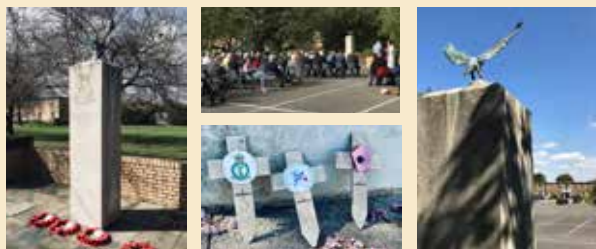


REMEMBRANCE DAY CELEBRATED EVERY YEAR!

In 1995, the RAF Hemswell Memorial was erected on the edge of the old parade ground to commemorate all who served during its' 30 year life as a RAF Bomber Command base. Hemswell Cliff Primary School (which began life as an RAF School) are always in attendance from 11am for a Remembrance Service, held every year on the closest school day to 11th November. Pupils lay flowers and squadron wreaths will also be laid. All are welcome to attend.



RAF Hemswell Aviation Trail Idea

Start your day at Hemswell Antique Centres. Enjoy a tasty breakfast with a Bomber County Coffee before having a browse around the centres in search of military memorabilia. Spare a thought and pay your respects for our war heroes as you march across the parade square to the Memorial. View our flypast performed daily in The Guardroom!



Next stop: The Dambusters Inn, Scampton Village. Almost like an RAF museum filled with nostalgia. Features a micro brewery serving craft beers as well as Real Ales. Voted Pub of the year for the 3rd time in a row by CAMRA!



If you are lucky to time it right you might get a FREE display from The Reds!



We are also part of the Polish Bomber Squadron Trail. Why not discover this wonderful engaging story of men and women of the wartime Polish Air Squadrons who made Lincolnshire their home.



The RAF Ingham Heritage Centre is also part of the trail: Check Opening Times before visiting <https://www.rafingham.co.uk/contact>.



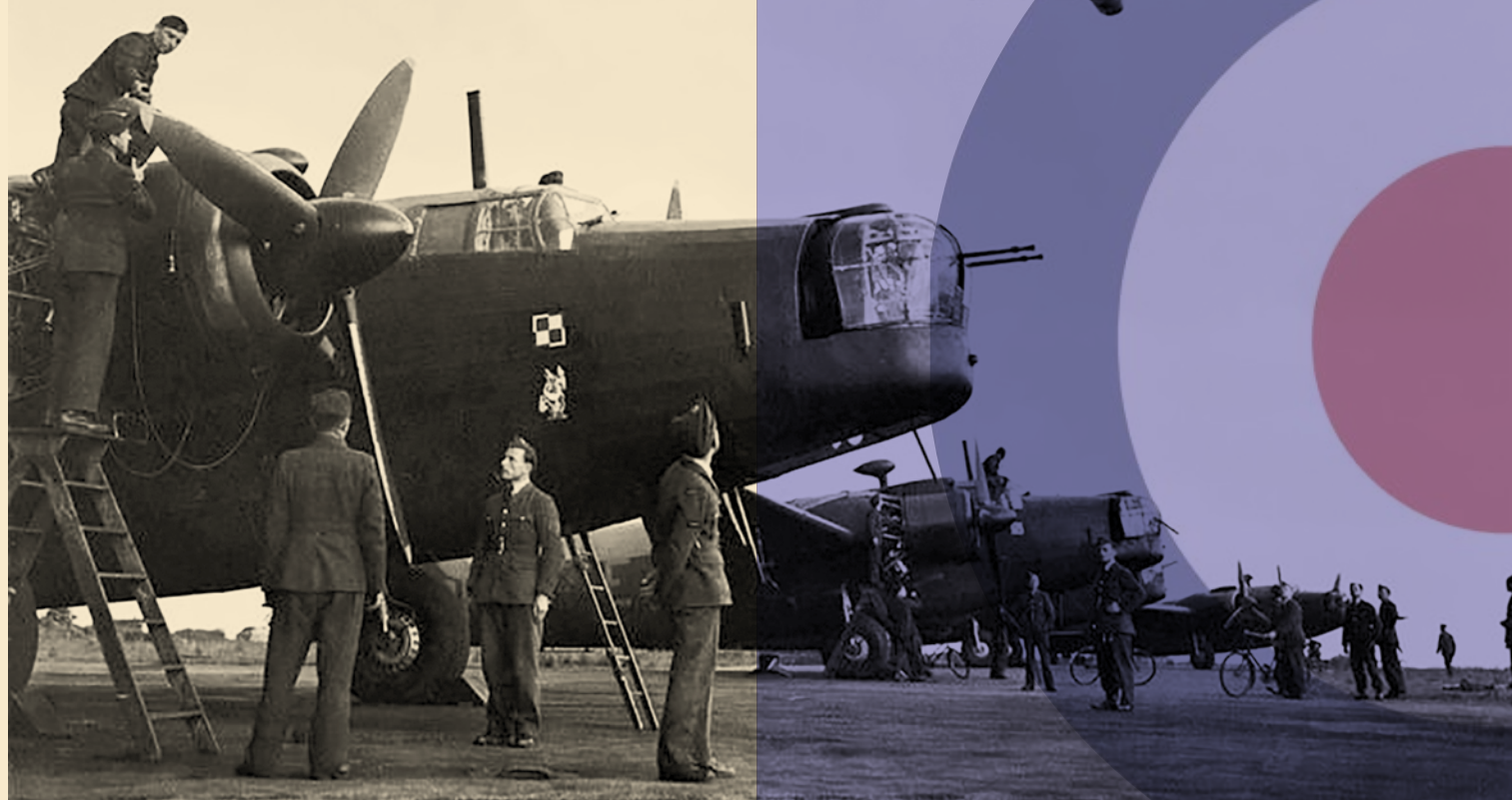
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HEMSWELL
ANTIQUE
CENTRES

Designed and produced by Hemswell Antique Centres
to commemorate the centenary of the RAF, 1st April 2018.

Hemswell Antique Centres, Caenby Corner Estate,
Hemswell Cliff, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire DN21 5TJ T: 01427 668389

Front cover photograph: RAF Hemswell, Spring 1943.
The unit's Wellington Mk X attended by ground crew. Notice the men being more
interested in their work or cameraman, rather than their low flying bomber.



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RAF Hemswell 1916 -1967

Hemswell's Association with the RAF began during the First World War and continued into the 1960s.

Originally called RFC Harpswell, the airfield changed its name to RAF Hemswell when it was reactivated in December 1936. Squadrons 144 and 61 of Bomber Command were the first residents, flying Hampdens on some of the earliest and costliest raids. When Britain declared war on Germany, 3rd September 1939 RAF Hemswell was the only airfield in North Lincolnshire ready to take part. The Hampdens from Hemswell were among the first British aircraft to drop bombs on German soil. On 29th September that year, five Hampdens of 144 Squadron took part in the daylight bombing of Heligoland. Of the 20 crew involved, 15 were killed, 5 were taken prisoner of war and all aircraft were lost.

During April 1940, one of the primary roles of the Hampdens of Lincolnshire was mine laying, known as "gardening" in RAF speak. Hemswell's target area was the Kiel Approaches and Warnemünde. It was the first of many successful operations, but not without cost.

The Hampdens finally flew out of Hemswell in July 1941 as the station was passed over to new owners - Three Polish Squadrons, No's 300, 301 and 305 who operated continuously from July 1941 to March 1944. Equipped with Wellingtons and taking part in most of the big raids over Germany. They quickly built themselves a reputation for being fearless and skillful airmen.



In 1943, a new runway created home to the Lancaster Finishing School. Introducing fresh crews to the Lancaster Bomber, Hemswell became a sub-station for RAF Scampton. Hemswell, with its excellent facilities was to remain as an operational airfield after the war, when it was used by several squadrons flying Lancasters, Mosquitos, Lincolns and Canberras. Today Hemswell remains relatively unchanged to when these magnificent planes flew overhead.

Hemswell is perhaps the only pre-war RAF Station converted to private retail use, but has retained its' character and unmistakable Royal Air Force vibe, much to the delight of returning veterans.

One claim to fame, is that many of the ground shots from the 1954 film 'The Dam Busters' were filmed here due to the layout of RAF Hemswell being identical to RAF Scampton. The film-makers only had four airworthy Lancasters available to them. Part of the RAF's fleet of aging Avro Lincolns had been mothballed at RAF Hemswell prior to being broken up and several of these aircraft appeared in background shots during filming, doubling for additional 617 Squadron Lancasters!

The only known colour film of Lancasters at war features in the 1940's documentary 'Night Bombers' which shows Avro Lancasters at RAF Hemswell preparing for a raid over Germany.

Centre photograph: Lancasters taxiing at RAF Hemswell en route to a German raid. Inset Richard Todd as Guy Gibson in The Dam Busters 1954.



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Background photograph: Hampdens in flight over RAF Hemswell.

Far left photograph: RAF Hemswell, 1941. The Wellington IC, BH-T (R1211) and its crew celebrating 25th successful mission.