, Carnmoney on 01/02/1883. He was accepted for service in February 1917. A record states he had 21 years experience as a chemist and was anxious to join the RE Chemical Section. He had previously served with the Calcutta Volunteer Rifles. Son of James Harper, Carnmoney. Husband to Sarah Jane Fidler. They married in St Catherine's Presbyterian Church in Dublin on 07/07/1913. James was living in Belfast at this time. Sarah later lived at 202 Northborough Rd., Norbury, London. They had a son, Cecil James. Essex Farm Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

### **+McCULLOUGH, James**

Royal Irish Rifles. 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 6846. Died 17/07/1917. Age 22. James was wounded in May 1915 and his mother received a letter from the Matron of No. 13 General Hospital in Boulogne informing her that her son was being transferred by hospital ship to England. On 10/01/1917 James McCullough and Elizabeth (Lizzie) Strain were married in Ballygrainey Presbyterian Church. After they got married their address was 22 East Street, Donaghadee. Six months after he was married Rifleman James McCullough was killed in action on 17/07/1917 during





**AIF Burial Ground at Flers on the Somme. Named after the Australian Imperial Force, those who died in the later fighting on the Somme are buried here, along with men who fell fighting over the same ground in 1918**

road construction in a forward area of the battlefield. Son of James and Sarah Ann McCullough (nee Reid) who were married on 10/12/1888 in St Mary's Parish Church of Ireland Church Belfast. Husband of Elizabeth McCullough, of 22, East St., Donaghadee. St Quentin Cabaret Military Cemetery, Belgium. Donaghadee and District WM and in First Donaghadee Presbyterian Church

**1918**

**+BUCKLEY, Harold**

RAF. 53rd Training Squadron. Flight Cadet. Died 17/07/1918. Age 19. He was killed when his training aircraft spun and crashed in the Midlands. Trinity School and Halifax Secondary School. Member of the QUB Training Corps 15/05/1917. Gibraltar Rd., Halifax. Warley Congregational Cemetery. Halifax Town Books of



Remembrance, Halifax Secondary School WM, St Hilda's Church, Halifax WM

**1921**

**+FITZPATRICK, John A**

Royal Army Pay Corps, Squadron Quartermaster Sergeant. 7657241. Died 17/07/1921. Age 36. Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. Born at Lurgan. Son of Hugh and Catherine Fitzpatrick. Husband to Jane Frances Kane Fitzpatrick, of 17, Queen St., Stirling. Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery, Iraq.

**1942**

**+BANNISTER, Brian Stanley**

RAF. Flight Lieutenant. 43089. DFC. Died 17/07/1942. Age 24. 24 Sqdn. Flying accident caused by lightning on transit flight of Hudson N7253 to Hendon from Sydenham, County Down. The crew and high-profile passengers on board numbered 13 people when they took off from Sydenham Airfield, Belfast, bound for RAF Hendon, London. En route, the plane sustained damage to the port wing. It is possible that a lightning strike caused the fatal structural failure. The plane came down at Tyn-y-bryne Farm, St. Asaph, Denbighshire, Wales.

Brian received his education at Campbell College, Belfast before attending Sandhurst Military Academy. He joined the British Army in 1938 and in the early stages of WW2, he served in France with the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. In April 1940, he transferred to the Royal Air Force as a Pilot Officer. In April 1941, Bannister received the Distinguished Flying Cross while serving with RAF 53 Squadron. The citation commended his gallantry and devotion to duty. A year later,

on 11/04/1942, he received a promotion to Flight Lieutenant. Bannister had survived another crash on 18/02/1942. In that case, Consolidated Liberator AM925 struck a radio mast on take-off from RAF Nutts Corner, Co. Antrim. Brain Stanley Bannister was one of 5 injured members of the crew from RAF 120 Squadron. A further 3 aircrew died in the incident and the navigator died 2 days later in a military hospital in Belfast. Son of Frederick Charles and Kathleen Mary Bannister of 12 Myrtlefield Pk., Belfast. Dundonald Cemetery. A funeral service took place on 24/07/1942. RAF. Flight Lieutenant. 43089. DFC. Died 17/07/1942. Age 24. 24 Sqdn. Flying accident caused by lightning on transit flight of Hudson N7253 to Hendon from Sydenham, County Down. Control lost in cloud and wing broke off. Crashed at Tyn-y-bryne Farm, Nr. St Asaph, Denbighshire, N.Wales. In same plane Wing Commander Malcolm Morgan McMullan (See below). Son of Frederick Charles and Kathleen Mary Bannister of Belfast. Family headstone, Dundonald Cemetery. Flying Officer. Died 17/07/1942 North Wales. "Hudson N7253 left Belfast for Hendon on 17/07/1942, and crashed 2.5 miles south east of Ruthven, North Wales. All on board were killed.

### **+McMULLAN, Malcolm Morgan**

RAF. Wing Commander. 21092. MiD. Died 17/07/1942 North Wales. Aged 38. He and eight others VIP passengers along with a crew of four in a Lockheed Hudson Mk I, N7253 of 24 Squadron RAF. The aircraft took off from RAF Sydenham, Belfast City Northern Ireland en route for RAF Hendon the 17/07/1942 when it crashed at Tyn-Y-Bryn Farm near Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd, Denbighshire. An investigation into

the accident was established that the cause was structural failure involving the port wing of the aircraft. It appears at the time of the accident, there was stormy weather with turbulence and it seems the aircraft went out of control after being struck by lightning. All on board perished. In same plane Brian Stanley Bannister. (See above). Born 1904 to William John and Alice McMullan, nee Morgan. Husband to Elizabeth, nee Wilson of Hill Lodge, Ballycarry County Antrim. Elizabeth died 14/02/1994 aged 94 years. Howarden Military Cemetery North Wales. Family headstone, Greyabbey Cemetery, County Down.

### **+PINKERTON, William**

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Fusilier. 7043238. Died 17/07/1942. Aged 29. Originally a Royal Irish Fusilier and was probably one of a number of Faughs who were transferred to the Skins following 1st Bn Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers' return to India after the retreat through Burma. Another was James 'Barney' Breslin, who had served with the Faughs in France in 1940. Barney survived the war but never forgot the behaviour of the Japanese. If anyone asked him how he felt about them he had a simple answer: 'Bad boys. Bad Boys.' Son of John M. Pinkerton and Eliza J. Pinkerton, of Ballymoney. Delhi War Cemetery, India

### **1943**

### **+McMULLAN, William Austin**

RAFVR. 35 Sqdn. Pilot Officer. 139489. Died 17/01/1943. Age 23. Son of Clifford and Helen Elizabeth McMullen, of Belfast. Fourfelt Cemetery, Esbjerg

### **1944**

**+MAGEE, JAMES**

RAF. Sergeant (Bomb Aimer). 616984. Died 17/07/1944. Aged 24. 40 Sqdn. Son of James and Mary Ellen Magee, of Belfast, Northern Ireland. Belgrade War Cemetery, Serbia. 502 (Ulster) Squadron WM, St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast

**+WEBSTER, Christopher John**

Royal Army Service Corps. 531 Inf. Bde. Coy. Lance Corporal. T/87268. Died 17/07/1944 in Normandy. Age 24. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Webster; husband to Emily Webster, of Gilford, Co. Down. Brouay War Cemetery, France

**+WILLIAMS, Ernest Alfred**

6th Bn. Royal Welch Fusiliers. Fusilier. 4200191. Died 17/07/1944. Aged 27. Son of Alfred and Lily Williams; husband to Margaret Williams, of Lisburn. Banneville-La-Campagne War Cemetery, Calbados, France

**Every Day is a Remembrance Day**

***We will remember them***

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The **remembrance ni** programme is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD who served as Chaplain to 102 and 105 Regiments Royal Artillery (TA), as Hon. Chaplain to RNR and as Chaplain to the RBL NI area and the Burma Star Association NI. Dr McKelvey is a Past President of Queen's University Services Club. He may be contacted at [houstonmckelvey@mac.com](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

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