

Australian David Linacre volunteered to fly with the RAF at the outbreak of war and sailed from New Zealand to the UK via South America, Africa and Gibraltar - a trip of 8 months. After familiarisation training and acceptance into the RAF he was posted to Lasham to practice rocket firing from Miles Master aircraft. Peer pressure to achieve high scores was intense, and the only way to outshine the rest was to keep the aircraft pointing at the target for as long as possible. Becoming adept at pointing the aircraft at the ground longer than most, David achieved high scores, and many popped rivets on the aircraft due to having to pull out of dives so late. 3000 feet was the accepted minimum at which recovery should commence, but David prefers to forget what his altimeter typically read when he started to pull out.

David Linacre joined 609 in March 1945 as a Warrant Officer whilst the squadron was stationed at Plantlunne. Having liberated a motorbike in Belgium, David and a colleague attempted to start it by pushing. David was left to hop down the road with one foot in the attached sidecar, and his colleague on the other side of the bike, while attempting to coax it into life. When the engine did fire, David was left stranded being dragged along the road, one leg in and one out. He next recalls waking in hospital, the bike having run into a wall.

After repatriation to the UK and an extensive stay in hospital, David was fitted with a back brace (which he kept on for forty years) and returned home. He then built a business specialising in extruded plastics, at one point running the largest factory of its kind in Australasia. His passion for sailing took him to the top of international yacht judging, and he ran the Australian national sailing squad for the 1972 Olympics, with a more recent involvement in the Hobart to Sydney races.

Whilst on a trip to Japan in 1999 as part of a yachting competition series, David extended his trip to the UK, and attended the 1999 609 Squadron Association reunion, meeting faces he had last seen 55 years previously.

Still a hard worker, David combines work with yachting and golf (which has taken a front seat after the removal of the back brace) to keep himself busy.