

## The Amiens Prison Raid - 18th February 1944.

The following is **Bill Collard (S55-58)** report on the 70th anniversary memorial service held at Hunsdon Airfield on Sunday 16 February 2014.

*Each year the kind people of the small Essex village of Hunsdon remember the three airmen lost during the famous raid on Amiens Prison.*

*After the wettest winter on record, the morning of Sunday 16th February 2014 dawned bright and sunny with not a cloud in the sky. I had been warned in advance that the trip to the airfield memorial sight along what remains of the old runway was tortuous, with many deep pot holes and so it was! Andrew Payn and myself had kindly been invited to the service by the Chairman of the Parish Council, David Gibbs, who was expecting about 25 people. As my car limped along the flooded roadway I was somewhat surprised to pass many families with young children and soon realised that David had totally underestimated the numbers. I would guess that at least 100 people gathered around the wonderful airfield memorial, erected by volunteers from the Hertford Airfields Memorial Group in 2005.*

*At 11.45am, the Reverend David Scott ( Reader, St Albans Diocese ) welcomed everybody and asked us to follow the printed Order of Service. The memorial was flanked by flag bearers from the local British Legion and the Nazeing and Broxbourne Royal Air Force*

*Association. A large gathering of ATC cadets were in attendance from 309 Squadron Sawbridgeworth and 1239 Squadron Broxbourne & Hoddesdon. My attachment shows the two flags being flown at the site. The RAF flag and the New Zealand flag. It had been decided to give the event a slight New Zealand flavour to honour F/Lt Richard ' Dick' Sampson RNZAF, killed by flak while on his way back from the Prison and not mentioned so often as Pickard and Broadley.*



*The Names of the fallen were read out by Mr Denis Sharp from Hertford Airfields Memorial Group.*

*Flight Lieutenant Richard Webb Sampson.*

*Flight Lieutenant John Alan Broadley DSO DFC DFM*

*Group Captain Charles Percy Pickard DSO\*\* DFC*

*Five wreathes were laid and the last post sounded followed by a two minute silence.*

*Excitement then mounted as it had been indicated that an aircraft of a suitable vintage would perform a flypast. Fingers started to point as the experts spotted a dot on the horizon. Suddenly, a WW2 Hawker Hurricane 11b came screaming in and performed miraculous aerobatics. I found out that the plane was operated and flown by Peter Teichman from the Hanger 11 collection and based at the nearby North Weald airfield. Later Andrew Payn kindly contacted Peter and thanked him for his stunning display and explained the Framlingham link.*

*We all then adjourned to the local village hall for tea and sandwiches. Much interesting memorabilia was on display including a showing of the film shot by the RAF Film Production Unit which accompanied the raid.*

*A wonderful day with new friendships made.*