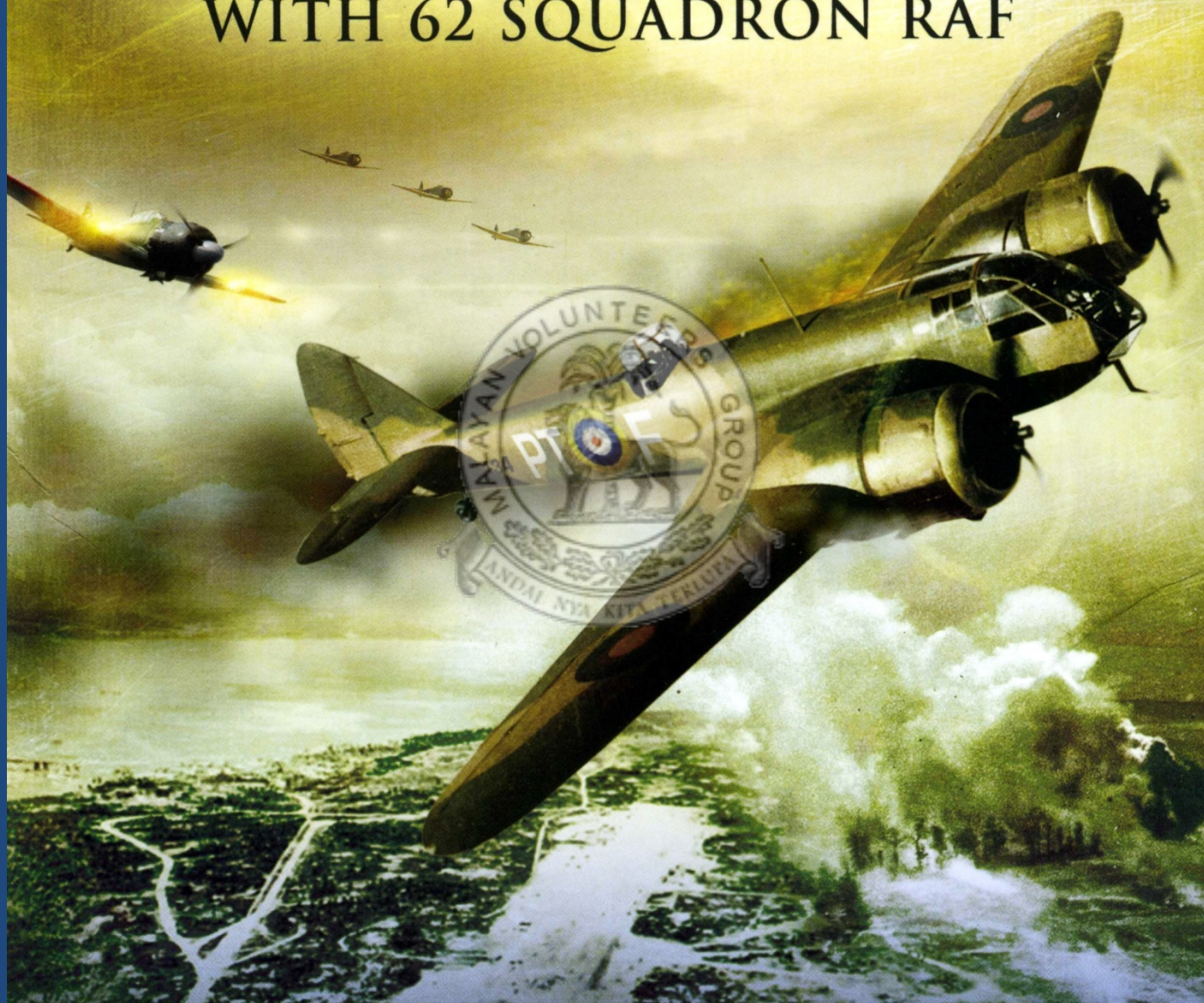


FAR-EAST FLYING AND SURVIVAL WITH 62 SQUADRON RAF



BIOGRAPHY OF ARTHUR STEWART KING SCARF

- Born June 13, 1913, Wimbledon.
- Educated at Kings College School, Wimbledon.
- According to Headmaster Dixon, “Scarf was an average student; pleasant chap; mad about planes.”
- Joined the Royal Air Force, 1936. Nicknamed “Pongo” for his gregarious personality and sense of humour.
- Posted to Singapore with 62 Squadron, 1939.
- Married Sallie Lunn in Alor Star, May 1941.
- Died in Alor Star Hospital December 9, 1941 as a result of his wounds sustained in air combat against the Japanese.
- Awarded the Victoria Cross posthumously, June 1946.

FRIENDSHIP AND 62 SQUADRON

- Arthur Scarf and Harley Boxall met at RAF Thornaby Flight Training School, 1936.
- They met again with the newly formed 62 Bomber Squadron at Cranfield, 1937.
- They served with RAF 62 Squadron in Malaya until December 9, 1941.



INSPERATO = UNEXPECTEDLY

62 SQUADRON CREST

- Members of the newly formed 62 Squadron were invited to submit a draft for a crest.
- My father's was chosen: "A Comet" with the motto "Insperato", i.e. "Unexpectedly"; an unexpected attack.



Norman Irving



Arthur (Pongo) Scarf

On the way to Singapore 1939

UNIFORMS

- Flying Officers Arthur Scarf and Norman Irving showing their new uniforms for the tropics before leaving for Singapore, 1939.
- It was Norman Irving who wrote the recommendation for the posthumous VC award on March 18, 1946.



Flying Officer Frank Griffiths (Pilot)

Sergeant Willmott
(Navigator)

LAC Pidd (Fitter)

AC Templeton
(Wireless Operator)





Flimsy cans, each carrying four gallons of Shell aviation fuel, were packed in wood cases and carried onboard the aircraft.

Frank Griffiths on route to Singapore 1939

FLYING OFFICER FRANK GRIFFITHS AND CREW, 62 SQUADRON EN ROUTE TO SINGAPORE, 1939

- Typical pose; hands on hips.
- When I met him in Wales in 1989, this was the same pose.



Frank Griffiths with
characteristic 'hands
on hips' pose.

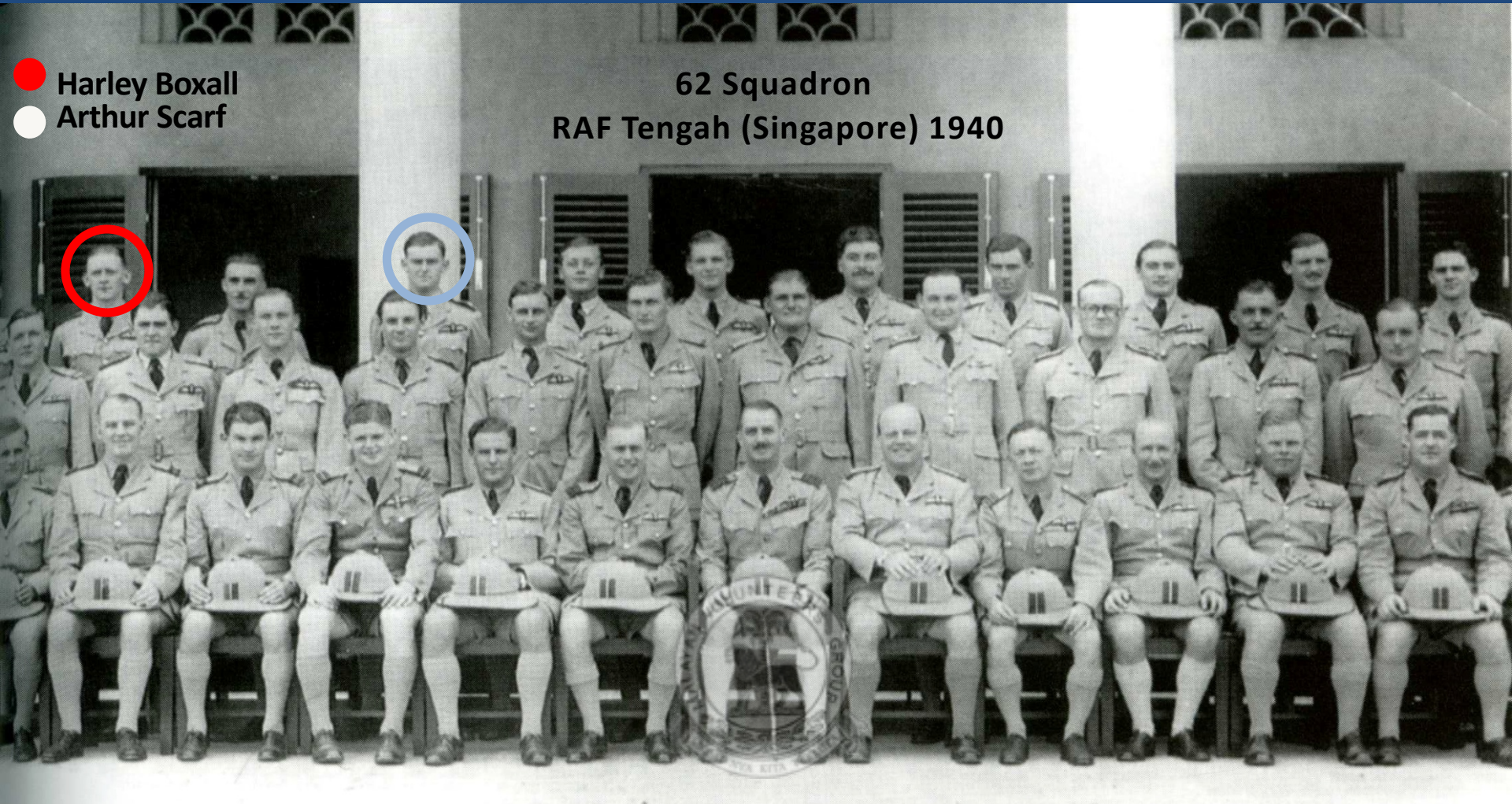
EPIC JOURNEY: FROM RAF CRANFIELD TO RAF TENGAH, SINGAPORE, 1939

- “Devotion to a Calling” by Boxall and Bamford: “During the summer of 1939, a decision was taken by the Air Ministry to reinforce the Royal Air Force in the Far East with two squadrons of Blenheims.
- The urgency of the situation required that the aircraft from 34 and 62 Squadrons be flown out to their final destination at RAF Tengah in Singapore, Malaya. The journey took a total of 50 flying hours (12 days) because of refuelling stops, crew illness, and mechanical problems en route.”

Flight to the Far East: departed 23 August (A Flight) and 26 August (B Flight) 1939

England France Malta Egypt Iraq Arabian Peninsula India Burma Malaya Singapore

3 September 1939



● Harley Boxall
● Arthur Scarf

62 Squadron
RAF Tengah (Singapore) 1940

RAF ALOR STAR, 1940

- From RAF Tengah, Singapore, 62 Squadron moved to Alor Star in the northwest of Malaya.
- Aircraft and crew detachments were sent to Alor Star, where there was an airfield and an advanced/emergency landing ground built in preparation for possible war.
- As the “Japanese situation” worsened, 62 Squadron moved permanently to RAF Alor Star early 1941.

The three man crew of Blenheim L1131 started their uninhabited island adventure on April 4, 1940 following a flight from Alor Star to Sabang (Sumatra) to photograph suspected enemy shipping within the harbour. On the return flight, an engine failed followed shortly after by the other one resulting in a forced landing off a deserted island 83 miles west of the Malayan coast.



62 Squadron Blenheim, photographed in 1938, written off 4 April 1940

DESERT ISLAND, LOST AT SEA

- April 4, 1940, RAF Alor Star was ordered to check enemy shipping in Sabang Harbour, Sumatra 450 miles west of Alor Star across the Strait of Malacca. Five Blenheims were airborne. It was my father's first operational flight as the pilot of one of the Bristol Blenheims.
- Pictures were taken of Sabang harbour, but heavy cloud obscured vision of the squadron and wireless contact was silent. Not realizing my father's Blenheim had disappeared from view, the other squadron aircraft returned to Alor Star.
- Trying to find his way back to Alor Star with his navigator and wireless operator, Harley Boxall's Bristol Blenheim lost an engine and crashed into the sea near a tiny island, Pulo Rawi.

LOST AT SEA, CONT'D

- A May Day distress signal was sent to RAF Alor Star from the Blenheim, but the flight coordinates were incorrect because of the instability of the aircraft. The Blenheim was way off course.
- A search and rescue flight initiated by Flying Officer Frank Griffiths involving a Sunderland aircraft from 230 Squadron based at Seletar, Singapore was initiated, but the Bristol Blenheim Bomber was never found.

Rescue at last!



Flight publication dated:
April 25, 1940

Previously reported "Missing",
now reported "Safe".

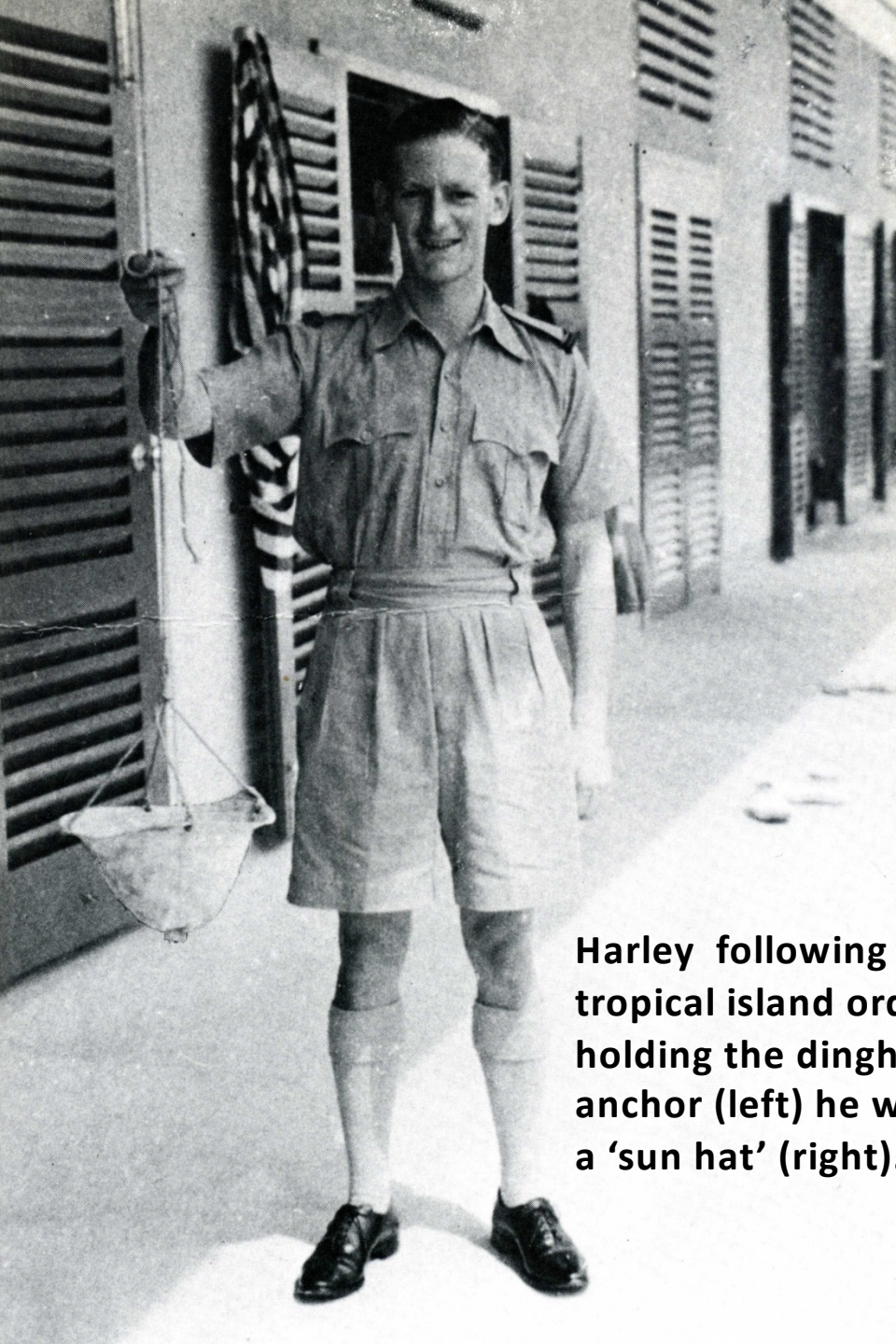
F/O C.H. Boxall 37903
LAC W.W. Martin 556352
Sgt L. Podger 580525

From the cover of
"Angel Visits - from Biplane to Jet"
by Frank Griffiths

Artist: Terry Whitworth

RESCUE AT LAST

- My father and his two crew, Podger and Martin, managed to survive for a week on this remote, uninhabited island with very little fresh water and a few provisions from the ditched aircraft.
- Rescued by Thai fishermen.
- It was a miracle that my father and his crew were saved after a week because those waters were fished infrequently by the Thai fishermen.



Harley following his tropical island ordeal holding the dinghy sea anchor (left) he wore as a 'sun hat' (right).



'Pongo' Scarf in Singapore



Sallie Lunn



A LOVE STORY: ELIZABETH NORAH LUNN (SALLIE) AND ARTHUR SCARF (PONGO) MARRIED IN MAY 1941

- After a whirlwind romance, Sister Sallie Lunn, with Queen Alexandra's Nursing Service at the Alor Star General Hospital, married Squadron Leader Arthur Stewart King Scarf in May 1941.
- Both were from Wimbledon, England.

Harley Boxall

Sallie Lunn/Scarf

Pat Davies/Boxall



ANOTHER LOVE STORY: FOLLOWED BY A WEDDING WITHIN THE SAME MONTH! MAY 19, 1941

- Sister Pat Davies of Perth, Australia, with Queen Alexandra's Nursing Service at the Alor Star General Hospital, married Squadron Leader Harley Boxall of Birmingham, England.
- Sister Alethea Gentles, bridesmaid.
- Squadron Leader Norman Irving, best man.
- Dr. Lupprian, Medical Superintendent of Alor Star Hospital gave the bride away.



Alethea Gentles

Dr E.V. Lupprian

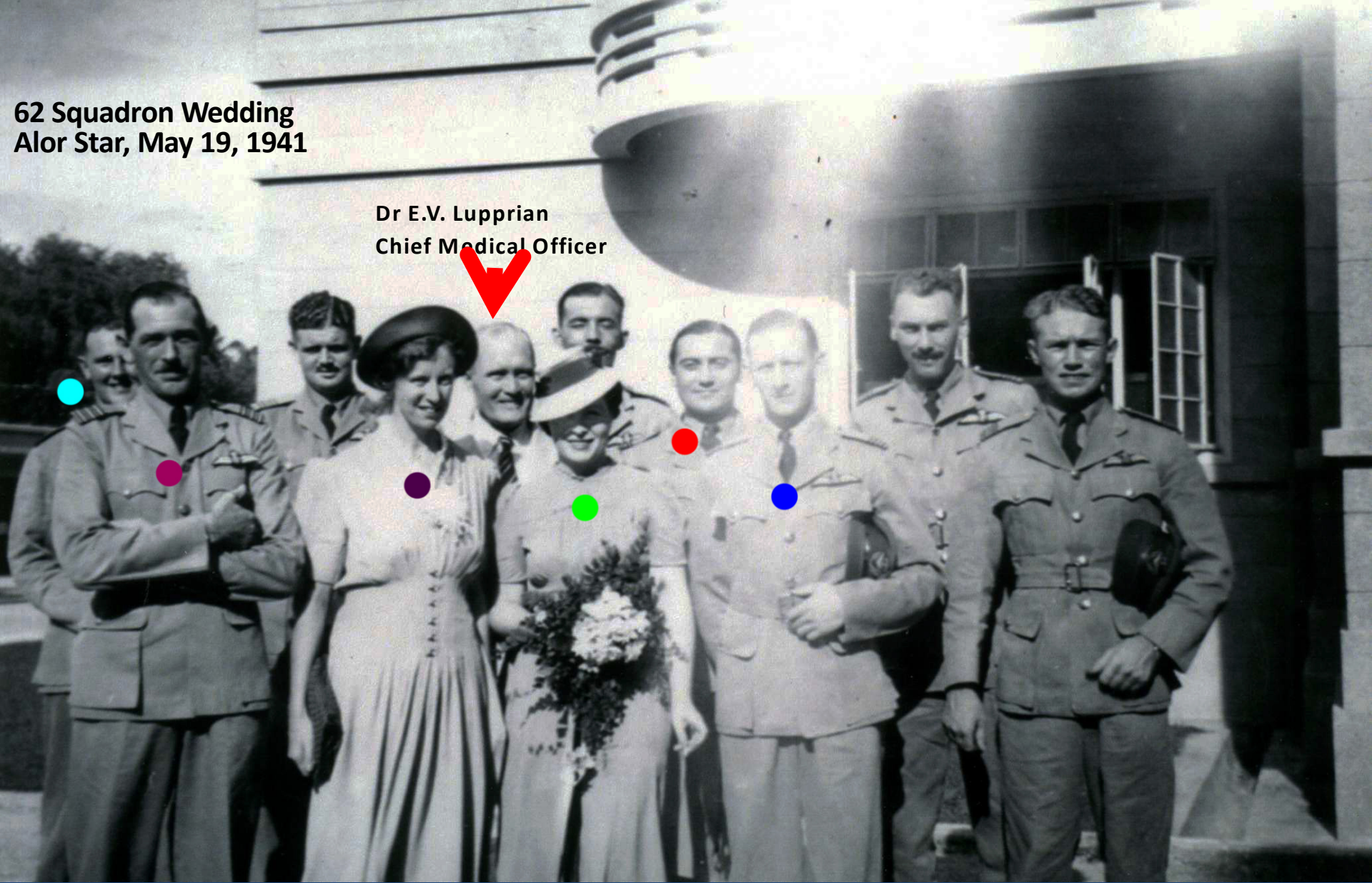
Pat Boxall

Harley Boxall

Norman Irving

62 Squadron Wedding
Alor Star, May 19, 1941

Dr E.V. Lupprian
Chief Medical Officer



● 'Pongo' Scarf

● Pat Boxall

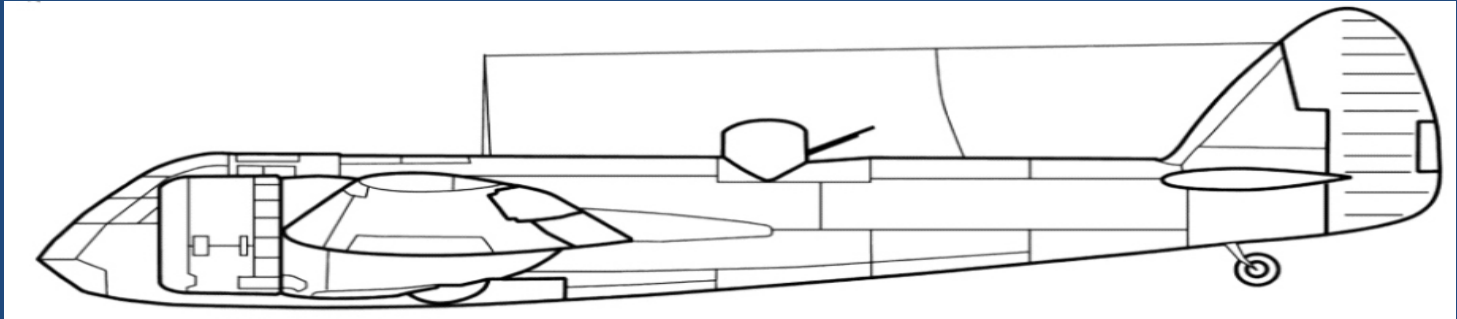
● Harley Boxall

● Alethea Gentles

● Squadron Leader Duncan!

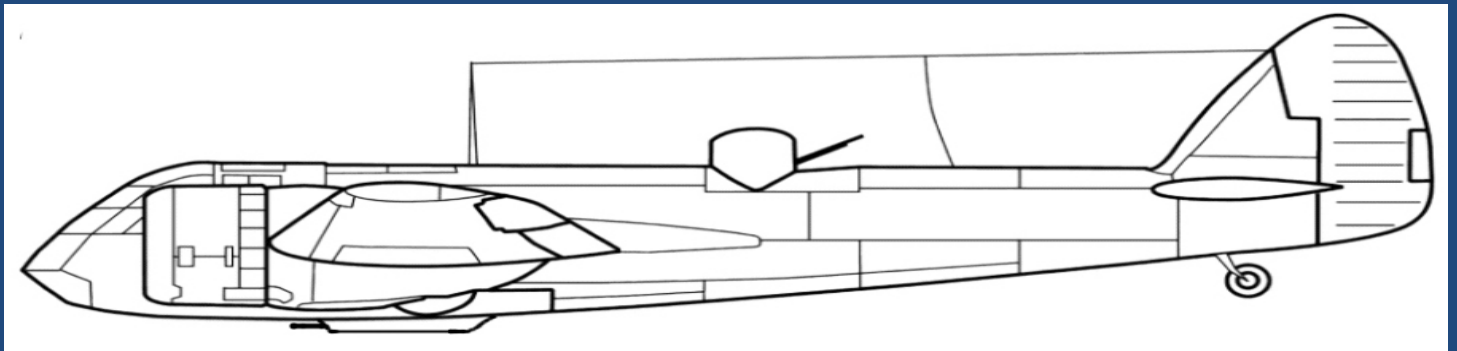
● Norman Irving

Blenheim aircraft at Butterworth on the December 9, 1941



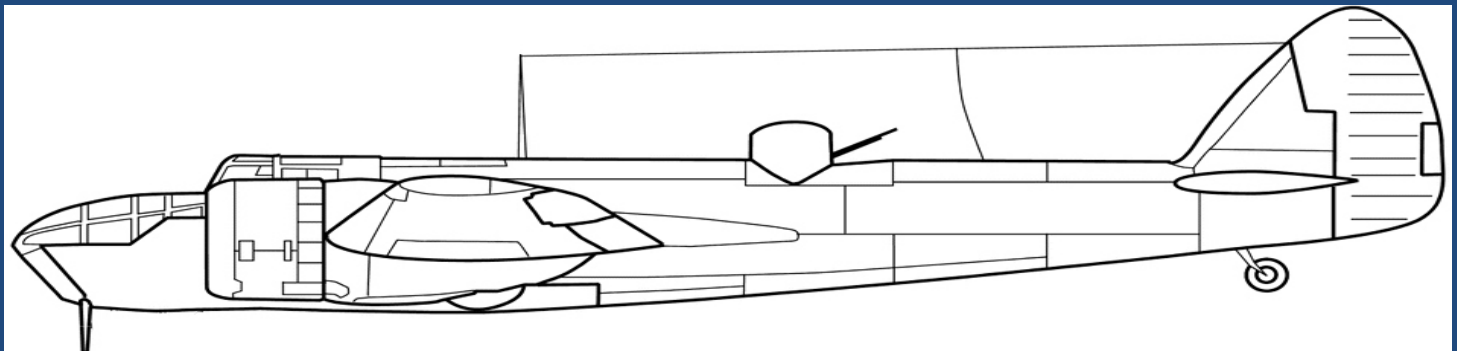
62 Squadron

Bristol Blenheim Mk1 (B)



27 Squadron

Bristol Blenheim Mk1 (F)



34 Squadron

Bristol Blenheim Mk IV (B)

JAPANESE INVASION OF MALAYA

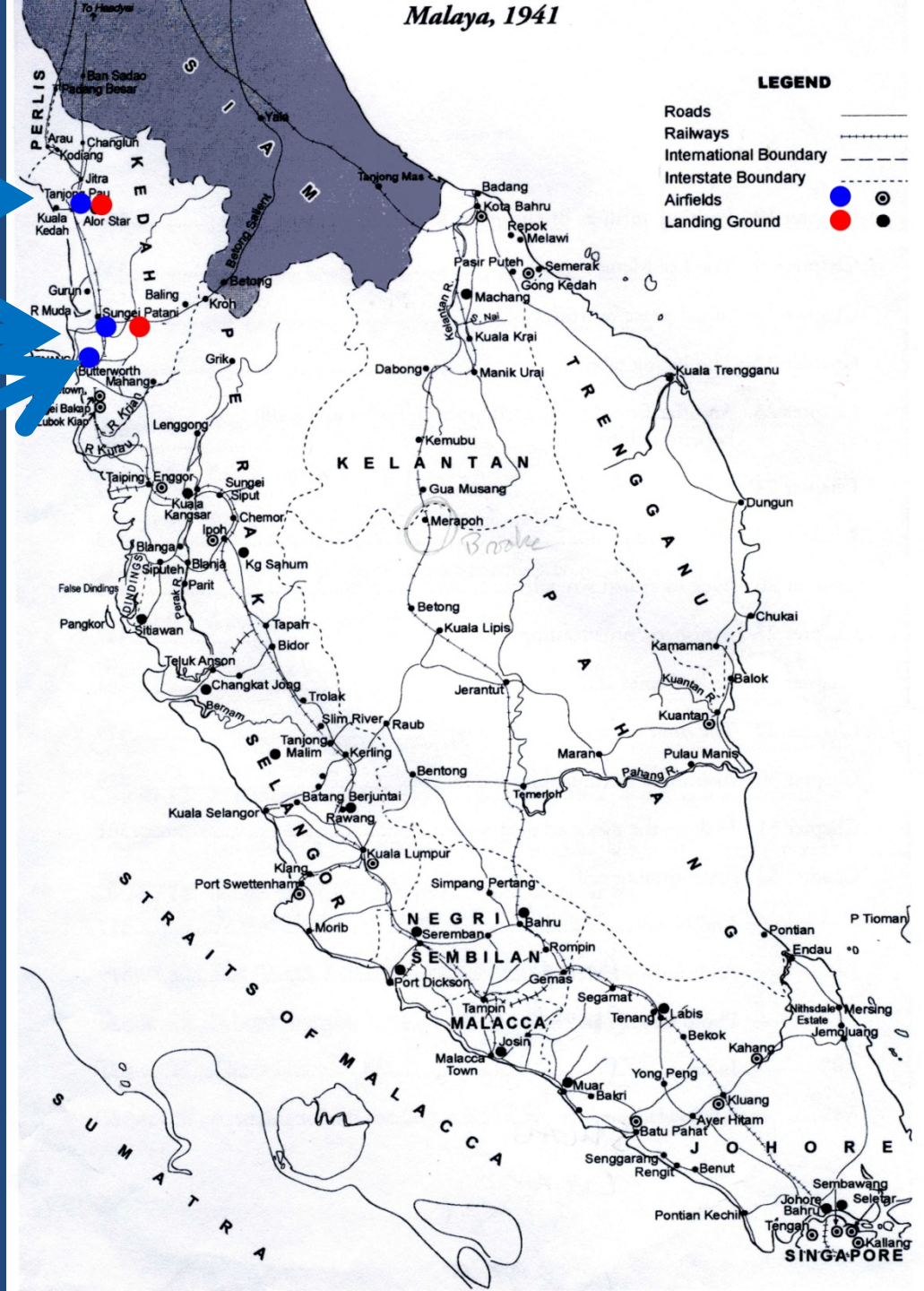
DECEMBER 8, 1941

- From: “A Fortnight of Infamy” by John Burton, “Blenheims from 62 Squadron were the last British planes to attempt a bombing of the Japanese landing zone at Kota Bahru, December 8, 1941.
- Led by Squadron Leader Boxall, the raid had the distinction of being the first to attack the Japanese landing armada at Kra Isthmus on the east coast of Siam/Thailand on the first day of war declared by Japan.”

Alor Star - 62 Squadron RAF
Blenheim Mk1 Bombers

Sungei Patani - 27 Squadron RAF
Blenheim Mk1 Fighters
21 Squadron RAAF
Brewster Buffalo Fighters

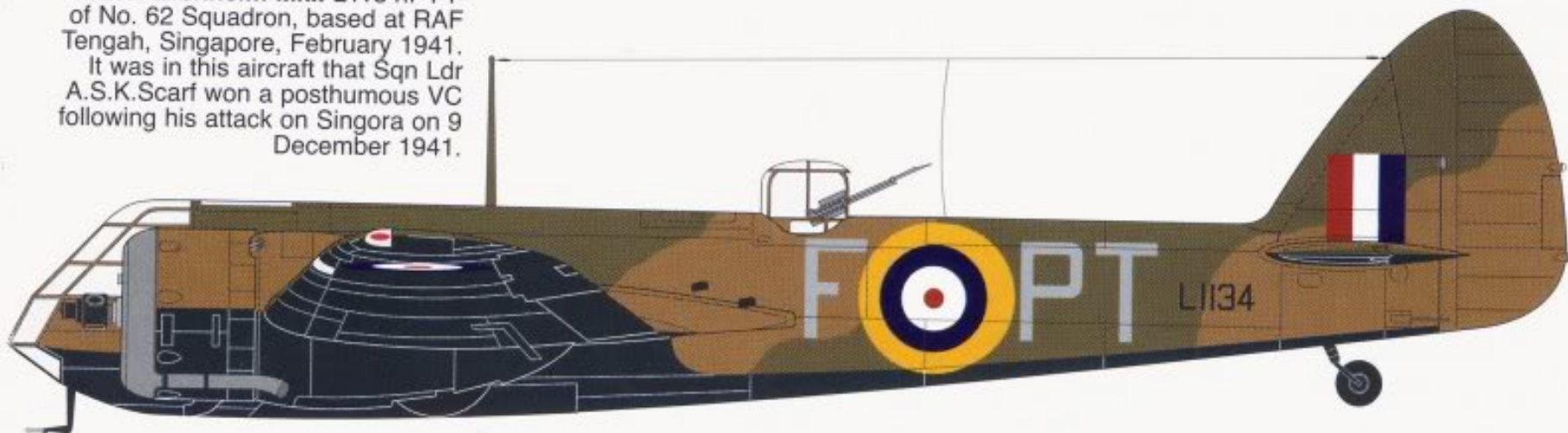
RAF Butterworth
Remnants of 62, 34, and 27 Squadron
Blenheims, also 21 Squadron Buffaloes



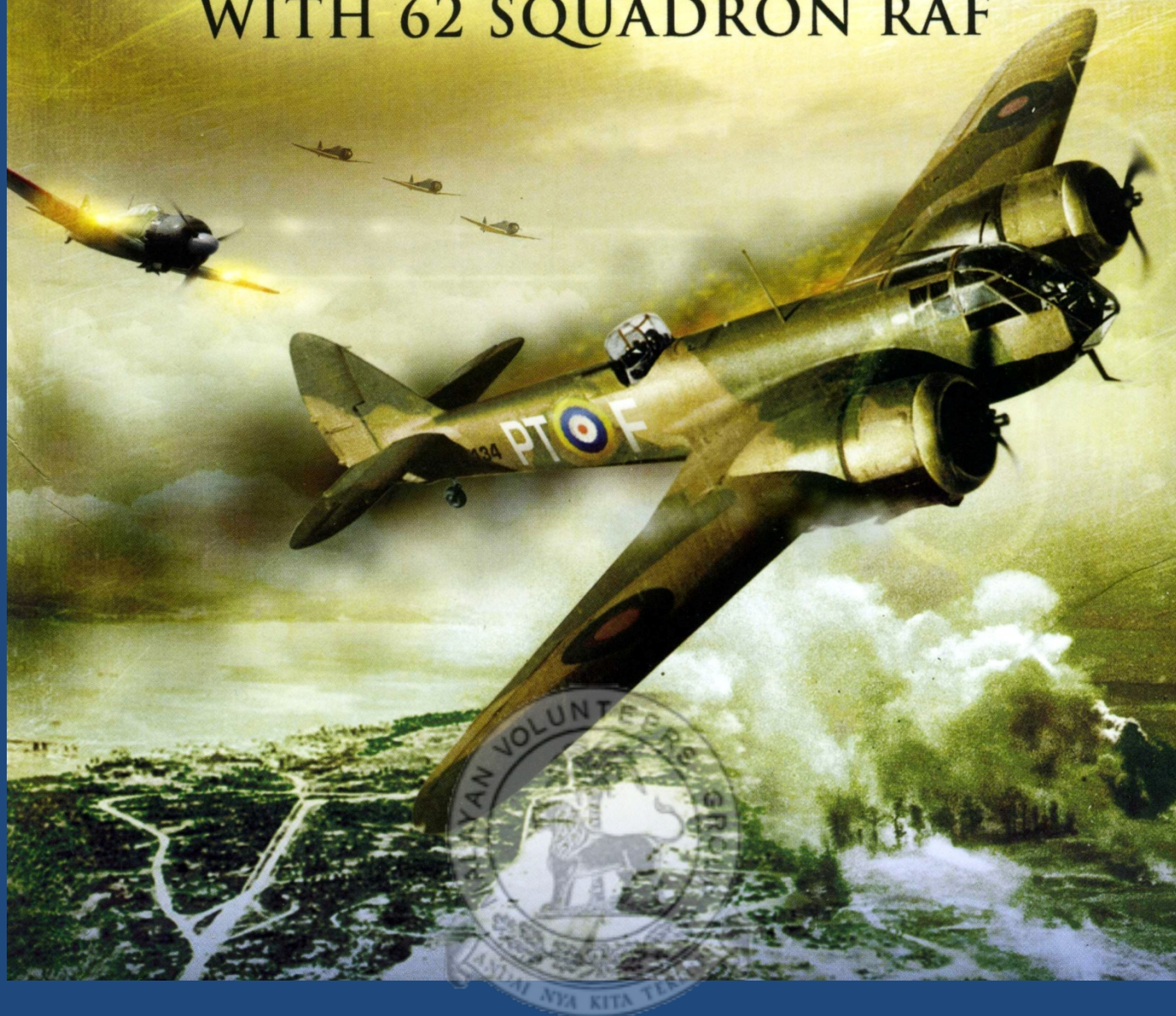
DECEMBER 9, 1941

- Map of Malaya showing the air strikes by the Japanese.
- From “Fortnight of Infamy” by John Burton, “Within a few hours a mammoth strike by Japanese aircraft occurred at the RAF Butterworth Base destroying many Bristol Blenheim aircraft on the ground and wounding ground crew who were trying to ready the aircraft for take off.”

Bristol Blenheim Mk.I L1134:PT-F
of No. 62 Squadron, based at RAF
Tengah, Singapore, February 1941.
It was in this aircraft that Sqn Ldr
A.S.K.Scarf won a posthumous VC
following his attack on Singora on 9
December 1941.



FAR-EAST FLYING AND SURVIVAL WITH 62 SQUADRON RAF



LAST FLIGHT OF SQUADRON LEADER ARTHUR SCARF

- Jacket cover for “Devotion to a Calling” by Boxall and Bamford
- Artist: Jon Wilkinson
- Scene represents final moments of Squadron Leader Scarf as he was being attacked by Japanese fighters in the raid over Singora, Siam/Thailand December 9, 1941.

ARTHUR SCARF AND BRISTOL BLENHEIM MARK I - L1134

- From “Fortnight of Infamy” by John Burton:
- “By late afternoon on December 9, 1941 two intact Blenheims managed to get off the ground before another fierce raid. One turned back to the airfield because of heavy fire.
- Squadron Leader Arthur Scarf and his crew, Ritchie and Calder, continued alone to Singora on the east coast of Siam/Thailand.
- Squadron Leader Scarf dropped all his bombs before turning back towards Butterworth. His aircraft met with heavy fighter opposition and he was grievously wounded.”

SQUADRON LEADER ARTHUR SCARF

- Squadron Leader Scarf managed to get his severely damaged bomber and crew back in the direction of Alor Star where he knew Sallie would be at the hospital. Scarf made a forced landing in a padi field near the Alor Star airfield.
- The crew members, Ritchie and Calder, who were not injured, removed Arthur Scarf from the wreckage of the Blenheim and carried him as quickly as possible to the emergency room.
- Dr. Nowell Peach assessed him and ordered a blood transfusion. Arthur Scarf was bleeding profusely from his left brachial artery as well as a wound on his back.



Flight Lieutenant (Dr) Nowell Peach 1941.

Dr Peach sedated Arthur Scarf and treated him for shock after his forced landing.

EMERGENCY ROOM, ALOR STAR GENERAL HOSPITAL

- Sister Pat Boxall was on duty in the emergency room and called Sallie Scarf to come urgently from the staff residence.
- Sallie said (letter to my mother), “I remember I was off duty, but when I came over to the hospital, Dr. Peach was there with Ritchie and Calder. Dr. Peach told me about Pongo’s arm. I felt very depressed when I heard, as Pongo was left-handed. When Pongo was moved from the stretcher, the severe wound in his back started bleeding as well.”

DEATH OF SQUADRON LEADER ARTHUR SCARF

DECEMBER 9, 1941

- In Sallie's letter to my mother she said, "You put up a subcutaneous saline drip in his chest and I gave two units of blood as my blood group was compatible with Pongo's. What cheered me up was when I heard him say to you, "Now Pat, don't get fresh with my mammary glands!" Then Dr. Peach came and wheeled Pongo into the operating room. Pongo called out "Don't worry, chin up!"
- Sister Boxall accompanied Dr. Peach to the operating room. Sallie Scarf waited outside. Pongo slipped into unconsciousness before the anaesthetic commenced.
- Pongo died as a result of extreme hemorrhage and shock.
- He was 28 years old.
- He had been married for seven months.

SALLIE SCARF, WIDOWED

- My mother came out of the operating room with Dr. Peach. They shared the tragic news with Sallie who was very upset because she had hoped that the blood transfusion would have saved her husband's life.
- Arthur Scarf was later buried in the grounds of the hospital by Sister Phyllis Briggs who obtained a coffin from the hospital chaplain.
- Sallie and other service personnel were evacuated from Alor Star to Singapore, December 12, 1941.

THE STORY CONTINUES...

- The evacuation journey from Alor Star to Singapore down the Grik Road was a nightmare.
- Roads were crammed with civilians, vehicles, British Army, and Australian soldiers retreating from the advancing Japanese.



21 Squadron RAAF Brewster Buffalo fighters being refuelled at RAF Butterworth sometime between November 20 and December 13 , 1941.



On December 13, Squadron Leader Boxall, Flight Lieutenant Lancaster, and Sergeant Stafford travelled by road from Taiping to Butterworth to 'rescue' three repaired Buffalo fighters and fly them to RAAF 21 Squadron in IPOH. The aircraft were safely delivered to RAAF 21 Squadron and RAAF 453 Squadron on the morning of December 14, 1941.



Lanchester AFV,
November
1941, Malaya

During the retreat to Singapore, Sqn Ldr Harley Boxall was given command of three Lanchester Armoured Fighting Vehicles (AFV's) to help fight a rearguard action from December 17 to 19, 1941.

THE LANCHESTER ARMoured FIGHTING VEHICLE

- Squadron Leader Harley Boxall and other members of 62 Squadron had now effectively become part of the British Army as there were no aircraft left to fly.
- They were ordered to participate in a vital rearguard action protecting British and Australian forces down the Grik Road to Singapore.
- They manned three AFV's. Harley Boxall's AFV came across a section of the Argyll and Sutherland Highland Regiment being closely pursued by Japanese soldiers.
- Harley Boxall was the vehicle commander and gunner. His air gunner fed the guns and the bomb aimer became the driver.

THE AFV STORY

- Around a bend in the road, Japanese troops appeared on bicycles. They were machine gunned down by the Lanchester AFV's. Those not killed outright abandoned their bikes and leapt into the jungle.
- “The AFV's, giving covering fire to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders retreated with the regiment to the causeway at Johore. Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders crossed before the causeway was blown up by Indian sappers.”
- The Japanese started repairs to the causeway on February 1, 1942.
- The invasion of Singapore took place on February 8, 1942.



**“THE CAUSEWAY” BY PETER ARCHER (1984)
COMMISSIONED BY THE ARGYLL AND SUTHERLAND
HIGHLAND REGIMENT IS DISPLAYED IN THE WW2
MUSEUM, STIRLING CASTLE**

- January 31, 1942, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, led by their pipers, marched across the causeway into Singapore.
- In this painting, you see the Royal Navy personnel in their white uniforms ready to assist any stragglers to Singapore. Also in the picture is a Lanchester AFV similar to the one in which Squadron Leader Harley Boxall was both commander and gunner for two days.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OTHERS IN THE STORY?

- My parents survived the war. They emigrated to Southern Rhodesia in 1948 having spent 3 years in India after Malaya. My mother died in 1990 in London, Canada and my father died in 1994 in Harare, Zimbabwe.
- Sallie Scarf was evacuated from Singapore to India, January 1942. She met and married Major Stuart Gunn. They returned to England after the war. Sallie had four daughters. She died in 1986.
- Sister Alethea Gentles, my mother's bridesmaid, was listed as killed by Japanese aircraft strafing survivors in the water after the S.S. Kuala was bombed in the South China Sea, January 1942.

CONTINUATION

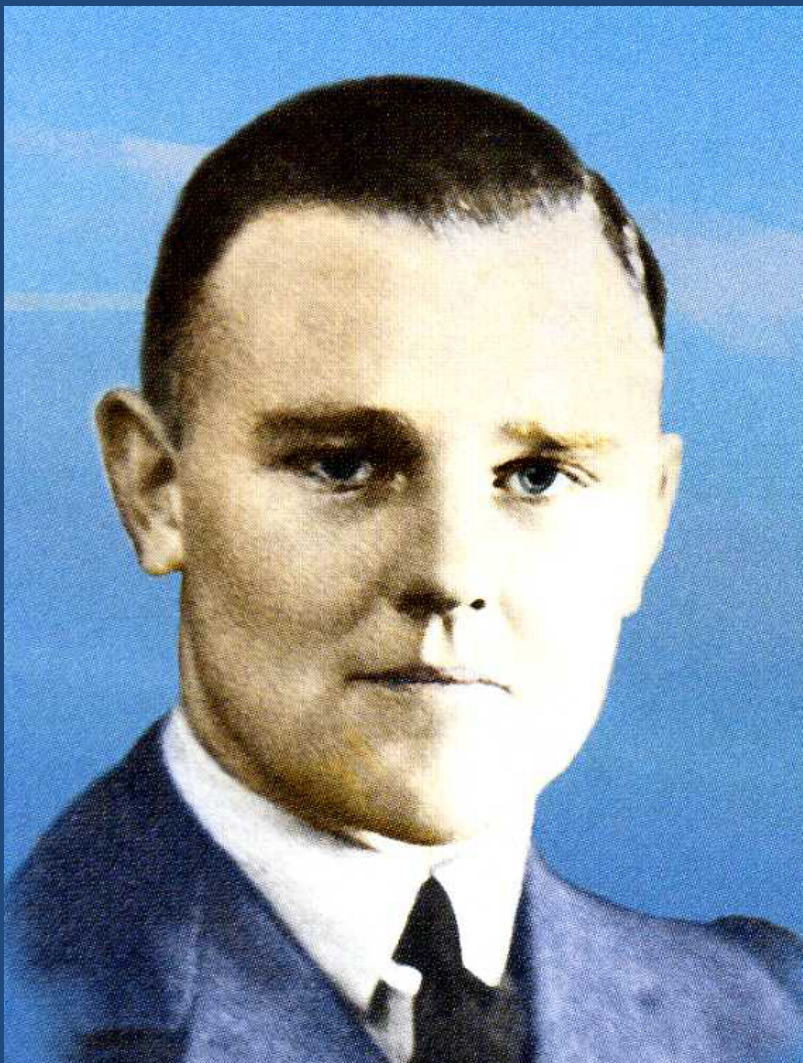
- Sister Phyllis Briggs was later captured in Singapore by the Japanese in January, 1942 and became a POW until 1945.
- After the war, she returned to England, married Mr. Thom, and had two daughters.
- Phyllis Briggs lived to be 100 and died in 2012. Her Malayan experience appeared in “Women Beyond The Wire” by Warner and Strickland as well as in the BBC War Archives, “The People’s War”.

GROUP CAPTAIN FRANK GRIFFITHS

- He left Malaya before the Japanese invasion and returned to England.
- He was involved with air radar calibration and testing from 1940 to 1943. He was instrumental in the development of the automatic blind landing system for aircraft during 1944 and 1945. This system is still in use today.
- He died in 2011.

DR. NOWELL PEACH

- Planned to become a surgeon in England.
- Became a Medical Officer with the RAF Volunteer Reserve in the Far East in 1941.
- Escaped from Alor Star to Singapore in December 1941, but was captured in Java, March 1942.
- He served as a POW doctor.
- He studied “Grays Anatomy” in the POW camp given to him by Dr. “Weary” Dunlop, an Australian Army surgeon.
- Returned to England after the war, became a surgeon, married a nurse, had a family of five children.
- Highly regarded for his surgical work and knowledge of tropical medicine.
- He died in 2012.



RAF Squadron Leader ASK Scarf



Victoria Cross

THE VICTORIA CROSS

- June 1946, Sallie Scarf/Gunn received the Victoria Cross for her late husband at the Investiture, Buckingham Palace.
- Sallie recalled King George VI's kind words, "Your late husband did a wonderful act for which this country will be eternally grateful."

ARTHUR STEWART KING SCARF V.C. MEMORIALS

- Taiping War Memorial Cemetery, Malaysia; the grave is marked with a white tombstone engraved with a Victoria Cross.
- A plaque is located in Kings College School, Wimbledon.
- RAF Brize Norton maintained the VC 10 “Arthur Scarf” to transport RAF personnel and supplies to other bases. The VC 10 is now out of service.
- National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire has a tree planted in memory of Arthur Stewart King Scarf, V.C.
- Far East POW Organization web site.

2006

- My husband and I were invited by the Keeper of the Medals to see the original Victoria Cross and medal collection of Squadron Leader Arthur Scarf at the Air Force Museum in Hendon.
- It was an emotional moment holding the Victoria Cross in my hand.
- This humble, unadorned, bronze medal with the words “For Valour” was made from the Guns of Sebastopol during the Crimean War.
- Queen Victoria requested a simple medal be made as the highest award for Valour because there is no price for Valour.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for your kind invitation to be here today.

- It has been a great honour and a privilege to share this story with you.