

Ibsley Air Base, Southhampton England – April 1, 1944

Royal Air Force Station Ibsley or more simply RAF Ibsley is a former Royal Air Force station in Hampshire, England. The airfield is near the village of Ibsley, about 2 miles (3 km) north of Ringwood and about 85 miles (137 km) southwest of London. Ibsley was known as USAAF Station AAF-347 for security reasons by the USAAF during the war, and by which it was referred to instead of location. It's USAAF Station Code was "IB".

Opened incomplete in 1941 as a fighter base satellite, it was used by both the Royal Air Force and United States Army Air Forces. In the Second World War it was used primarily as a fighter airfield. After the war it was closed in 1947. It eventually had three concrete runways, 18 hardstandings plus 18 double pen dispersals and two Bellman plus 12 blister hangers.



P-47's at Ibsley

RAF Ibsley
USAAF Station AAF-347



Aerial Photo of Ibsley Airfield, January 1944. Note the runway extension to the 01 runway at the south side of the airfield, with the perimeter track extension.

IATA: none – ICAO: none

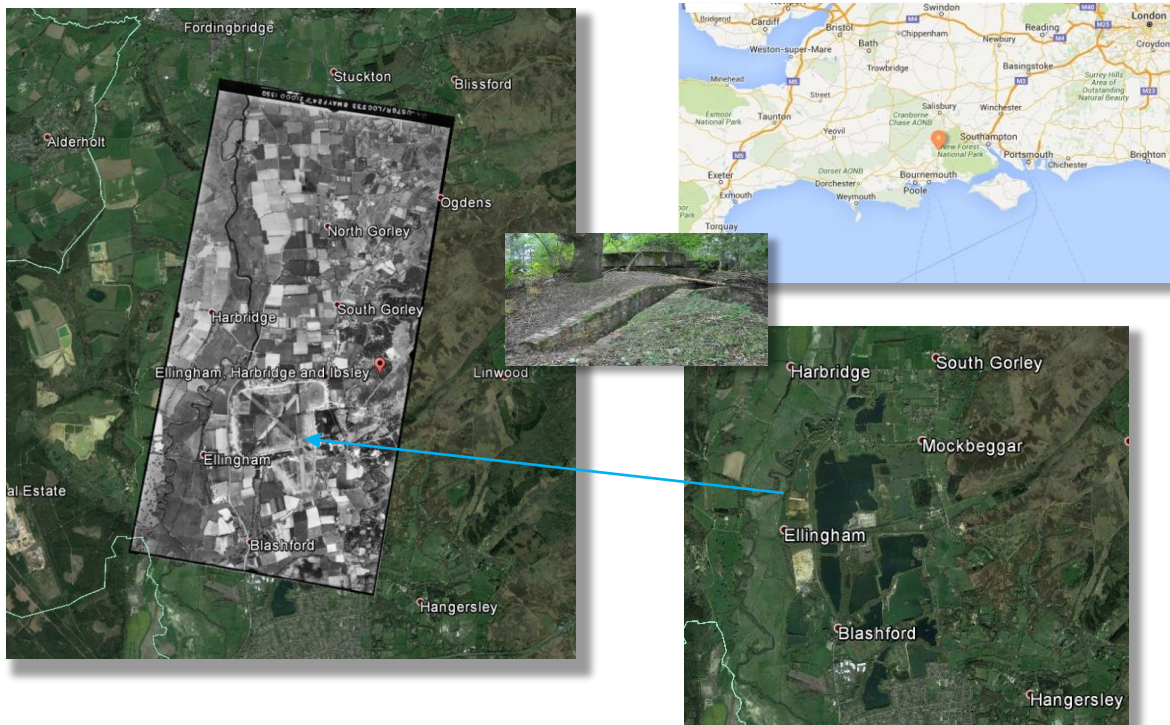
Summary	
Airport type	Military
Owner	Air Ministry
Operator	Royal Air Force United States Army Air Forces
Location	Ibsley, Hampshire
Built	1940
In use	1940-1947
Elevation AMSL	164 ft / 50 m
Coordinates	50°52′46″N 001°46′50″W

Map

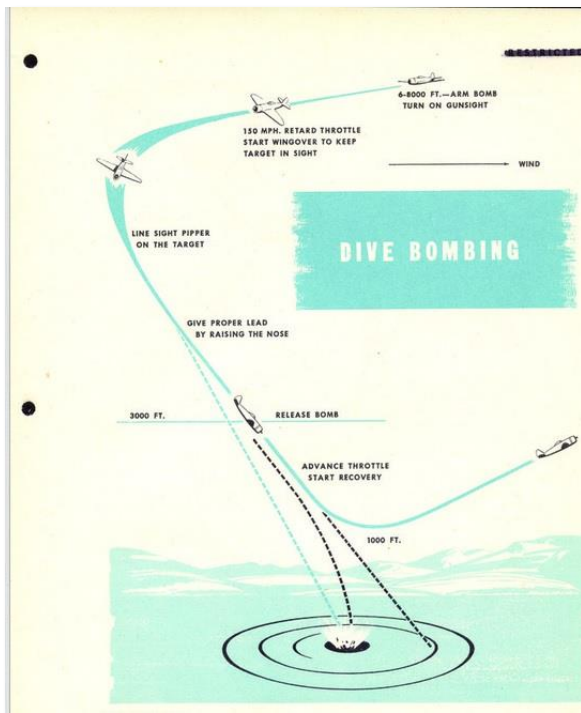


Location in Hampshire

Today the remains of the airfield shown below on the left in a 1944 photo overlaid on a modern day satellite image are mostly quarry lakes, with an abandoned control tower overlooking the water.



Almost immediately after their arrival, members of the 48th began a rigorous training program, flying, dive and glide bombing, night flying, low-level navigation, smoke laying, reconnaissance, and patrol convoy sorties. Having had a burning desire to be a dive bomber pilot, Lt. Harrison must have felt like he was in Disneyland. He would now put the experience he gained by buzzing his brother's farm in Ohio to good use.



Clear for Action
Your flight approaches the target in line astern at from 6000 to 8000 feet. The leader obtains the clear-to-bomb signal from the range officer.

GUN SIGHT
OFF ON
TURN RIGHT TO INCREASE BRILLIANCE

On most P-47's the bombs are armed by three T-shaped controls adjacent to controls used to jettison external tanks. Turn a control counterclockwise, pull and then twist clockwise to arm. To safety a bomb, reverse the steps. To drop the bomb, pull the appropriate TANK RELEASE handle.

Approach the target slightly to one side. Trim your plane for the maximum speed you will attain during the dive. As the target starts to disappear under your wing, wing over. Keep the target in sight at all times.

Turn 90° to place your diving run on the target. Put the pipper right on the target. Near the dropping point, slowly drag the nose up. When you estimate you have the correct lead, hold the plane steady and drop the bomb.

Use ailerons for deflection corrections and elevators for range. Avoid the use of the rudder except to stop skids.

Eliminate excessive diving speed by keeping the entry speed down and retarding throttle. Dive at an angle of between 45° and 60°. Avoid overboosting the engine during the pullout.

Pull out above 1000 feet to eliminate the danger of mushing. When you climb, make sure you are in no danger of a collision, and do not look back to see where your bomb hit. It's a bad habit to develop for combat. Your leader, or the man following you, notes the results you obtain.

In case your bomb fails to release, safety it, and skid and slip your plane over the target area to shake it loose. If this fails, return to the field and notify the tower of your difficulty before landing.

ARM YOUR BOMB

TANK RELEASE TANK RELEASE TANK RELEASE
BELLY LEFT RIGHT
TURN COUNTER-CLOCKWISE & PULL THEN TURN CLOCKWISE TO ARM



Dive bombing had been experimented with on offensive operations as early as the First World War. The concept was simple – the forward movement of any bombing platform would have a pronounced effect on any bombs dropped, resulting in a forward movement of the bomb rather than a simple vertical drop. This in turn led to problems with accuracy and the requirement for specialist bombsights to try to calculate a large number of variables involved. In theory, if an aircraft were to dive vertically down on top of a target, most of these variables would be eliminated, leading to far greater accuracy. However, the control response needed to actually pull out of the dive meant that particularly heavy aircraft were not able to attempt this maneuver. Furthermore, the stresses on the aircraft on pulling out of the dive were considerable enough to require strengthening of the airframe, resulting in the need for specialized design and manufacture to guarantee a good combination of safety and accuracy. Also, as heavier aircraft with large bomb loads were not suited to this role, the accuracy which came with dive bombing also brought the penalty of a smaller bomb load – hence, dive bombing was very much a precision attack against selected targets rather than a strategic attack.