

**From The Sun Newspaper [27<sup>th</sup> February 2013] He downed 21 Nazi planes but... WW2 ace's medals sold to pay care home fees. The family of a legendary World War Two air ace are selling his medals to pay for his care fees.**



Brance ... as he is now



Hero...  
Brance Burbidge in the war

Wing Commander Brance Burbidge was the RAF's deadliest night pilot, downing 21 Nazi fighter planes.

Now 93, he is in a private care home suffering from Alzheimer's after his wife Barbara died last year. And his family are "reluctantly" auctioning his medals — including the Distinguished Service Order and Distinguished Flying Cross — to raise £120,000, six years of fees.

Son Paul, 59, said: "We have no option.

"The cost is considerable but it is a brilliant care home. As he won these decorations, he should benefit from them. We're reluctant to do it but believe it's right. We value him more than his medals."

Wing Cmdr Burbidge, a pacifist Christian from East Dulwich, South London, had been a conscientious objector when war broke out. But as stories of Nazi Germany emerged, he joined the RAF just before he turned 20 in 1941. He flew Mosquitos with 85 Squadron and his greatest achievement came on November 4, 1944 when he shot down three Junkers 88 bombers and a Messerschmitt fighter plane over Bonn. He was known for showing mercy to enemy pilots by aiming at the engine instead of the cockpit and after the war he became a lay preacher.

Ian Moreland, of 85 Squadron, said it was "terrible" the family had to sell his medals to pay for his care in Chorleywood, Herts. He said: "It is a real kick in the teeth. He's a hero.

"Sadly he won't be the last to have to sell his medals to pay for care."

His gongs, plus flying jacket and logbooks, are to be sold in London on March 25<sup>th</sup> 2013.

Deadly ... an RAF Mosquito



£120,000 target... ace's medals

