

2024

Hugo Trotter DFC

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**Number 5 BRITISH FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL (BFTS)
Clewiston, Florida**

1941-1945



In Memoriam

Hugo Trotter DFC: Course 11. Died February 27, 2024, aged 100



From Course 11 Listening Out. April 2, 1943

Hugo Trotter, DFC, member of the Order of the Légion d'honneur and founder member of the 5BFTS Association, died peacefully at home in February.



Hugo – photograph by Anne Hughes 2023

He was the beloved husband of Lisa and loving father of Alexander and Rupert. He had five grandchildren. The family held a private cremation followed by a service of thanksgiving which was held at the Hospital of St Cross, Winchester on April 26, 2024.

Hugh Stuart Stucley Trotter, better known to us as Hugo, was born in London in 1923. He attended Harrow School and, in September 1941, went to Glasgow to take part in a University Short Course designed to deliver training to undergraduates prior to their entry to the RAF. He was on an RAF Induction Course at Regents Park in April 1942 and later that year, Hugo sailed across the Atlantic arriving in Canada in September 1942. He travelled south from RAF Moncton in New Brunswick, Canada to Clewiston via Boston and New York, and was a member of Course 11 from September 25, 1942, to April 8, 1943. At Clewiston, the cadets

were billeted in groups of four. Hugo's roommates were Pete Varley, Peter Train, known as 'Puff', and George Watt. Hugo first met Pete Varley at Glasgow when they were both doing the University Short Course and met Peter Train at Regents Park. These four, who were probably friends by the time they arrived at RAF Moncton, remained firm friends during their time in Clewiston. They returned to Canada to sail home via Philadelphia and New York.

In 2017, Hugo asked me if I would like to see his photograph album from his time at Clewiston. The answer was an unequivocal 'yes' and several editions of the newsletter starting in March 2018 contained photographs taken by Hugo - these chronicled his journeys between Clewiston and Canada, and his time at Clewiston and in the camp at Riddle Field. There were many pictures of airplanes and various sporting activities, and some show how they spent their leisure time, for example, fishing and visiting other parts of Florida. The four friends feature regularly, although there are pictures of other well-known 5BFTS people, such as John Potter who became President of the 5BFTS Association and was also on Course 11.



Hugo fishing on Lake Okeechobee

	<p><i>L-R: Pete, George, Hugo and Puff</i></p> <p>Hugo remarks that, "we all shared the same room at Clewiston which meant that none of us at the end of the Course were Officer Material!"</p> <p>In the end, Puff, Hugo and Pete were all commissioned as officers and Hugo won the DFC. After WW2, Puff became a doctor and lived in Essex. He died between 2001 and 2005. Pete became a test pilot with the Gloster Aircraft Company in 1955 and then with Armstrong Whitworth. He died in 1989. Hugo became a solicitor. George's career in the RAF and afterwards is unknown.</p>
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Above: From 5BFTS Newsletter, March 2018. Below: From Hugo's Photograph Album: Graduation Day April 8, 1943, at Riddle Field for Course 11, 5BFTS



- Back row: Higgins Jay Cheesebrough Edwards Dyson Downs Jack Dukelow Shipton Amos Watt trotter Varley Train
- Middle Row: Thatcher Barrett Magness Bruce Mark Burgess Potter West Hobson Johnstone Kent Tattershall Gaskell Macphie Thomas
- Front row: Curtis-Haywood Carroll Hatchwood Davies Hicks (5 RAF Officers and John Paul Riddle) Jeffries Crook Hanlon Charlesworth Lockwood

Returning to the UK and after further training, Hugo was posted to 12 Squadron, a bomber squadron who were re-equipped with Lancasters in 1943. The Squadron was at RAF Wickenby in Lincolnshire. An entry in the London Gazette of January 19, 1945, shows that Hugo won the DFC while with 12 Squadron.

After WW2, Hugo became a solicitor. As a result of a chance meeting in 1963 between John Potter and Johnny Jorgenson (both ex-Course 11), a reunion was arranged and on April 9, 1964, 21 years since they had been awarded their Wings, 21 members of Course 11 dined at the Royal; Aero Club in London. This was the start of the 5BFTS Association. Hugo became the Honorary Solicitor.

For more information about the reunion on April 9, 1964, please visit <https://commons.erau.edu/bfts-history/3/>



After service in the RAF flying Lancasters and Dakotas, Hugo took up gliding at Redhill, and soon became Chairman of the Surrey Gliding Club. He served as Team Manager of the British team in the 1954 World Gliding Championship. In 2001, he received a lifetime award for involvement in gliding. Hugo received the Legion d'Honneur as a part of the French government's recognition of veterans of the Battle of Normandy. In May 2024, Hugo was invited to visit his old RAF Squadron, No 12, and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

This Obituary was published in the #5BFTS Newsletter number 29 – Autumn 2024