

Obituary for Maurice Humphrey

Maurice died on 13th March 2012 at the age of 75. His funeral was held on 29th March at the Rose Hill Crematorium in Doncaster, attended by his family, friends and members of the NMBVA. During the service Fred Hallam of the Nottingham Branch NMBVA gave the eulogy.

He was a founder member of the Doncaster & South Yorkshire Branch of the NMBVA and member of the Sprotbrough Branch of the Royal British Legion.

Maurice joined the RAF in 1955, at the age of seventeen and a half, for a period of 4 years. After basic training at Padgate in Lancashire, he was posted to RAF Melksham for training as an electrician.

After training he was posted to RAF Church Fenton where he worked in the control tower, after which he completed an overseas tour to RAF Tengah, Singapore with detachment to 63 squadron at Kluang, in Johore State, as an Airfield Controller.

He enjoyed life in the Far East and when demob neared in 1959, he applied to the Australian editor of the "Straits Times" for the advertised position as the newspaper's cartoonist. With demob papers signed and accepted and one fortnight remaining, the newly formed government in Singapore set about replacing the Colonials with their own men.

The editor departed and the post of cartoonist no longer existed. With insufficient funds for a civilian flight home, Maurice approached his CO for a solution, which was a free RAF flight home on a month's leave, providing he signed on for a further 18 years. With no alternative, he agreed.

Throughout his service Maurice completed two Far East tours in Singapore – Malaysia and Kuching - Borneo where his hobbies were model making and playing the drums for the local RAF station jazz band. Later he served a five and seven year tour, respectively, at RAF Cranwell and the nearby RAF Fulbeck.

While at Cranwell, he founded and helped to run the "White Crane", a charitable services variety club. He engaged performers of the likes of Marti Crane, Acker Bilk and the Baron Knights on a regular basis. The local community

were given membership passes, which they used to enter the camp via the laundrette. (Maurice being Maurice said that for guests to enter via the Guard-room was undignified).

At Christmas time the more senior club members were collected by mini-bus and treated to free dinners in the camp. His generosity also extended to children from homes in Grantham and Sleaford, when he formed a Saturday Cinema Club with free ices and teas.

His enthusiasm and hard work were justly rewarded with the "White Crane" being voted the UK's top services club for 5 years running. Maurice's last task at Cranwell was to complete a 20 foot by 15 foot working scale model of the aerodrome in the operation's building, for the training of trainee officer cadets. The project was so detailed, that he completed his tour in 1977, an over stay of one month and a final service of 23 and a half years.

In civilian life, as a commercial model maker, he made working scale models of cutting and drilling equipment, for use in the mining industry. He was also commissioned to make working scales models of type 92 electric loco's, for the Dover-Calais tunnel, later used as driver teaching aids. His last remaining years were spent as a stonemason making many splendid monuments and memorial plaques, for friends, neighbours and the NMBVA.

Quote by Fred Hallam

During the years I have known him, he has always been a staunch friend and trusted confidante and I will always have fond memories of a man I am proud to have called a true friend.

On joining the National Malaya & Borneo Veterans Association, as a member of the Doncaster & South Yorkshire Branch, Maurice has completed many plaque's and memorial tablets for association purposes. His work output has been prodigious. The list is endless, but among many and by no means all, are the following:

Some Of The Work For Which Maurice Was Commissioned

May 1995

Large plaque dedicated to the NMBVA in St Mary's Cathedral, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Large plaque dedicated to the NMBVA in St Stephen's Church, Singapore.

August 2002

Sandstone and marble memorial dedicated to the Combined Services standing in the grounds of the County Hall, Northallerton

Plaque dedicated to bomber crews of No1 Bomber Command at the old RAF Headquarters at Bawtry Hall.

Brass plaque dedicated to the NMBVA in the Chapel, Hut 12, Eden Camp, Yorkshire, for those who gave their all during 1940 – 1966.

Large plaque for the Nottingham Branch NMBVA situated at the Victoria Embankment Memorial Gardens, Nottingham.

NMBVA plaque of dedication to the fallen since 1945 in St Mary's Church, Sprotbrough, Yorkshire.

Plaque for the Royal British Legion dedicated to British Colonial and Commonwealth Armed Forces who fell in WWII, situated in St Mary's Church, Sprotbrough, Yorkshire.

For the Sherwood Foresters Regiment a dedication plaque in the Victoria Embankment Memorial Gardens, Nottingham.

Maurice was a member of the St Paul's sub-committee and was involved in the design of the plaque. He had obtained the stone to make it, but St Paul's Cathedral deemed that their own stonemasons should carry out the work.

2003, he produced the tablet for the plinth and plaques for the NMBVA Memorial Garden at the National Memorial Arboretum.

2006, he designed the Cross and Keris, supervising the installation, having produced the Keris in his own workshop.

Memorial Plaque for the 11th Hussars at the National Memorial Arboretum.

Memorial Plaque to the European Civilians who were POWs of the Japanese in WWII.

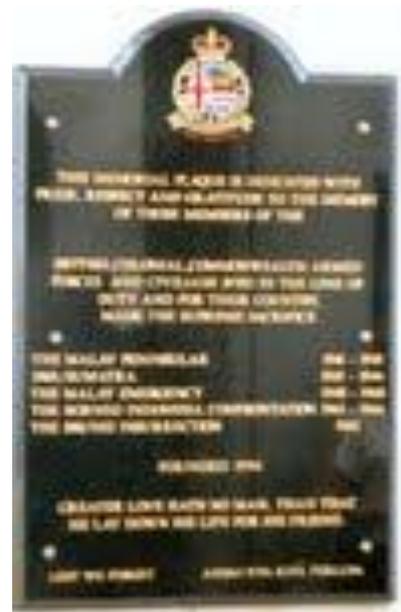
Memorial of Dedication to the Nuclear Test Association.



A young Cpl. Maurice Humphries second from left



Maurice at his Memorial in the County Grounds Northallenton



Plaque at the Victoria Embankment Memorial Gardens Nottingham

The Cross & Keris being dedicated at the National Memorial Arboretum 2006

