

The Kipper Patrol

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About the Book

Author Louise Wilkinson launches an insightful new book about the history of the formation of 608 squadron Auxiliary Air Force and Thornaby Aerodrome.

Thornaby, 1930, saw the formation of 608 squadron Auxiliary Air Force. Remembered by some veterans as "the kipper patrol," their job as part of Coastal Command, involved protecting shipping convoys, looking for submarines and defending the northern supply routes. Although their role was never seen as glamorous and never received national glory, nonetheless, they played a significant part in the defence of the United Kingdom. This book tells the story of young pilots such as Geoffrey Ambler, Geoffrey Shaw, William Appleby-Brown and Peter Vaux, and airmen such as Albert Guy, Harold Coppick and Syd Buckle, and considers how their lives were dramatically changed with the onset of the Second World War, which saw them cease to be part-timers and become full time members of the Royal Air Force.

The Kipper Patrol serves as an insight into the history of this squadron, as well as the history of Thornaby Aerodrome itself. It uses as its basis, a series of interviews with veterans from the squadron and presents their memories of squadron life, along with many of their personal photographs. The book provides an insight into relationships between officers and other ranks within a military organisation and shows how these relationships changed over time.

The Kipper Patrol provides a long awaited history of a squadron remembered by many local people, and recognised by both the Airman Memorial and the replica Spitfire. It serves as a lasting memory to both the squadron and the aerodrome, and in particular, to the many veterans who so willingly gave up their time to share their memories.

Listen to BBC Radio interview with the author @

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