

**75th ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION OF RAIDS ON FORÊT DE NIEPPE
21-22 SEPTEMBER, 2019**

SEEKING INFORMATION AND EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST



The discovery five years ago of craters still remaining from bombing raids on V2 storage sites in a forest in Northern France in 1944 has resulted in the local community hosting a commemoration in September to mark the 75th anniversary of the raids. Graeme Woodrow, son of **Flt Lt G David Woodrow**, was astounded to find the craters when he visited the forest in 2013. "I stood in those craters, looked to the sky and felt a powerful, but indescribable, connection to my father." He was able to send the photos by email to his father but David died before he returned home. "We never had a chance to discuss it fully but, being a navigator, he was chuffed he was right on target."

Graeme returned last year and visited the adjoining town of La Motte au Bois where he met the Deputy Mayor of the region, Frédéric Massa. Frédéric was deeply moved by his father's story and when Graeme showed him his father's chart, log and photograph of the bomb drop from one of the raids he was overwhelmed. "This is precious to you, I know, but it is also precious to us. It is part of our heritage," he said, and proposed the idea of the commemoration.

The commemoration will take place as part of the French Heritage Days celebrations on **21-22 September, 2019**, in the **Chateau of La Motte au Bois**, which appropriately these days is home to an aeronautical institute. The Australian government will be represented by Group Captain David Titheridge.

Right: Chateau of La Motte au Bois, centre, with the edge of the Forêt de Nieppe in the top left.



Follow up research has found that there were at least eight raids on the forest involving 1521 aircraft from many squadrons between 27 July and 9 August, 1944. Frédéric is **seeking any information**, particularly photographs of participating crew or logbook entries, to be included on display panels which will be unveiled at the remembrance ceremony.

If you have any information or would like to attend please contact graeme.woodrow@gmail.com