DRIVING FORCE: Former 550 Squadron driver Marjorie Grey, 91, from East Halton, at the service with her daughter Jennifer Grey.

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550 Squadron memorial service





Squadron remembers its 353 fallen heroes

Lancaster fly-past at memorial tribute PAYING THEIR RESPECTS: Some of those who the part in the 550 Bomber Squadron and RAF North Killingholme Association Memorial Service. PAYING THEIR RESPECTS: Some of those who took

TEARS were shed at an annual reunion as servicemen from the Second World War remembered their lost comrades.

North Killingholme. Pictures by Ray Corke.

Surviving men of 550 Squadron, who flew Lancaster bombers 68 years ago from North Killingholme, gathered with family and friends of their late colleagues.

The reunion took place in North Killingholme, with a service of remembrance and wreath-laying at the squadron memorial, in Lan-caster Approach, as well as a pro-cession led by the Immingham Air Training Corps band.

The former servicemen and their families then enjoyed a fly-past by the only surviving airworthy Lan-caster bomber of the Battle Of Britain Memorial Flight, before a service at St Denys' Church.

Attending the reunion was Mar-jorie Grey, 91, of East Halton, who was a driver for the squadron.

She said: "I was posted all over the place during my time in service, from Scotland down to London.

"I eventually became a flight com-mander's main driver and anyone else who wanted me to do something would have had to have asked him first.

"I come every year to the memorial

by Katie Blackburn katie.blackbum@gsmg.co.uk

service. You cannot really describe the amount of emotion felt by every-

"When the Lancaster bomber does its fly-past, I always shed a tear at that point, to me, no other can top

As reported, 550 Squadron was based at Waltham before moving to North Killingholme airfield in January 1944, where it remained until it was disbanded in October 1945.

The squadron, which included members of the Canadian, Australian and New Zealand air forces, lost 353 of its members between 1944 and 1945 - with 13 Lancasters shot down over enemy territory and 13 crashing in Britain on their way home.

Among those remembering lost loved ones was Eve Dolphin, whose father died on March 31, 1944, when she was just 18 months old.

After travelling up from Devon for the reunion, the 69-year-old said:



"Attending the service gives me a sense of connection to my father, even though I never knew him.

"He is buried in Germany, the country his plane went down, in a place called Durnbach. It is a British war cemetery where about 3,000 men are laid to rest

"My father, Ronald Johns, was a rear gunner on the plane and to this day I cannot believe how people fitted into such tiny compartments and went out to war.

'Through my own research and travels I have some small remnants at home from his plane that

crashed. "I have attended the service for

MARCHING ON: The Immingham Air Training Corps Band lead the march back to the village hall after the 550 Bomber Squadron and RAF North Killingholme Association Memorial Service.

SENSE OF CONNECTION: Eve Dolphin remembering her father Ronald Johns, who died on a sortie from

'I don't think I could ever miss this service'

THE first ever fly-past for this service was in 1993, the year I was born.

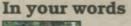
I live opposite the memorial stone where the missed a service yet.

I used to get excited when I was younger as soon as I heard the band coming down the



Killingholme when she was only 18 months old.

reunion is held each year and I have not



Katie Hedison,



WISE WORDS: The Reverend Mike Page-Chesney taking the service.

one is just as special to me.

"I used to hope that someone would attend that possibly knew my dad, but it has never happened.

"It is a heartfelt moment when the Lancaster bomber flies over us." For more information on the squadron, visit www.550squad-ronassociation.org.uk

Seeing the Lancaster bomber is definitely a proud moment, as it is a treasure of the village

It is nice talking to people who lost relatives in the war and especially to those who served during it. Their stories are fascinating to hear. My fiance is in the Army so next year I am moving to Germany with him. However, I do



not think I can ever miss this service so I will do my best to come back again for it.

It is a part of my childhood. I have grown up attending it so I never want to let it fade away from my life.

