



*Auntie Barbara with Gordon, the love of her life...but he died in 1944*



*All my love darling  
Auntie Barbara*

Because 762 Christchurch Road was close to Hurn airport it was popular with the pilots and was always filled with them saying hello and goodbye. They always came with gifts for everyone, some extra butter, sugar, tinned ham always from the Canadian pilots and chewing gum and silk stockings from the Americans. When they arrived with all their kit, it would be dumped on the kitchen table and each contribution was greeted by us with an 'oooooh or an ahhhh.' The big kettle was always on the hob so tea was made, or if we were lucky one of them had managed to smuggle some coffee from the Naffi. It seemed like Christmas Eve to me and the excitement lasted until I fell asleep at night. I always fell asleep hearing laughter from the kitchen, then perhaps a song and more laughter. I told my mother one day that I could never remember all their names and she said, 'just call them all Uncle Johnnie,' ...so I did. So if they were flying at the crack of dawn I would be allowed to stay up for a while whilst one of the Uncle Johnnies popped me up on his knee and told me a bedtime story, I loved it and he seemed happy too.



*1944 Marsden pilots*