

Gwendoline Peach



Leading Aircraftwoman 2069400, 105 Squadron, Women's Auxiliary Air Force

Died February 22nd 1944, aged 22

Memorial at Loose (All Saints) Churchyard Extension, Kent

**Daughter of Garfield John and Emily Hancock;
wife of John Kenneth Peach, of Loose**

Gwendoline Hancock was the daughter of John and Emily (nee Rowe) Hancock, born in 1922. She married John Kenneth Peach in 1943. John was a transport contractor and Gwendoline was a leading aircraftwoman in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF). They lived in Loose, 1½ miles south of Maidstone.

Whilst women were not allowed to become air crew, or participate in active combat, they were exposed to all the dangers associated with work on a military airfield, especially in Kent where the enemy was only 20 minutes flying time away. Gwendoline had worked herself up from Aircraftwoman Second Class, through First Class to become a Leading Aircraftwoman. Near to Loose were two short-lived wartime airfields where Gwendoline may have worked, RAF Headcorn and RAF Lashenden. In 1943 both had only recently been opened. They were built as Advanced Landing Grounds for use around D-Day. During this period they were occupied by parts of the USAAF Ninth Air Force. RAF Headcorn held 75 Republic P-47 Thunderbolts of the 362nd Fighter Group, and at RAF Lashenden the 345th Fighter Group had its P-51 Mustangs. Both had returned to agricultural use by the end of 1945. No trace exists of RAF Headcorn today, but RAF Lashenden is now the private Lashenden (Headcorn) Airfield.

The National record of marriages shows that she and John married in the last quarter of 1943. It is a tragedy that they had so little time together, as Leading Aircraftwoman Gwendoline Peach died of tuberculosis and meningitis on February 22nd 1944 in the Ashford Isolation Hospital. She is buried in Loose (All Saint's) Churchyard, in Kent, just opposite where she and John lived at 1 Cape Cottages.





The grave of Leading Aircraftwoman Gwendoline Peach

In Memory of
Leading Aircraftwoman
Gwendoline Peach

2069400, 105 Sqdn., Women's Auxiliary Air Force who died on 26 February 1944 Age 22

Daughter of Garfield John and Emily Hancock; wife of John Kenneth Peach, of Loose.

Remembered with Honour
Loose (All Saints) Churchyard Extension



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Sources

WAAF: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s_Auxiliary_Air_Force

RAF Headcorn: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RAF_Headcorn

RAF Lashenden: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lashenden_\(Headcorn\)_Airfield](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lashenden_(Headcorn)_Airfield)