

# **The Memorial Service for Harry Thomas Winter**

**21 May 1922 – 28 February 2026**

**RIP**



**St George's Royal Air Force Chapel of Remembrance, Biggin Hill**

**Sunday 2pm, 31 May 2026**

Officiating Chaplain: Licensed Lay Minister: Ann-Marie Jefferys  
Organist: Mr Eric Johnstone  
Trumpeter: Miss Vicky Mace

Standards being paraded are St George of England and the  
Royal Air Force Regiment Association

followed by Lantern George



Please stand for Minister Ann-Marie Jefferys and  
the Welsh National Anthem 'Land of my Fathers'

Standard bearers approach the altar.

Minister: Welcome.

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus  
Christ be with you all.

Though we are dust and ashes, God has prepared for those who  
love him, a heavenly dwelling place.

At his funeral we commended Harry Thomas Winter into the  
hands of almighty God. As we prepare to commit his remains to  
the earth, we entrust ourselves, and all who love God, to his  
loving care.

Psalm 90:1-4

Lord you have been our refuge  
from one generation to another.  
Before the mountains were brought forth  
or the earth and the world were formed  
from everlasting to everlasting, you are God.  
You turn us back to dust and say:  
'Turn back O children of earth.'  
For a thousand years in your sight  
are but as yesterday  
which passes like a watch in the night.

Tribute to Harry  
by his son Paul Winter.

Minister: Tom Claxton will sing solo, in Welsh, the first verse of 'Guide me Oh thou great redeemer'. Please join in with the other verses.

Arglwydd , Arwain Trwy'r Anialwch  
Fi, bererin, Gwael Ei Wedd,  
Nad oes ynof nerth na Bywyd,  
Fel yn gorwedd yn y bedd,  
Hollalluog, Hollalluog,  
Ydyw'r Un a'm Cwyd i'r Lan

**All:** Open now the crystal fountain,  
whence the healing stream doth flow;  
let the fire and cloudy pillar  
lead me all my journey through:  
Strong deliv'rer, strong deliv'rer,  
be thou still my strength and shield,  
be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,  
bid my anxious fears subside;  
death of death and hell's destruction,  
land me safe on Canaan's side:  
Songs and praises, songs and praises,  
I will ever give to thee,  
I will ever give to thee.

High Flight by John Gillespie Magee Jr  
read by Margaret Wilmot

"Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth  
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;  
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth  
of sun-split clouds, — and done a hundred things  
You have not dreamed of — wheeled and soared and swung  
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,  
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung  
My eager craft through footless halls of air....

Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue  
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace.  
Where never lark, or even eagle flew —  
And, while with silent lifting mind I've trod  
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,  
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God."

Minister: Father of all, we thank you for the remarkable life of your servant Harry, for all that he did, and for all that he was to so many. We thank you for his wartime service in the Royal Air Force, his commitment as a comrade and his story that has inspired so many.

We pray for his family, especially Josie, Martin and Paul, his wider family, his wide circle of friends, especially those in the Masons, the Royal Air Force family, and at James Terry Court. Uphold them in their grief, give comfort and peace, knowing that Harry is safe in God's keeping. We ask this in the name of your risen Son, Jesus Christ. Amen

Almighty and eternal God, Lord of the universe and maker of all that is: we praise and thank you for all those who denied themselves and laid down their lives for their friends.

Grant to those who are remembered here, in this place and in our hearts, that their names may be written in your book of life; and to us who remember them, give grace to walk in the same way of love and faith, that we may come at the last with them to that eternal kingdom where you live and reign in the perfect unity of love, one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**All:** Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come; thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory.  
for ever and ever. Amen.

A time of reflection

A time to think of your own memories of Harry.

Standards are received from the sanctuary and bearers depart.

Process to the Remembrance Garden for the burial of ashes to the Royal Air Force March Past.



### The Committal

Ashes are placed in the ground.



Minister: We have entrusted Harry Thomas Winter to God's mercy, and we now commit his mortal remains to the ground earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust: in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our frail bodies, that they may be conformed to his glorious body, who died and was buried and rose again for us. To him be glory for ever.

**All:** Amen.

## Last Post and Reveille

Minister: We give thanks for the life of Harry. Life is a journey on many different roads but Lord you are always with us. Sometimes there is a hard journey through pathways of pain and fears in dark places, help us to remember that nothing can separate us from your love, within us there is an empty space which was once filled, a sense of being which is no longer there, a way of being and living which has gone, within us there is a loss of something which was precious, we pray that you will stay with us now and hold us in your love.

**All:** Amen

To love is to risk the pain of parting, not to love is never to have lived, the grief which we now experience is the honouring of our love, let us now in a quiet moment say our last goodbye to Harry.

## Blessing

May God give us, and to all those we love, his comfort and his peace, his light and his joy, in this world and the next. Let us go into the world, glad that we have loved, empowered to live life to the full as Harry did, and may God be our company, Jesus Christ walk before us, and the Holy Spirit surround us.  
Amen.



Harry volunteered for the RAF in early 1941 in response to the first bombing of his hometown of Cardiff by the Luftwaffe. He became a Sergeant Wireless Operator (Air).

On his 19th operation in October 1943, over Germany his Halifax was shot down near Hameln. The pilot and two gunners were killed. Harry had leg wounds which kept him in hospital for seven months.

He was taken from Hameln to Dulag Luft, a transit camp near Oberursel, for interrogation. At a train station, Harry was lying on a stretcher on a platform when he was confronted by an armed soldier intent on shooting him. It was only the intervention of a

German medical orderly, Gunter Arf, who had been looking after Harry, that saved his life. Harry gave his name and address to Gunter and asked him to make contact after the war. Following hospital treatment, he was sent to a prison camp in July 1944.

In January 1945 the Soviets were pushing westwards and the Germans evacuated the camp. From 19 January 1945 to 8 February 1945 the camp prisoners were forced to march more than 120 miles in  $-25^{\circ}\text{C}$  temperature through Czechoslovakia into eastern Germany, finally ending up south of Berlin.

It was here, near Berlin, that Harry and his comrades were finally liberated by the advancing Soviet army, though they were kept as hostages until all Soviets in German hands had been returned.

Determined to escape, with American assistance Harry crossed the river Elbe which marked the border between the Soviet and American zones. From there he made his way back to England.

After the war, in 1946, Harry returned to his job in the paper industry and met Josie in a dance hall in Penarth, where her family had been sent as evacuees. Josie and Harry married in 1950 and had two sons, Paul and Martin. Harry contacted Gunter Arf, the German who saved his life and the two families often went on holiday together. Harry referred to Gunter as his ‘brother in arms.’

He travelled widely, visiting most of Europe, much of America, and crossing Canada twice. In 2022 for his 100th birthday he was flown in a Spitfire from Biggin Hill. Harry was given a turn at the controls, and then the pilot took over again and performed a victory roll.

*“I’m not worried about dying, I did my duty,” said Harry in a 2025. “Yes, I did my duty.” interview with the Telegraph*





Text and photos – RAF Assoc, 427 (Lion) Sqn + Chapel photographers

