



SHEARWATER AVIATION MUSEUM FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

Spring 2002



Our once and future fleet!

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And other stuff we had room for....

Submissions

To facilitate a good product, the staff would like to pass on the following info:

Text submissions can be either paper, email or electronically produced, Word or Wordperfect. We will format the text for you.

Graphics are best submitted as an original photo (not a fax). If submitted electronically, they should be 300 dpi and a .tif file. A .jpg file at 300 dpi is acceptable if no compression is used. However, we will attempt to use any pictures, whatever the format, that you may desire to send to us.

If anybody requires a hand or additional clarification please feel free to email Bob at rgrundy@accesscable.net.

Following these guidelines will allow us to produce clearer newsletters in a timely fashion. Thanks in advance.

Bob Grundy



SHEARWATER AVIATION MUSEUM FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER



Cover

Flashback to the days when Canada could back its foreign policy with more than empty rhetoric.

PLEASE NOTE

When sending mail of any kind, newsletter articles, letters to the editor, membership renewals, donations etc please ensure the **envelope is addressed correctly** to the:

Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation or **SAM Foundation**

Deadlines for receiving submissions:

Summer 27 June

Winter 4 Oct

Spring 7 March

Some Donations are being sent directly to the Museum and therefore may be deposited to the Museum account and not credited to your membership in the Foundation and there-fore no receipt will be sent.

Newsletter Staff

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The Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation (SAMF) Newsletter is published three times yearly. Cheques made payable to the "Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation" or "SAMF" should be mailed to PO Box 5000, Station Main, Shearwater, NS B0J 3A0. Portions of this newsletter may be reprinted without prior permission provided full credit is given to both the author(s) and the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation Newsletter. In accordance with his mandate, the Editor of the SAMF Newsletter reserves the right to edit, condense or reject copy to suit the requirements of the Newsletter. Any opinions expressed are deemed to be those of the author(s), and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation, its members, and/or the Shearwater Aviation Museum.

A wise nation preserveth its records, gathereth up its monuments, decorateth the tomb of its illustrious dead, repaireth its great public structures, and fostereth national pride and love of country by perpetual reference to the sacrifices and glories of the past.

-Joseph Howe, 31 August 1871

EDITOR'S GRUNTS



The aim of this newsletter comes under review each time we begin selecting content. If the aim appears to shift slightly it is because we address new circumstances and see new fields to explore. There will be new, non-member, recipients (possibly even readers) of this production. Some of these will be unacquainted with Naval and Air Force history and jargon. There will be footnotes and explanations of matters esoteric to the non-cognoscenti (a polite euphemism for the ignorant). This is not a dumbing-down but rather a necessary and urgent reaching-out – a reaching-out to a wider audience of potential new members to be replacements for us, the dwindling old guard.

We have selected for this issue articles that celebrate the great days of Canadian Naval Aviation and the nostalgia of members who remember fondly those exciting and also halcyon days (Foxtrot at the dip).

"For The Cognoscenti"

You will find herein archane Naval jargon these words allude to ribald, lewd old sea chanties too gross to grace the pages of this erudite and proper newsletter - old sailors will know the missing words. e.g. The alphabetical signal flag "F" (foxtrot) was hoisted by a carrier preparing to launch or recover aircraft.

We will celebrate also the exploits of Canadians in naval aviation from its inception in 1914 when so many Canadians served with distinction in the R.N.A.S. on the Western Front, at Gallipoli and elsewhere.

While this issue will be oriented largely to naval aviation history it should not be regarded as a valedictory – there are some of us who are promoting naval aviation's rebirth; a naval pundit's view of what could be is here too.

Our Foundation's mandate is to preserve Maritime Military Aviation heritage, not just the Navy part of the mandate, will be recognized with due attention to the R.C.A.F. in future issues.

This newsletter must remain apolitical in the sense that it must not be politically partisan but that does not mean that the publishing of controversial views is proscribed. Indeed we have a duty as retired warriors to speak our minds about national defence strategies and the organization of the armed forces: Which category of citizen is better qualified to speak on these matters of the greatest national importance, professional warriors like us or lay persons like professional politicians or media pundits?

You will find herein a lengthy but succinct article by Stu Soward. In case you wonder why Naval Aviation which was such a vital part of national defence, got scuppered. Time spent reading Stu's chronology will both answer the question and leave you disturbed and indignant.

Lastly, we enjoin you to read and enjoy and to tell us by email or snail mail what we are missing and what bores you. Bill Farrell



CYBERNOTE

from Ted Kieser

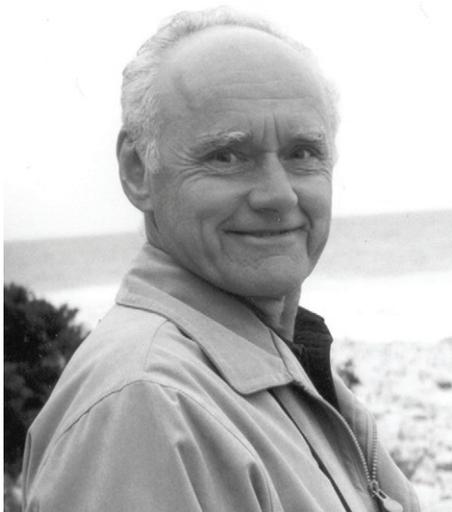
This is just a note to all of you who no longer shave with a straight razor and who have ventured into the realm of the computer! For information, the Shearwater Aviation Museum has NEW web site at:

www.shearwateraviationmuseum.com

Whilst currently 'under renovation' there is a lot of good information on this site, and, thanks to the museum's Christine Dunphy, new stuff is being added all the time. Christine is always happy to receive suggestions to improve this fine web site. Additionally, you are all encouraged to send her your email address and other information so she may enter or update the 'Email Directory' on the site. This is a great opportunity for people to find old friends. For those of you who have already registered, drop in and check that the information is up-to-date. And, are you subscribed to 'NAVAIRGEN'? If not, go to the museum web site and click 'Naval Air Net', then select 'NAVAIRGEN' and follow the instructions to subscribe.

The Navaigen network was established to facilitate communication among former naval air personnel but it is not necessarily limited solely to that group. Any former maritime aviation personnel or people with an interest in maritime aviation are welcome. It was developed to provide a method of exchanging relevant information to a large group at once, thus obviating the necessity of sending individual messages. The net also serves as an excellent vehicle for exchanging information about things computing, email and other Internet educational features.

Check out the Shearwater Aviation Museum home page. Sign up or update your information on the site today!



President's Report

 In the second of February at the Wine, Cheese and Art evening, I once again had the privilege of accepting a cheque from Mr. David Fountain, Chairman of the Nova Scotia Int. Air Show Committee, for \$11,160. This was of course our share of the Air Show (Sikorsky) Golf Tournament proceeds last September. After this very enjoyable and successful event, I began to think of how to give recognition to all those that work so hard to make the Foundation a success. Perhaps the best part of being President is the ability to write a column in the Newsletter without any specific theme.

I will use this literary licence to applaud all those who contribute so much to SAMF. I'm sure that I will miss a few. For that I apologize in advance. Here, in no particular order, is my list of "Hall of Fame" nominees: Ernie Cable, Don Cash, Eric Edgar, Bill Farrell, Bob Grundy, Barry Keeler, Ted Kieser, Mike Kelly, Al Moore, Bill Gillespie, Gerry Marshall, Bill Mont, Harold Northrup, Jav Stevenson, Jack Shapka, Tom Tonks, Kay Collacutt, Owen Walton and Harry Porter. Their contributions are significant and varied. Having a team as dedicated as this makes the job of President very easy. To the above list I'd like to add all those who have made monetary contributions over and above their membership dues. On a more mundane note, I'm happy to say that your Foundation's finances are on track. For the September through February period we were very close to our budget forecast. Revenues were slightly

ahead of forecast and expenses were on budget, so we seem to have a fairly good handle on our annual cash flow. So far our corporate fund-raising efforts have been very disappointing. Except for some advertising space in the Newsletter, we have received support from only three corporations. Some others that have been contacted are reviewing our requests and others will be contacted soon. As a result we are asking you, the SAMF members to search your souls and wallets. We have sent out individual requests and I hope that many of you will respond favourably. The planning for an atrium addition has been launched. We will be working closely with SAM to fund most of this project. Based on our financial experience of the last couple of years, we believe we can afford this undertaking. It is important that we be very conservative in our financial assumptions however, since receipts from some of our projects like the Wall of Honour will decline over time. Since the future of Shearwater and the Air Show are in doubt, we can not depend on strong funding from the Air Show golf tournament. Running a golf tournament on our own is possible, but the income would be lower. At present we are able to meet our running expenses, make payments on the CFCF loan for the new hangar and still have some funds left over to support an atrium. Depending on the cost estimate, we should be able to afford at least a significant part of it. We will be discussing these matters at upcoming Board meetings and I will keep you informed in future columns.

In closing let me say once again that I feel very honoured to be the President of such a fine group and on behalf of all of us here, "good health" to all!

Eric Nielsen

From the Curator's Desk

by Chuck Coffen

The year 2002 started off on a very positive note as Ms. Christine Hines joined the Museum team as Curator of Collections. Christine hails from New Brunswick and brings excellent qualifications to her new post. In addition to a BA, History major from St.FX, she is a graduate of the three year Museum Studies program at Algonquin College in Ottawa and has five years experience as Collections Manager at the Base Borden Military Museum.

February being Black History Month, on February 27th a new exhibit honouring the contribution of Black Canadians in Military Service to their country was unveiled at a public showing. The event, organized by our General Manager, Barb Hicks, was an enormous success. The highlight had to be a brilliant vocal rendition of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" by young Tyaila Cain-Grant. Senator Don Oliver, the keynote speaker, delivered a moving address on the History of Black Canadians.

As the busy season approaches it is timely to review our well stocked Gift Shop for all you aviation buffs. Pat Burstall has produced a new water colour painting of our famed Sea King Helicopter which is beautiful to behold. Our Gift Shop Manager may have found a new supplier for all of our Canadian Naval Memorabilia needs. Also remember all you SAMF Members that your membership entitles you to 10% off ALL Merchandise in our gift shop. So here's to another great tourism year..

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YOUNG FIGHTER PILOTS

There was a squadron party in the woods and suddenly there was a downpour of thunder and rain. Two young fighter pilots ran for about 10 minutes in the pouring rain, finally reaching their car just as the rain let up. They jumped in the car, started it up and headed down the road, laughing and of course, still drinking one beer after the other. Suddenly an old Indian man's face appeared on the passenger side and tapped on the window! The passenger screamed, "Eeeeeekkk! Look at my window!!! There's an old Indian guy's face there!" (Was this a ghost?!?!?!?) The old Indian man kept knocking, so the driver said, "Well open the window a little and ask him what he wants!" So the fighter pilot rolled his window down part way and, scared out of his wits, said, "What do you want???" The old Indian replied, "You have! any tobacco?" The fighter pilot, terrified, looked at the driver and said, "He wants tobacco!" "Well give him a cigarette! HURRY!!" the driver replied. So he fumbles around with the pack and handed the old man a cigarette and yelled, "Step on it!!!" rolling up the window in terror. The pilot presses the gas pedal up to 80 MPH, they calm down and they start laughing again, and the other pilot said, "What do you think of that?" The driver replied, "I don't know. How could that be? I was going pretty fast." Suddenly there was a knock on the window AGAIN and there was the old Indian man. "Aaaaaaaaaaaaaa, there he is again!" the fighter pilot yelled. "Well see what he wants now!" yelled back the driver. He rolled down the window a little ways and in a shaky voice said, "Yes?" "Do you have a light?" the old Indian quietly asked. The passenger threw a lighter out the window at him, rolled up the window and yelled, "STEP ON IT!" They are now going about 100 MPH and still guzzling beer, trying to forget what they had just seen and heard, when again there was another knock! "Oh my God! HE'S BACK!" He rolled down the window and screamed out in stark fear, "WHAT DO YOU WANT?" The old man gently replied, "You fighter pilots need some help getting out of the mud?"

SHEARWATER DOOMED?

(Credit to COMPASS ROSE)

(The following will be of considerable interest to those of us who served in HMCS SHEARWATER and is yet one more example of the reduction of our defence to the absurd... It appeared on the navairgen newsgroup on the Internet.

"CFB Shearwater is very close to the final desecration of being carved up for sale to real estate developers. Declared surplus, it is now passing into the hands of Canada Lands Company. If there is to be a rescue, it must be made now: THE HUN IS AT THE GATE!

VITAL TO DEFENCE

Today's (Mon 14 Jan 02) issue of the Daily News carries a cogent article by pundit/commentator Barry Boyce warning the public that this DND asset, which could be vital to a long-overdue revision of Canada's national defence strategy, will very soon become a forever-lost asset.

FOREIGN POLICY ASSET

Boyce intends a follow up article next week in which he will, I hope, expand on the idea of restoring this base to the capacity it once had to support an aircraft carrier and so enable the projecting of Canada's foreign policy onto the world scene. I speak here of Canada's stand under Prime Minister Lester Pearson against the Anglo-French attack on Egypt a half-century ago and the delivery to Port Said by the aircraft carrier HMCS Magnificent of Army and Air Force units – these in support of a UN intervention largely initiated by an outraged Canada.

PROTEST NOW

Our carrier is long gone and shearwater is incrementally and rapidly crumbling. A last-ditch effort to save Shearwater might just succeed if enough of us communicate vigorously and immediately with our elected representatives at all levels of government – and communicate also with those leaders of industry who have a stake in the rebuilding of our armed forces. Current operations declare a requirement for an aircraft carrier to restore our ability to do the delivery job Magnificent once did and then to remain on station to provide forward support for

troops ashore. A multi-purpose carrier (such as the USN is using so effectively in the Arabian Sea) will be expensive but will create taxpayer shipbuilding jobs in the Maritimes and across the country,

FREELADING BUMS?

The major warships will be affordable unless we refuse to abandon our shameful bent for freeloaders on the Americans for the defence of our own country: Our budget has been balanced to a great extent by transferring our defence budget onto the taxpayers of our neighbour.

The message to veterans, retirees, serving members of the forces and to citizens-at-large is:

"SPEAK NOW OR FOREVER HOLD YOUR PEACE"

SENIOR SERVICE?

BY Mike Kelly

(As written to the editor of REVEILLE)

Dear Sir:

The front page of the May/June Reveille, The Senior Service - Navy's 76th year, is not exactly true.

The Royal Navy is known as the Senior Service, and most people imagine wrongly, that the expression highlights the fact that the Navy preceded both the Army and Air Force.

Actually, the term first became current in the 17th century during the rise of the East India Company. Many of the company's trading ships were not only better than those of the Royal Navy, but offered much better pay. As a result, a number of officers relinquished their commission in the Navy and joined East India Company Vessels, which for many years were the finest even among merchant ships.

Nevertheless, compared with the Royal Navy, the East India Company was a mere newcomer.

It was in recognition of this fact that the Royal Navy was spoken of first as the Senior Service.

(Note from Kay. Mike is ex-RCAF.... no matter how you slice it, the Navy was/is and always will be, the senior service - forever and ever, AMEN!)

NOBLE TRADITIONS LEAD TO NOBLE DEEDS

Three Brave Sergeants

by Richard Dooly
Daily News

Three Canadian Forces Sergeants from Shearwater are receiving one of the nation's highest awards for bravery for their part in a dramatic rescue at sea two years ago.

Sgt Dorwin Williams and Sgt Howard Thomas, both of 30 Sqn and Sgt Philip Trevor of Wing Ops at 12 Wing Shearwater will be presented with the Star of Courage by Gov. Gen. Adrienne Clarkson at a ceremony later this spring for rescuing 12 of the 13 survivors of the bulk freighter *Leader L*.

The 236 metre freighter sank around midnight March 23, 2000 in heavy seas about 700 kilometres north of Bermuda. The crew of 31 abandoned ship after sending an SOS picked up by a Canadian Naval Task Group headed to the Caribbean for war games. Williams, Trevor and Thomas volunteered to be lowered from Sea Kings launched from *HMCS Iroquois* and *HMCS Halifax* to rescue survivors clinging to wreckage in the stormy seas.

Trevor made eight trips into the pounding waves, rescuing eight sailors before the search for the missing crew was called off. One other survivor was picked up by a ship.

Williams made three dangerous descents on a night he'll never forget. "It was a difficult night, that's for sure" Williams said.

The first into the water was Thomas. But he was reeled back into the helicopter after injuring his back on a chunk of debris hurled by a wave. Williams, who is a Sea King Radar Operator, took his place.

Each time Williams descended, he choked on fuel spread on the water and struggled against ferocious waves while suspended from a bucking helicopter that could dip or rise by as much as 10 metres when hit by a blast of wind.

He found three desperate sailors clinging to each other, but the panicked men almost drowned Williams in their struggle to get into the horse collar used to hoist one person at a time aboard the Sea King. "After swallowing a whole bunch of sea water and struggling to break one of them away, I got one separated and up

we went," said Williams. He repeated the scenario twice more.

His last time into the water, Williams became unhooked from his safety cable and had to hang onto the sailor being winched aboard the Sea King. "I just held on for dear life", he said.

26.11.55

LCdr(P) John Henault BEEMAN, pilot, LCdr Francis Roger FINK co-pilot, PO 1 Lawrence William VIPOND crew, and LS Paul Arnold SMITH, were jointly responsible for saving the 21 members of the crew of the Liberian Freighter 'SS KISMET II' which had run aground on the rocky coast of Cape Breton Island against a cliff which rose almost vertically from the sea to a height of some 400 feet and was being pounded to pieces by heavy seas. It was decided by the authorities concerned that the rescue could not be effected from shore while seas and reefs made any attempts from sea impossible. At 0845 hrs the helicopter flew towards the wreck. The wind had veered slightly and it was found that along the cliff face the turbulence was not so great and they were able to approach close to the 'KISMET II'. By means of hand signals they were able to make the crew understand that they wanted the after steering platform cleared away by the removal of ventilators, rails, etc, so that the helicopter could land. This was accomplished. BEEMAN succeeded in balancing the helicopter on three wheels on the deck; considering the fact that fairly heavy turbulence was still being encountered and that the cliff was only about 25 feet away, made attempt at rescue by hoist impossible. Four members of the crew were embarked and taken to shore. Leaving the co-pilot and one crew member behind. BEEMAN made a further trip and picked up seven crew members. Third and fourth trips were made by the co-pilot and one crew member to remove the remaining 10 crew.

2.11.64

HMCS BONAVENTURE(22) at approx 1530hrs, while under refit at St. John, NB, a fire was reported on 5 deck F section. There were reports of explosions, intense heat and volumes of black and nauseating smoke issuing from the affected compartment. Lt John Allister CHISLHOLM RCN took charge, with volumes of dense black & nauseating smoke issuing from the compartment.

There were reports of explosions, intense heat, and in view of dangerous material in nearby compartments, dressing in Chemox breathing gear, entered the area to assess the situation, he heard cries from an adjacent smoke filled area and found a stranded workman in a state of panic. He led the man to safety. Returning to the fire area he found another workman trapped & also led this man to safety. Again returning to the area he found a third man who had succumbed to asphyxia, lying in the furthest corner of the burning compartment. With assistance, he carried the body from the area and then directed fire fighting at the scene.

Queens Commendation (Service)

28.11.53

Lt(P) Allan John WOODS RCN

A British 'Attacker jet a/c' was being ferried by WOODS from RCAF Stn NAMAQ to Halifax for loading onboard HMCS MAGNIFICENT, to return the a/c to the UK. An engine flame-out at 30,000ft 60 miles from Sault Ste Marie, and despite having only 2000ft ceiling, WOODS made a successful dead stick landing. The fault was repaired & trip resumed, however once again about 60 miles out of Ottawa, the engine failed WOODS made a second dead stick landing. Once repaired WOODS completed the flight without further incident.



Star of Courage



IN THE DELTA

- Davidson, Peers
- DeWolf, Adm
- Dorman, A
- Downie, Al
- Fox, Alex
- Fudge, M.M.
- Gick, Philip Adm
- Hay, Ronnie
- Johansen, Hal
- MacGlashen, Archie
- Maxwell, Bill
- Richardson, Norm
- Schwenk, Tino
- Spratt, D
- Stapleford, Dave
- Stetchman, JW
- Vandewater, V
- Wadds, "Trigger"
- Young, Al

*They shall grow not old, at we that are left
grow old;*

*Age shall not weary them, nor the pearl
condemn.*

*At the going down of the sun and in the
morning*

We will remember them.

Laurence Binyon

**LAST RNAS PILOT DIES
- TRUE OR FALSE**

Navy News04.01.02 08:52
(in part)

The last WW1 RN pilot, Conrad Philip Bristow, has died just a fortnight short of his 102nd birthday. Philip Bristow joined the Royal Naval Air Service in 1917. He was summoned to London for an Admiralty board, and on his 18th birthday made his way to the RN College at Greenwich as a Probationary Flying Officer, learning navigation, the principles of flight, and how to take apart and put together a machine gun. The next stage of his training saw him actually get his hands on the controls of an aircraft, when he headed off for France, to Vendome in La Rochelle. He was taken aloft in a Caudron bi-plane for a handful of flights until he was judged ready for his first solo flight. Then it was "Off you go, Bristow!" - and off he went, his son John recalled him saying.

After circling above the French countryside and making a perfect landing on the bumpy grass, Philip taxied hurriedly over to his instructor to ask if he had qualified as a pilot. "Yes, but don't you taxi as fast as that!" came the reply. The fledgling pilot then returned to the Naval Air Station at Lee-on-the-Solent for training in seaplanes - a completely different technique, as water presented a difficult platform for both take-off and landing. There was the added complication at Lee-on-the-Solent of having to avoid the jutting pier. Once fully trained, Philip moved on to Westgate-on-Sea to begin submarine surveillance flights. Coming down at sea was a serious risk for Naval pilots, not least because of the unreliability of the engines, and each aircraft trailed a long copper wire to act as a radio aerial - and two carrier pigeons as a back-up in calling for assistance.

On three occasions Bristow ditched with mechanical problems. He was rescued in turn by a trawler, a drifter and a British destroyer - twice employing his pigeons. In April 1918 the RNAS was absorbed into the newly-formed Royal Air Force and Philip left the RAF as a flight lieutenant in May 1919 to rejoin the family glass merchants business in Cardiff, of which he became managing director in 1938. But he kept his Naval uniform throughout his time at Westgate and described his RAF uniform as "rarely worn". Philip Bristow

was made a Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur in 1999.

Dave Shirlaw

Editor, Seawaves Magazine

NOTE: From Dave:

I have received the following:
I thought you would like to know that the "last" part of this report is not true. I recently attended the 105th birthday party for Henry Botterell a Canadian who served in the RNAS flying Camels in France 1917-1919. He retired as a Flight Lieutenant RNAS, wore naval uniform throughout his WW1 naval service, and is still very much alive and kicking. Henry Botterell is now the senior resident in the Veteran's Wing at Sunnybrook Hospital here in Toronto.

And From J.Allan Snowie, former Lt(P) Author of "The Bonnie" -the history of Canada's Last Aircraft Carrier, HMCS Bonaventure

Dear Editor Shirlaw;

You will have heard from Joe MacBrien about Canada's Henry "Nap" John Lawrence Botterell age 105. Henry joined the RNAS on 14 March 1917 and can be seen in the photograph of 208 Squadron in Draper's book "The Mad Major". He and Draper are the only ones in naval uniform. In recent times Henry's 1918 attack on a German Balloon has been the subject of a painting by British aviation artist Robert Taylor. Last year the Commanding Officer of today's 208 Squadron RAF flew to Canada to meet and interview his unit's last surviving First War ancestor. Henry was one of 936 Canadians who joined the RNAS. This "ship's company" group of men is the subject of a book that I am researching for publication in 2004. If I can be of any further assistance in providing information please do let me know.

We discovered only in final proofreading the juxtaposition of the "In the Delta" list with the recognition that a 1914-1918 war pilot still lives was by pure chance as Bob assembled the many articles: Or was some ethereal hand guiding?

Ed.

825 Squadron

Ro. 880 Squadron has the longest history of all the units that served in Canada's Naval Air Arm. Although it was zero manned in 1990, the squadron is still on the Canadian Forces inventory today. No. 880 Squadron came into being in May 1951 when 825 Squadron was renumbered to 880. The following is a brief account of the rich heritage 880 inherited from 825 Squadron, its proud ancestral predecessor.

The Royal Navy (RN) formed No. 825 Squadron on 8 October 1934 by combining two Royal Air Force (RAF) flights to form a new squadron and renumbering No. 824, which at that time was embarked in *HMS Eagle*. No. 825 Squadron, equipped with 12 Fairey III F's, continued to serve on *Eagle* in the China Station in the spotter reconnaissance role. *Eagle* transferred to the Mediterranean Fleet in January 1935 and shortly thereafter the carrier disembarked its aircraft to Royal Naval Air Station (RNAS) Hal Far, Malta and sailed home for refit. In September 1935, 825 Squadron joined *HMS Glorious* for further Mediterranean service and in July 1936 it re-equipped with 12 Fairey Swordfish I's and became a torpedo spotter reconnaissance squadron.

At the outbreak of war in September 1939, 825 Squadron embarked from RNAS Dekheila, Egypt to *HMS Glorious* to search for shipping in the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. *Glorious* returned to

the Mediterranean in January 1940, and the squadron operated from Hal Far until March 1940 when the ship was recalled for the defence of Norway. Upon arrival in the United Kingdom, No. 825 Squadron disembarked at RNAS Preswick and deployed to RNAS Worthy Down, and the RAF Stations at Detling and Thorney Island to carry out operations in the English Channel against U-boats, E-boats and enemy transports in the Calais area during the Dunkirk evacuation. Eight of the squadron's 12 aircraft were lost at Dunkirk, including the CO LCdr Buckley RN; five of the aircraft were lost in a single bombing raid over France on 29 May 1940. To make matters worse, the squadron's carrier, *HMS Glorious*, was sunk by the German battleships *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst* on 8 June 1940.

In July 1940, the remnants of the squadron were augmented to nine aircraft and embarked on *HMS Furious* for September operations off Norway that included the noteworthy night attacks on Trondheim and Tromsø. In February 1941, the squadron re-embarked on *Furious* for escort duty with a convoy ferrying aircraft to the Gold Coast.

In May 1941, 825 Squadron joined *HMS Victorious* and took part in the historic attack on the German battleship *Bismarck*. The squadron Swordfish sighted *Bismarck* on 24 May and attacked the following day; a single torpedo hit forced the battleship to reduce her speed. The *Bismarck* was crippled in a follow-on

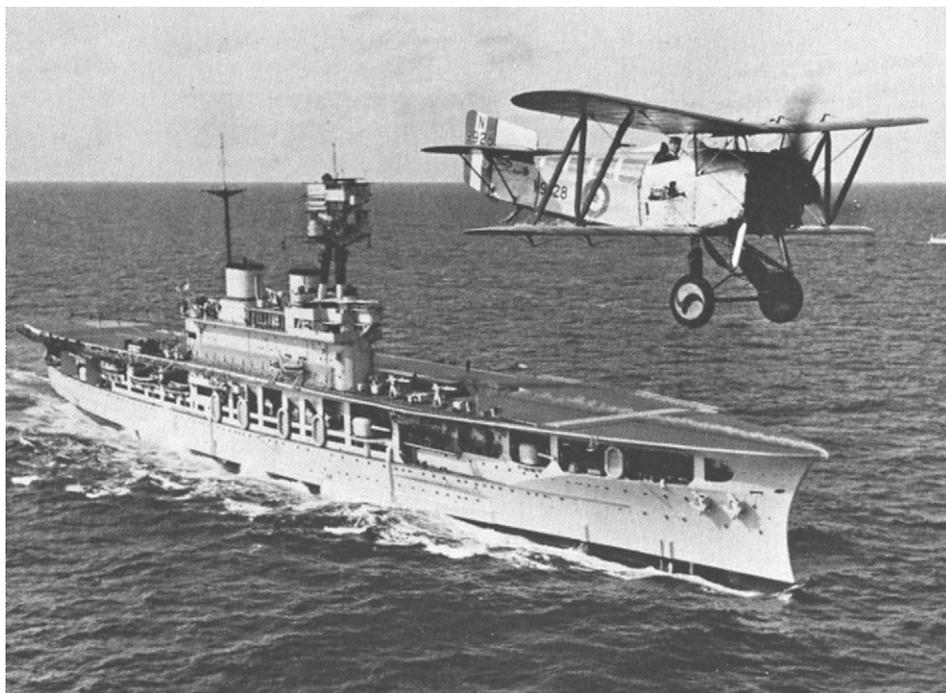
strike by Swordfish from 810, 818 and 820 Squadrons on 26 May and finally sunk by the Fleet on 27 May 1941.

From June 1941 the squadron embarked on *HMS Ark Royal* to provide anti-submarine protection for convoys fighting to reach beleaguered Malta; the squadron also conducted strikes against targets in Pantellaria, Sardinia and Sicily in September. On 13 November 1941, U-81 torpedoed *Ark Royal* 50 miles from Gibraltar and the squadron's carrier sank the next day. The few 825 Squadron aircraft that were airborne at the time flew to Gibraltar, but the squadron essentially ceased to exist.

In January 1942, 825 Squadron reformed in England at RNAS Lee-on-Solent with nine Swordfish I's destined for torpedo bomber reconnaissance duties. In early February six aircraft were detached to Manston to augment strike forces against the possible breakout of the German battle cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* and the cruiser *Prinz Eugen* from the French port of Brest. When these three capital ships dashed up the English Channel the squadron's six aircraft launched a torpedo attack, which was part of a poorly coordinated strike involving ships and other RAF aircraft; no hits were obtained and all of the squadron's aircraft were shot down. The CO, LCdr Esmonde, was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross and the five surviving crewmembers were all decorated.

The squadron regrouped at Lee-on-Solent in March 1942 receiving Swordfish II's as replacements for their lost aircraft. Three aircraft embarked on *HMS Avenger* for Arctic convoy duties to Russia; 16 U-boats were sighted of which only six could be attacked. The squadron shared in the destruction of U-589 with *HMS Onslow* on 14 September. Upon return to England the squadron carried out strike operations in the English Channel from the RAF stations at Thorney Island and Exeter while seconded to 16 Group, RAF Coastal Command.

From March 1943, 825 Squadron embarked in *HMS Furious* to provide anti-submarine operations for convoys sailing from Scapa (Scotland) and Iceland and to conduct anti-submarine sweeps off the Norwegian coast. In December 1943 the squadron joined *HMS Vindex* to begin a long association during which time it flew many sorties against the enemy in Atlantic and Arctic waters. At this time a fighter flight of six Hawker Sea Hurricane II's was added to the squadron to defend



the convoys against air attack. Terrible weather failed to prevent intensive flying and the squadron shared with surface forces in the sinking of U-653 on 15 March and U-765 on 6 May 1944. During April 1944 three more modern Fairey Fulmars from No. 784 Squadron briefly augmented 825 Squadron's Swordfish. In August 1944, the squadron now equipped with 12 Swordfish III's again embarked on *HMS Vindex* to provide anti-submarine protection for arctic convoys. The highlight of this period was the escorting of Convoys JW 59 and RA 59A to and from North Russia. On 22 August, Swordfish 'C' sank U-354 and claimed a possible sinking the next day. A Sea Hurricane damaged another U-boat on 22 August, and two days later the squadron shared the sinking of U-344 with surface forces. The final success of this escort task occurred when Swordfish 'A' sank U-394 on 2 September 1944. In March 1945, 825 Squadron embarked in *HMS Campania* with the Sea Hurricanes having been replaced by eight Grumman Wildcat I's (Martlets in RN terminology) for further Arctic convoy duties. On return from this voyage the squadron's Swordfish were transferred to 815 Squadron while the Wildcats continued in 825 Squadron until also struck off strength in May 1945 (Victory in Europe) when the squadron was disbanded. The Royal Navy reformed No. 825 Squadron at RNAS Rattray in Scotland on 1 July 1945. The squadron was a Canadian manned unit initially equipped with 12 Fairey Barracuda II's with Air Search Homing (ASH) radar. These aircraft were replaced in November with 12 Fairey Firefly FR I's that were given to Canada as part of Britain's war claim settlement. By the end of the year all of the pilots and 60 percent of the maintenance ratings were Canadians; observers were in short supply and none would be available to relieve their British counterparts in 825 until a group graduated from course in the summer. The squadron was transferred to the RCN on 24 January 1946 when *HMCS Warrior* was commissioned. In March, 825 Squadron embarked in *Warrior* for her maiden voyage to Halifax where the squadron disembarked for the first time on Canadian soil at RCAF Station Dartmouth. The RCAF provided hangers and accommodation for the RCN's fledgling Naval Air Arm at Dartmouth that formed the Naval Air Section. For the next year 825 Squadron was under training either ashore at the Naval Air Section or afloat in *Warrior*, in which the squadron

embarked for a visit to the West Coast in the winter of 1946. In April 1947, 803 and 825 Squadrons were formed into the 19th Carrier Air Group (CAG) and took part in fleet exercises off Bermuda. On completion, the 19th CAG turned its Seafire and Firefly aircraft over to the 18th CAG and sailed to the United Kingdom in *Warrior*. While in the United Kingdom 825 Squadron re-equipped with 13 Firefly FR 4's and returned to Canada in June 1948 aboard *HMCS Magnificent*. The FR 4's were loaned from the Royal Navy to train for the planned acquisition of the AS 5 anti-submarine version of the Firefly. In preparing for the creation of NATO in 1949 Canada agreed that the RCN would specialize in anti-submarine warfare; consequently, the AS 5 was required to replace the FR I, which was a strike-reconnaissance fighter. The FR 4's were used as an interim trainer because they better replicated the performance of the AS 5 than did the squadron's former Firefly FR I's. In November 1948, the two Firefly squadrons, 825 and 826, were grouped to form the 18th CAG to facilitate maintenance on similar aircraft. In early 1949, 825 Squadron returned nine of their Firefly FR 4's to the Royal Navy (The squadron ditched two and lost another in a mid-air collision; the RCN retained one until 1954) and took delivery of 18 new Firefly AS 5's equipped for anti-submarine warfare. For the next two years 825 Squadron was stationed at the Royal Canadian Naval Air Station Shearwater or was embarked in *Magnificent* for cruises. There was another re-organization in January 1951 when 803 and 825 Squadrons formed the 19th Support Air Group (SAG). All RCN air units were renumbered on 1 May 1951 to better identify Canadian naval air squadrons in the Commonwealth numbering scheme. Consequently, 825 Squadron was renumbered to 880 Squadron and the 825 identity reverted to the Royal Navy. No. 825 Squadron garnered a proud heritage during its wartime operations that are reflected in its Battle Honours:

**Dunkirk 1940,
English Channel 1940-42,
Norway 1940,
'Bismarck' 1941,
Malta Convoys 1941,
Arctic 1942-45
Atlantic 1944.**

Although the Battle Honours were repatriated with 825 Squadron when it returned to the Royal Navy, the proud heritage and traditions of the

squadron remained with the RCN and established the standard to be upheld by its successor squadron. The spirit of 825 Squadron's motto, 'Nihil Obstat' (Nothing Stops Us), is exemplified in the fact that 880 Squadron remains in being today (albeit unmanned), despite political pressures to disband many of our air squadrons that reflect Canada's unique aviation heritage.

The Shearwater Aviation Museum is currently restoring Firefly PP462 to flying condition. This Firefly FR 1 was among the first 825 Squadron aircraft to fly ashore to Dartmouth. To preserve part of 825 Squadron's history and to commemorate the founding role the squadron played in our nation's naval aviation heritage, PP462 will be painted in the same dark sea gray and sky (light green) livery as the first 825 Squadron Fireflies that landed at Dartmouth on 31 March 1946.

Colonel ESC Cable OMM, CD (Ret'd)
Shearwater Aviation Museum Historian

Postscript:

Upon return to the Royal Navy 825 Squadron continued to build on its proud heritage. Flying Firefly FR 5's, it served in the Far East and Korea for which it was awarded the coveted Boyd Trophy. In 1953 it converted to the Firefly AS 5 and was engaged in anti-submarine duties and later participated in strikes against Malayan terrorists in central Johore.

In 1955, equipped with Fairey Gannets, 825 Squadron saw anti-submarine duty in the Mediterranean and then the Far East followed by shore based duty from Malta. In 1960, the squadron converted to Westland Whirlwind helicopters and saw duty in the Mediterranean, Persian Gulf (Kuwait Crisis) and East Africa (flood relief).

In May 1982, equipped with Westland Sea



GREETINGS FROM THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN

November 1995

Congratulations from Japan.

It is my great pleasure to congratulate all who worked for the 50th Anniversary of Naval Aviation and the new Shearwater Aviation Museum.

I have been concerned about Canadian Maritime Operations of Destroyer combined with Helicopter since I was assigned to the LSO of JDS HARUNA, the first Japanese Destroyer Helicopter Carrier, after I returned from HS50, CFB Shearwater in 1972, being qualified for LSO and DDL, because we had to become the same skill level, as soon as possible to defend West Pacific Ocean, as Canadian Forces's that had been the most professional and the highest in the world. JMSDF is trying hard to achieve it operating 24 Destroyers and 48 ship-borne Helicopters, because Canadian Forces is still "Number One in the World" and is our goal to come up with.

I regret to say that I cannot come to Shearwater this time, but I shall come soon to see my friends, what is changed, what is not changed at your Base, and to tour the SAM, Nova Scotia etc.

Congratulations to all realized this historic event.

Yours truly,

Haruo Arai



Sam Sim, Three years and still packing them in!!!

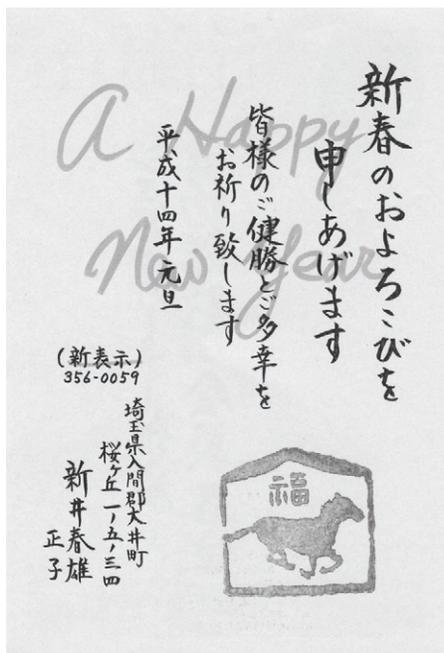
It is hard to believe the progress the Shearwater Aviation Museum has made in recent years. The little museum that could is proving time and again that we can. From the new building, our constantly growing presence during the air shows and our constant acquisition of aircraft and aviation antiquities, the museum is making a name for itself. A small article about S.A.M. in a recent issue of the Smithsonian's Aviation and Space Magazine evidenced this.

With all this constant activity, did you know that three years ago we added a modest flight simulator to the museums list of attraction? To aid in giving you a sense of this attraction I will attempt to give you a description on the make up and capabilities of the Sam Sim.

The simulator consists of a cockpit fitted with an ejection seat out of a CT133 T-Bird. The seat rests on Teflon runners for easy adjustment fore and aft. There are rudder pedals on the floor. Sorry, there are no toe brakes as of yet. The perspective pilot steps into a fighter aircraft style tub fabricated out of wood. You face a screen that is actually a computer monitor cleverly disguised. On a small shelf, just above the knees rests a joystick and on another shelf to the left rests a throttle quadrant. I must say that George and Rob, the museums craftsmen really did a great job in giving the museum a lasting example of their talents.

For flight controls the sim was fitted with HOTAS in mind or rather hands on throttle and stick. The ancillary controls are activated via various buttons on the stick and the throttle. Taxiing is handled via the rudder pedals or the right and left brake buttons on the front of the throttle. Buried in the depths of the wooden tub lies our computer. We are running Flight Simulator 2000 Pro for software. There are various video-out lines so that at the larger shows we can broadcast whatever is on the sim's screen to various big screen televisions and or video projectors. To round out the simulator we have added a sub woofer and four speakers strategically placed for surround sound

What everyone wants to know is how does it fly? Well, you can take off out of Shearwater and climb up to 8000 feet, stall the aircraft then kick left rudder and watch the world spin around you. The vertical speed indicator will show a huge



decent and the altimeter will be unwinding while the airspeed indicator will just waver back and forth. People sit down in the simulator and I ask them what would they like to fly today. They ask me what kinds of aircraft I have installed. I reply by saying almost every aircraft the Canadian military ever owned. Once they make their selection they must next choose where on the aerodrome here at Shearwater they would like to start. The usual starting point is from the button of runway 34. The sheer joy of watching an eight-year-old rise off the runway in a Hurricane, bring the gear up flaps up and cross over the refinery storage tanks and head out over the harbour is always gratifying. The ability to fly historical aircraft over a very detailed base that is Shearwater with the tower and all the hangars looking brand new is a daily occurrence here at the museum. Prospective pilots will fly the T-33 around the harbour, returning to the base with a great thump and the screech of the tires. They then proceed directly over to the T-bird cockpit that we have up against the far wall. They can actually climb into this aircraft. Thus the circle is complete. They have flown the aircraft on the simulator and then find themselves sitting in the actual aircraft.

The success of this piece of equipment has been the subject of debate for the three years of its existence. After repeated appearances at the Shearwater International Air show, the annual model show, the art wine and cheese show and the Mardi gras fund raiser we have helped raise the level of interest in the Museum. The local high schools are now making the museum a regular stop. Their physics program has an aviation module and they can utilize the museum to drive home what was taught in the classroom. The simulator and the static aircraft are great teaching aids.

In closing, I would like to say thanks to curator Charles Coffin for taking a chance and allowing us to construct this great device. We have opened up a link to the past and generated new interest in flight and flying. I have been a volunteer with the R.C.A.F. Memorial Museum before being posted to Shearwater. While giving tours in the museum in Trenton, I had very few tools with which to capture the imagination of the younger visitors. The ability to see an aircraft in the museum then have a seat in the simulator and fly it off the runways or waterways in and around Shearwater is unique. I think we are well on our way to achieving our objective, bring patrons through the doors



and give them a peak at the past and present aviation history here at Shearwater.

Written by
 Master Corporal John Davidson
 12 Air Maintenance Squadron
 Museum Volunteer



Unaltered
 Barry Blaisdell

Actual screen shot of one of SAM Sim's aircraft.

KOREAN WAR PROJECT

By Carl Mills

I am the author of *Banshees in the RCN*. Since that project, I have moved on thru some other research topics and am now studying the Canadian Airmen and Air women in the Korean War which will probably be published in 2003 (It's slow going as I don't do this for a living and am still working). The project involves virtually any air person who had any involvement in the Korean War. There were many RCAF nurses who flew to the South Pacific bring back wounded, RCAF fighter pilots, Army pilots, civilians, a cadre of observers and specialists, and two RCN pilots. **JJ MacBrien** flew 66 combat missions with the USN and I expect that most folks know about this. However, **Pat Ryan**, while serving as "Little F" at Shearwater in the late 50s, was dispatched to Korea to report on Naval air activities.

He was gone for about six weeks - returning home in mid-Dec 1950. He embarked aboard the carrier USS Lytle from San Diego to Honolulu. Here he had the private use of an Avenger while waiting to depart on the carrier USS Philippine Sea. The "Phil" went to Japan and then into combat with Task Force 77 in the Sea of Japan. Pat flew a few combat missions in the rear of the AD - ECM aircraft. On one flight, he was dropped off near Seoul, and moved north with an US infantry unit as a ground controller for FAC. He was shot at several times. Back in Japan he mixed with Canadians and

Australians and soon went to sea in HMAS Waramonga (SP??). In the Yellow Sea, he was jack-stayed to HMS Theseus. He then returned to Japan for the trip home.

MUSEUM ARTIFACTS

BY Eric Edgar

Pictured are several artifacts in the Museum, one is our Banshee newly restored courtesy of the fine folks at 12 AMS. The other two artifacts, front and centre are older and have not been restored. On the left, John Henry "Jake" Birks and on the right "Fearless" Frank Willis who looks ready to take to the air again. This photo was taken by Ray Philco at the Official Opening of our new Hangar.

LACROSSE RECALLED

BY Allan Browne, LSAR1
(in part)

Most will not recall that Shearwater had a Lacrosse team 50 years ago. Indeed, after some practices, we challenged the big boys from Stadacona to a game to be played at the Halifax Forum (Box lacrosse).

This comes to mind as a result of a CNAG reunion in Victoria in 1999. At that time, Rolly West collared me to meet someone that I had not seen in many years in the person of Dennis Mitchell. Dennis had with him a scrapbook with pictures and articles of many of the escapades enjoyed by so many of us in the early fifties. At that reunion we had our picture taken by Darkie Lowe who was attending. Uniquely that 'stick' shown is the very same I used in that game played and won so many years ago. It has been re-strung countless times but remains still most comfortable to wield. It now reposes in my camper and I still keep an eye out for a wall or empty box where I can jump (well, step) out and toss the ball around. Hopefully others involved in this game, and if memory serves it was the first, last and only lacrosse game of the period, will add a story or more as Dennis has done. My not so vague recollection is that Stadacona did not enjoy the whipping and refused to play another game.

TED CRUDDAS NEWSLETTER

Ted does a great job of continuing to maintain the bonds that tied the aircrew Officers and others together during Naval service - continuing the work begun and maintained for so many years by Rod Bays. The SAMF newsletter has a wider constituency to serve - that of the totality of all who served in the ships, the Squadrons and Shearwater. I realize now, though I didn't then, that when an aircraft was catapulted off the front end, it was the work of a team of one thousand men from the pilot at the very bow back to the stoker standing by the emergency steering machinery in the tiller flat - and everyone in between, Captain, cook and bottle-washer. When we receive letters from members who served in the ranks, letters with their cherished recollections of their naval air days, my temptation to chuck the editors job seems like abandoning old shipmates. So I hang in, hoping for a successor editor who will give them due voice in our newsletter. I see Ted's work and our own as complementary services to "old ships". Ed.



RECOLLECTIONS FROM THE TOWER

By Sheila Davis

There was a certain Control Officer at Shearwater who would stand out on the 'catwalk' and fire off pyro-technics on those occasions.

I had a trainee PO on the 'B' Stand one night. His position was well to the right of my Controlling Panel and one of his functions was to turn off the Runway lights after departing aircraft cleared Tower Frequency. One night TCA (don't you love that old designation!) was picking up speed on take-off, but not enough to lift off when the whole field went dark. The PO had hit the "Off" switch!

I probably verbalized something and then I saw that the PO was going to turn the lights back on which, in my opinion, would have been retinal shock for the Pilot of TCA. I wish I could move that quickly now but, at that time, I got to his station and intercepted his corrective action. After TCA was airborne, and I was about to clear him from Tower Frequency, he came up with "What's the matter Shearwater - saving electricity?" I was extremely grateful that he did not file a complaint which he had every right to do.

We thought it was a well run, prop-driven Airline in those days; but, even then, they were still trying to shave off taxi time on landing and get to the gate via the shortest way possible.

(Thanks Sheila, this brings back happy memories for those of us who can remember Shearwater in the days of TCA.)

"AWAY ALL LIBERTY BOATS"



Now where are all those museums, historic sites, tea parlours etcetera mates?

SURE BEATS THE WALDORF ASTORIA!

From Bruce Campbell

I have remained in touch with Hugh Bright and George Capern over the intervening nearly 50 years. Saw Mitch Mitchell and Bob Matchett at a CNAG reunion a couple of years ago and saw Bill Cowan at the Museum 4-5 years ago. Haven't a clue where the rest are. I can still get all sloppy and nostalgic over my time at Shearwater and on the "Maggie". Oh to be young again!



M16 Mess HMCS Magnificent New York City August 1953

Back row: Bruce Walker, Don Oliver, Dave Savignac, Bob Matchett, Bill Knatchbell
 Next row: Joe Craik, Gord Gillies, Andy Andrews, George Woods, George Capern, Larry Krushen, Hughie Hewens, Jake Kennedy, Gord Flanagan, Bill Cowan, Danny Chin
 Front row: George Dalgetty, Bill Smethurst, Hugh Bright, Dennis Mitchell

AN APOPTHEGM FROM TERRY GODDARD

Courage is not the absence of fear but rather the judgement that something else is more important than fear. The brave do not live forever but the cautious do not live at all. The key is to allow yourself to make the journey. You will be travelling the road between who you think you are and who you can be.

BARTLETT Versus SCHARNHORST

This editor had Dickie Bartlett as his Squadron CO (825) a half-century ago. I flew with Dickie, drank with Dickie, sailed some of the Seven Seas with Dickie, but never a word from him about his war. When I learned about it, quite recently, from others, I begged him to share some of his memories with all of us. It took two years of cajoling, coaxing and pleading to get the following.

Dear Bill:

Very many thanks for your letter of 7 Jan 02, concerning "fighting? Memories". It was very nice to hear from you even though a reply is required! Have now put off or stalled enough, so must get on with it. That word "stalled" brings back memories of a Firefly aircraft stalling and I remember thinking, just before we hit the water, what a damn silly way to go, and Peter Berry is in the back. Back to Norway days. The "Ark Royal" had just finished escorting the convoy with the Army evacuees back to Scotland. Our Squadron was due to go ashore to reequip with Fulmar aircraft, a big improvement. Then the order came, "Glorious" and her two destroyers had been sunk. "Ark Royal" was to return to the Norway area to find and attack the "Scharnhorst" and "Gneisenau". We steamed back, then worse news, the "Scharnhorst", "Gneisenau", a pocket battleship with a number of destroyers were in Trondheim harbour sixty miles up the fiord. The "Ark Royal" was ordered to mount a daylight attack. Of course at that time of year, June, it was daylight almost 24 hours a day.

A book "Wings of the Morning" by Ian



Cameron, pg 37, outlines the situation better than I can. Herewith:



"An equally tragic miscalculation was made a few days later. In an attempt to revenge the loss of her fellow carrier, the Ark Royal was ordered to mount a daylight attack on the Scharnhorst in Trondheim harbour.

It was suicide. And Partridge and the rest of the aircrew knew it. They had blunted their claws against Trondheim before. Even in the early days of the Norwegian campaign, it had been heavily defended. It would be inviolate now: ringed by some of the most formidable ack-ack defences in Europe and by the Messerschmitts of Vaernes airfield. To throw a handful of slow, cumbersome aircraft against so heavily defended a target was madness.

Blood flowed into my left flying boot

... *The night before the attack, the wardroom of the Ark Royal was unusually silent: too many of the aircrew knew too well that they had only a few more hours to live. So must the Light Brigade have felt as they looked down at the Russian guns from the heights above Balaclava; or the pilots of another Fleet Air Arm Squadron as, on 12th February, 1942, they flew up-Channel bereft of the promised cover by Spitfires and Hurricanes."*

Fifteen aircraft from 803 (I was in it) and 800 Squadrons were detailed for the task. The afternoon before take off a number of the aircrew tidied their cabins and wrote letters home, to be posted if they didn't get back. I pondered over writing and decided it might be better if my dad thought I had gone quickly and unexpectedly. However I did tidy up my cabin.

That night briefing was as it is meant to be – brief. As I remember, it was almost just "go to bed and do the best you can". Of course, W.T. silence was always in effect and we were always given a departure point from Norway, course and time back to the ship. T.A.G.'s were not allowed to attend briefings.

After briefing, the wardroom opened the bar while we had a double, if wanted, before manning our aircraft for a midnight take off. We arrived at the coast and I think passed over a watched lighthouse. We started up the fiord about two in the morning, the sun was just coming up. It was a beautiful morning. I must admit it did cross my mind that even if we survived we might never again see such a beautiful sight. But then the thought crossed my mind we would have a much better chance of surviving if it had been cloudy. As we approached the target the fighters attacked. What could my air gunner do with an old Lewis gun against a 20mm cannon? Not much. I could skid when he said they were coming in but I think everyone was determined to bomb the target as soon as possible and we didn't want to waste much time. Shortly thereafter, without warning, a big bang happened as a 20mm cannon shell hit the fuel tank behind me and some bullets ripped into my left side. Blood flowed into my left flying boot and my foot squished as I pressed on the rudder. I knew our troubles had started and almost looked forward to getting into the flak as the fighters would break off. However, once in the flak, I almost wished I was back with the fighters. The flak was unbelievably heavy and accurate. Ahead of me some aircraft were going down in flames and some didn't seem to be pulling out of the dive.



FAIREY PAID A COMMISSION FOR THIS

This remarkable caricature was designed, developed, concocted and implemented by Michael Hume Sandes, a Naval Pilot with much experience in the flying of the Fairey Swordfish. In this particular situation, the Pilot is required to file an A25, Accident Report, which went as follows:

“My crew and I were ordered to make a navigational cross country flight; at sometime during the flight it was observed that we were flying over a nudist camp and, in order to get a closer look at the activities on the ground, we flew the aircraft at a low enough level so as to be able to see the colour of their eyes. Unfortunately my navigator observer bent his head over the side of the cockpit and in so doing lost his navigational pencil, which he had lodged behind his ear. After we had scattered the nudists far and wide, we continued navigating without this one most important item. Navigators caught in this position are normally referred to as having a finger up their b_m. We continued on our exercise by flying from one village to another endeavouring to read the names of the Public houses we saw so as to pinpoint our position. It was felt that someone in the crew would have knowledge of the Pubs and so determine our whereabouts. However, we were a long way from our normal operating area. Meanwhile we were rapidly running out of fuel. Finally we did see the aerodrome in the distance when the engine conked out. With great presence of mind, the Pilot lowered the lock and proceeded to make the best landing he could under the circumstances. Unfortunately a brunch of trees got in the way and the aircraft came to a grinding halt. The Pilot was hardly dismayed and continued to smoke a cigarette with until the last possible minute. No blame was attributable to the Pilot as he acted in an exemplary manner even warning his crew of the inevitable crash.”

The Accident Board that was made up of three pilots blamed the accident on the Navigator for not having taken along a spare pencil and the Air Gunner whose girlfriend was in the nudist camp at the time. The Pilot continued on his merry way as the model of a very probationary, temporary Sub Lieutenant. Anyone who doesn't believe this story is a non-believer, believe me.

Michael Hume Sandes 1 oct 97

Determination was high at this stage, if only we could get one or two bombs on the target. I pulled up and we went into the dive. Normally, the aircraft responded well, now it was sluggish. Worse, in the dive, flak seemed to hit every part, bits and pieces peeled and flew off and it grew more sluggish. At 4000 feet I knew we were slightly off target but it was an armour-piercing bomb and I had to press the button – maybe it would hit the side? Next, pull out, oh, it was slow, the sea was coming up at us at a great rate. I was also feeling woozy, did it matter if we went in? At the last moment we skimmed the surface, the cushion effect? Now it was one thing at a time. I headed for the town of Trondheim, surely the flak would stop as we neared the city. It didn't, we turned away. For the first time, I noticed the engine was rough, then I noticed I could barely read the instruments. Was I too woozy or was it the engine? We were at tree top height, the engine seemed to grind to a halt and fell out of the frame. We came crashing down.

Lloyd Richards, my air gunner, helped me out of the aircraft. I couldn't stand up without falling over, guess from loss of blood. Lloyd got a mattress from a local house, put me on it and headed for Sweden 12 miles away. We were on enemy occupied land. It was a dreadful feeling. At that time, we carried small vials of morphine, so I gave myself the full shot. I woke up in a Trondhelm hospital.

One of the German pilots who shot me down or was part of it, came to visit me in the hospital. His parting words were “for you the war is over”. It wasn't — there were 5 long years to come.

(Dick Bartlett yielded his place in the escape queue of the Great Escape to a fellow POW who was caught and murdered by the Gestapo.)



Note: Your editor believes. Your editor believes that this is an autobiographical true

NOW WE ARE BOUND TO SUCCEED

Dear Kay:

I hate to be the bearer of sad news at this time of year, but I have to tell you that my husband Geoffrey Haylock (late Lt. RN) passed away Nov 12th age 77 of complications from Parkinson's Disease, and the results of the flying accident in Malta in 1948 when a passenger in a Sea Otter. I wrote to Bob Geale in Australia after he wrote to the Newsletter and found an entry in Geoffrey's log book when he was a passenger - very interesting! Also I found that Geoffrey flew Firefly's I, IV, VI, T1 & T2 which encouraged me to make a donation towards the restoration of yours, but you used it as a subscription renewal I think.

However, as a widow now, I have no idea how wealthy I shall be in the future, but I enclose a contribution towards the Firefly Fund and hope you continue to carry on to completion.

Merry Christmas to all the staff and may all the projects soar to great heights in 2002!

Mrs Marian Haylock
Amherst Head, NS
B3H 3Y2

(Many thanks to Mrs Haylock - both donations were credited to the Firefly Project.)

ACAM AVENGER

Atlantic Canada Aircraft Museum has, with a superb effort, retrieved a TBM from a New Brunswick forest and is well on the road to restoring it to static display condition. Hats off to ACAM!



FIREFLY STATUS

Wrenches bend, aluminium sheets get cut, rivets get hammered and the work goes on. Bud Ayer is a living paradigm for perseverance!

The work is not without problems: the propeller blades are finished but the pitch mechanism lacks some vital bearings. Eric Edgar is pursuing the Timken Company "just in case".

Hydraulic lines present a small but solvable problem. (British fittings)

Trim box (an intricate mechanism) is in the hands of volunteer millwright as are the hydraulic flap mechanisms.

We passed a milestone in late March with the fitting of cylinder sleeves into the skirts and the way is now clear to re-building the engine.

There are a thousand other things to do but we are getting there at an accelerating pace after a period in the doldrums.

Bill Farrell

SPECIAL APPEAL

We urgently need your help. Despite all odds, a fine new addition to the museum was officially opened on 24 Aug 01. Through various fundraising activities we have raised over 270,000 dollars and we have secured a 200,000 dollar low interest loan. The sum of these two ventures covered the cost. The next fiscal challenge is to raise sufficient money to retire the loan and construct an atrium to connect the two hangars and the former RC Chapel now housing the archives, a library and workshop. It is envisioned that this atrium will provide a more attractive entrance to the facility and a fitting venue for our Wall of Honour.

Your generosity has made possible our success to date. Please help us to achieve this final goal by contributing a little extra over and above your membership dues. A hundred, a thousand or five thousand dollars whatever is within your means. You will find a pledge form in this issue which will allow you to spread your special contribution over a period of years. If you cannot give any extra so be it, we understand. Your support has been and will continue to be publicly recognized in the museum.

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Eric Edgar

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Continental Air Defence Before NORAD Eastern Air Command Fighter Operations



Prepared By
Colonel ESC Cable OMM, CD (Ret'd)
Shearwater Aviation Museum Historian

Editor's Note:

The last edition of the newsletter contained an article about Eastern Air Command fighter operations. The following article describes the roles of the ground based components of Canada's first air defence system and how they evolved from the Air Detection Corps to the first radar network that established the precedent for the NORAD system just a little more than a decade later.

The Aircraft Detection Corps

While history remembers the many civilians who worked in factories and on the land, it all but ignores a dedicated group of men and women who volunteered for the Aircraft Detection Corps (ADC). This organization represented the changing face of Canadian territorial security by introducing a civilian formation into the country's embryonic air defence system.

As part of Canada's air defence plan, the Aircraft Detection Corps was established in May 1940 to form the early warning component of the air defence network. The Corps played a vital role in Canada's air defence during the Second World War by turning its attention skyward, watching and waiting for possible signs of not only an air raid but also sea assault by German forces. For most Canadians, the threat of U-boats in Canadian waters and rumours

of German agents coming ashore brought the battleground much closer to home. Daily news of enemy successes in Europe inspired civilians to help the military defend their homeland. Motives for participating in civil defence duty cannot be seen more clearly than in the words of Nova Scotia writer Evelyn M. Richardson. During the Second World War she and her husband tended a lighthouse on Bon Portage Island and became involved with the ADC. Her comments reflect the sense of duty and spirit of the Corps:

"In November 1939, light keepers became part of Coastal Defence and followed radioed instructions. Listening for the coded A, B, or C messages meant that, between us, Merrill and I were on 24-hour duty, 365 days a year for the five and a half years of the European war. Later, in the struggle against U-boats operating off our coast, we became Ground Observers for the Air arm of Coastal Defence. "Filling our time" became more than ever a rueful family joke."

The ADC was itself a small army comprised of people of all ages and walks of life. Observers were organized in a rank system according to their duties. The Regional Director, a civilian, was the liaison between the RCAF and the Chief Observers in each district and was responsible for the selection of Chief Observers. Likewise, the Chief Observer's responsibilities lay in the recruiting of Official Observers and the co-ordinating of watch schedules. The Chief Observer manned an official Observation Post, which covered an area of 32 square miles. The Official Observers did most of the actual watching and reporting; feeding all reports directly to the Regional Centre. There were also technical advisors who aided in co-ordinating communications and performing equipment maintenance.

In many cases, Observers had no access to instant communications, which sometimes made reporting difficult or even impossible. The Observation Post was the central point at the local level where a rapid means of communication was available. Usually it was located at the Chief Observer's home or business. Each Observation Post had a code name for identification purposes. The name identified the geographical region and a number identified the individual Observation Post. The Richardsons' Observation Post, for example, was "Yardy 18" which indicated that they

were the eighteenth Observation Post in Yarmouth County.

Official Observers were given report forms, a direction finder and information bulletins to aid in their work. The Official Observer Report forms were standard log sheets. The reports were sent by the Observers by telephone, telegraph or radio (in that order of preference) to regional Filter Centres. If the report was sent by telephone, Observers were instructed to ask the operator for the "Aircraft Detection Corps" and no charge was applied to the caller's bill.

A January 1942 instruction poster details the sightings in which the RCAF was most interested. The emphasis was on enemy or strange aircraft or aircraft which appeared to be in trouble. Observers were told that engines misfiring, aircraft circling an area and rockets or flares being dropped were signs of mechanical problems and were also to be reported along with sightings of aircraft flying below 500 feet over towns or residential areas. Reports of this nature were to emphasize aircraft identification numbers, colour, and markings.

Such incidents were, indeed, reported. In a letter, Chief Observer W.M. Nelson complained to Eastern Air Command of an incident involving an aircraft flying low over the village of Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia. The pilot was reported as flying at rooftop level. Mr. Nelson complained that the incident was responsible for the relapse of a village resident's illness. Another incident occurred over Shag Harbour. The Richardsons spotted a Catalina flying boat circling, however, no aircraft was later reported missing so they assumed it to have been part of an unscheduled drill.

ADC Observers were also instructed to report any strange shipping or landing activity along the coast. The military, primarily concerned with U-boat activity, also saw a threat from German surface vessels anchored off shore or in secluded areas. Observers were told to report strangers, suspicious signalling or flashing lights at sea, the discovery of caches of food or fuel and questionable campsites along the coast.

By 1942, there had been evidence to support the suspicion of German agents operating in Canada. The story of Langien-Haskins, a German spy who

worked in Canada between 1942 and 1944, is just one example. The Aircraft Detection Corps was instructed to report “soldiers or sailors other than Canadian or American” or any strangers suspected of possible acts of sabotage. If it had been true that the German intelligence community had had a vast network in Canada, the ADC would have been an effective source of information in the search for spies.

Aircraft Detection Corps as Part of Wartime Society

Perhaps one of the more interesting features of the ADC story lies in the role that it played in society at that time. Members’ sense of duty and commitment to an Allied victory was very much a part of the ADC experience. Equally important was the sense of participation that came with being an Observer. Since they were civilian, and therefore did not wear a uniform, members were given pins and lapel badges (in either English or French) to identify them as Official Observers. They were also given certificates of appointment and handbooks upon entry into the Corps and a certificate of acknowledgement. Corps members received copies of *The Observer*, a monthly magazine published by Royal Canadian Air Force Headquarters. The publication not only kept members informed of new developments vital to their work, but kept them abreast of news from other observation posts and the RCAF itself. These measures developed pride and a sense of duty in the Observers. This is vividly illustrated in a 1992 letter from Helen Haley, a former ADC member. She writes of her brother, George, who kept his “ADC pin proudly displayed on his ‘Air Force Suit’”!

The ADC experience was, in many cases, part of family life. Evidence suggests that observation and the reporting of aircraft were made by “unofficial” observers helping their parents when time was at a premium. This can be attributed, in part, to the traditional family structure of the time.

The ADC was largely superseded by a network of radar stations. In November 1944 the Chief of the Air Staff ordered the organization, which had reached a peak enrolment of 30,000 members in 1943 and still had 23,000 members on strength, to be disbanded. Radar could not entirely replace the ground observer,

however, and shortly afterward former ADC observers and lighthouse keepers in the eastern areas were asked to pass information on aircraft in distress, or on any other untoward incident, to the nearest RCAF station. They continued to do so for the rest of the war.

Canadian Air Defence Radar In Eastern Air Command

Contemporary interpretations of Canadian air defence history tend to ignore its humble beginning during the Second World War. A decade before the establishment of the nation’s current air defence system, small coastal radar sites had been erected to detect enemy aircraft. While these were seen as primitive, even by 1950’s standards, they set the stage for what later became NORAD.

Britain was the first Allied nation to begin full-scale research and development of radar. As early as 1925, scientists at Cambridge University had used reflected radio signals to measure the height of the ionosphere and by 1938, a network of early warning, radar sites had been deployed along England’s south and east coasts. The use of radar became one of the primary factors leading to an RAF victory during the Battle of Britain.

Canada, impressed by the British radar research, was prompted to engage in development of its own. In 1939, Canadian physicist J.T. Henderson met a Commonwealth delegation in London to study the British research. His mission not only committed the National Research Council to research and develop radar systems, but also led to the eventual deployment of an early warning radar network along both Canadian coasts. Radar was a highly secret development, therefore, to disguise their true function the radar sites were referred to as “Radio Units”. In May 1941 three RCAF officers who studied radar in England returned to Canada with two sets of ground radar equipment. One set was to serve as a pattern for Canadian production; the other was installed in the first radar station in North America, No.1 “Radio Unit” Preston Nova Scotia, giving early warning protection to the most important target in Canada, the port of Halifax. By 1942, the first Canadian radar stations had been established.

The RCAF operated three types

of radar systems: early-warning high-flying (TRU), early warning low-flying (CHL) and Ground Control Intercept (GCI). The TRU and CHL systems had ranges of 100 miles, and the GCI of 50 miles.

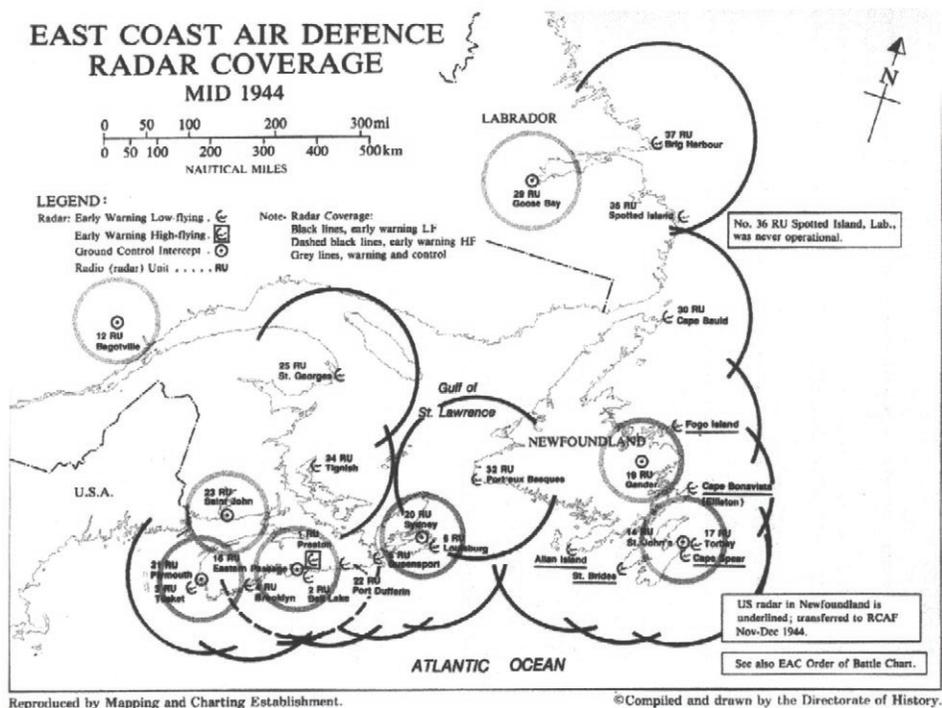
CHL and GCI radar in Canada were the same systems as those used in Britain but using North American-built components. In Britain, the CHL and GCI systems operated within the 5 to 13 meter bands (approximately 23.0 and 60.0 Mhz) and required towers up to 350 feet above ground level. Later, Canadian radar systems generated signals on the 10.7 cm band (or 2803.0 Mhz).

Radar improved the early warning capability of the Aircraft Detection Corps by almost 100 per cent. This decreased the time to intercept thereby increasing the probability that enemy aircraft would be engaged before reaching their targets. The radar network worked in conjunction with newly formed fighter squadrons dedicated to intercepting incoming enemy aircraft. In essence, the system became the first integrated early warning system in Canada and, with the inclusion of the Aircraft Detection Corps, portended the NORAD system of a decade later.

Eastern Air Command Radar Sites

Radar deployment in Eastern Air Command from 1942 until the end of World War II was impressive. After having assumed control of five radar sites built by the Americans along the eastern and southern coasts of Newfoundland the RCAF radar coverage extended from Labrador and Newfoundland to south of Nova Scotia including the Bay of Fundy, the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and the upper Saint Lawrence River. These installations not only provided a network of early warning systems, but also gave electronic coverage to most operational air bases with fighter squadrons. The radar sites sent target information to Filter Centers at Halifax or St. John’s Nfld. where it was plotted and fed to the sector control rooms at the fighter airfields, which, in the event of an attack, would direct the fighters onto the target. Figure II indicates the locations and types of RCAF Radar Units in EAC:

Development of the ground radar facilities and associated airborne equipment continued until the end of the war. By 1945 there were 22 radar stations on the east



Reproduced by Mapping and Charting Establishment. ©Compiled and drawn by the Directorate of History.

coast for early warning and ground control, including five in Newfoundland that had been taken over from American forces in late 1944. Since air attack on North America never materialized the units had no opportunity to serve their primary defence role, however, they were immensely valuable in locating friendly aircraft that were lost or in distress.

Life at a Radar Station

As recent as the 1940's, rural Eastern Canada was isolated, often cut off from the rest of the world. For most servicemen, living and working at the coastal Radar Units meant exposure to a harsh North Atlantic climate, very poor living conditions and the need to assume extra duties to share in the survival of the community. Then as now secondary duties were essential to the well being and management of the stations. These included jobs as diverse as shovelling coal and manning the canteen.

Security was tight at the early radar stations. Secret documents were locked up, machine gun emplacements installed and explosives planted to blow up vital equipment if an enemy raiding party came ashore. Station defence was an interesting feature at Radar Unit No. 30, Cape Bauld, Newfoundland. Defences included a five inch-field gun, sten guns and regular issue army rifles with bayonets. Strategic gun

posts were located at the radio, radar and diesel huts. Unit crews were assigned to each gun site and readiness drills were held once a year.

Mail was also closely censored. However, the greatest hazard to personnel proved to be boredom. A few radar sites were close to urban centres, but many were isolated beyond belief. The mere task of building them taxed the ingenuity of construction and maintenance units. In fact, the RCAF formed its own marine squadron to ship construction material and personnel to the more remote sites that were not accessible by rail or road.

Radar Unit No. 5 at Cole Harbour on the rugged eastern shore of Nova Scotia is one example of such a harsh living environment. In the summer of 1942, when the station began operations, the railway was the quickest link to Halifax, the nearest urban centre more than 150 miles (250 km) away, for men proceeding on leave. Like other stations, the buildings at Cole Harbour were single-story wood-framed buildings. At the time of construction, newly arrived personnel encountered a few small buildings (still under construction) with no running water. By September, running water was being pumped from Second Cow Lake to a newly constructed barrack and mess. Gradually, conditions improved.

Radar operators worked on a four-day cycle consisting of two days of alternating six-hour shifts on and off followed by two days without shift duties. In addition to duties at the radarscope, the technicians were responsible for submitting hourly weather reports to Eastern Air Command by telephone or radio. These reports were coded into a string of digits and letters indicating the station identification and the current weather conditions. These reports were used by aircraft on coastal patrol duty.

Isolated and uncomfortable, servicemen made the best of life at East Coast Radar Units. They became active members of nearby communities, in some cases marrying local women and settling in the community.

Conclusion

Unlike the war in Europe the prime threat to North America came not from the Luftwaffe but from German U-boat interdiction of the North Atlantic convoy routes. Since the air threat to Canada was ambiguous and the threat from the sea was threatening the survival of England the RCAF's air defence priority was secondary to the air protection of trans-Atlantic convoys, the supply line for the battlefields in Europe. However, when the air defence question was eventually addressed the RCAF had a successful model to emulate.

Despite a serious shortage of aircraft and pilots, victory in the Battle of Britain was attributed to an advanced air defence network. It was logical, therefore, for the RCAF to follow its usual practice in 1940 of adopting equipment produced for the RAF. Hence the RCAF's air defence system was modelled after the RAF's. The main difference was that Canada had to defend two air fronts to counter the potential Japanese threat from the west as well as the German threat from the east. To complete its defence of Canada the RCAF built an air defence network similar to that of EAC on the west coast. The resultant air defence networks defended not only Canada's east and west coasts, but also Newfoundland and the northern approaches to the United States. Continental air defence from a Canadian perspective consisted of a handful of fighter squadrons supported by two coastal radar chains and thousands of ADC observers. Because the threat of air attack from Germany on eastern

Canada seemed more probable than attack from Japan in the west the air defence network in Eastern Air Command garnered the most attention. Fortunately for Canada, its air defence system was never tested by the enemy but it did provide a useful service to Allied aircraft and served as a precedent for the future NORAD system.

The RCAF's Second World War air defence networks portended the joint Canadian-American NORAD organization. Both air defence organizations were formed to counter the air threat from foreign powers and were founded on similar principals. In 1940 Canada and the United States agreed to cooperate in the defence Newfoundland to counter the possible threat of Newfoundland becoming a German advanced base from which to attack North America. Post war advances in aircraft technology resulted in the burgeoning Soviet bomber fleet posing the primary threat to North American security. To counter this threat the United States and Canada again agreed to cooperate in the air defence of North America and NORAD was established in 1958. Both air defence systems were based on squadrons of fighters capable of intercepting unidentified targets detected by a chain of radar sites. The main difference was that instead of two chains of coastal radars the NORAD radar network consisted of three radar lines oriented to look north to detect the Soviet bombers approaching from the polar regions; the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line stretching from Alaska across the Canadian arctic to Greenland, the Mid-Canada Line along the 55th parallel and the Pine Tree Line across southern Canada comprised the three radar chains. Both air defence networks depended on civilian ground observers. During the Second World War the RCAF initially relied on the Air Detection Corps to provide early warning of enemy air attack. Similarly, the RCAF recruited ground observers into the Ground Observer Corps to fill the gaps in the NORAD radar coverage, particularly at low level. Like the Air Detection Corps, the Ground Observer Corps was eventually superseded by more capable radars.

The first concept of joint continental air defence originated with the RCAF's Second World War air defence organizations on the east and west coasts of Canada. The organization was joint in that Canada and the United

States cooperated in the defence of Newfoundland and continental in the sense that the EAC network in particular provided the vanguard defence for both Canada and the United States. However, the RCAF's east and west coast networks were totally separate entities and only if considered collectively could they constitute a primitive form of continental air defence. NORAD had only to expand the networks pioneered by the RCAF during the Second World War and apply the rapid advances in aircraft, radar and communications technology to create the first truly joint, integrated continental air

Recollections of Flight

Toward the whispery whiffs of cirrus
cloud's phantom white;
Through cold blue subtle sky,
so deceptively pale;
Over patchwork carpet of green and gold,
black as black in night;
Gently kissed by silent air and caressed by
the wind through which to sail;
Only we who flew as hawk and gull know
the true joy of flight,
A freedom in deeply felt solitude, a full
view of life so frail.

Phillip S. Utting

While the verse above may well touch the hearts of many or even all pilots from the past, it was written by Phillip S. Utting, younger brother of the late Lt Cdr Henry F. (Hank) Utting, RCN (P) who was killed at age 32, while serving with VX10 Sqdn, March 1st, 1957.

Phillip was also a pilot (private) and often on weekends when Hank was visiting at the family home in southwestern Ontario, the two brothers would fly together... for the sheer joy of sharing their mutual love of flying.

The poem was written following Hank's sudden and tragic death, inspired by a particularly beautiful day when Phillip, looking skyward could not help but reflect upon those flights and to profoundly miss the joy he had shared with his older brother.

The Editor:

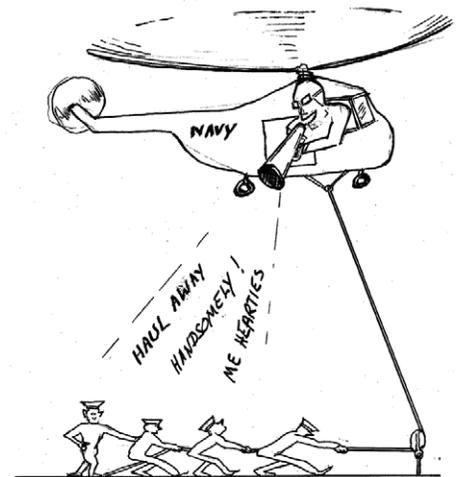
In receipt of your last newsletter, and as usual got great reading enjoyment from it, as I have of them all. Its good to remember back to times when innovations of today are taken for granted, but were grass roots back then.

I was an LSSE with HU21 in the mid 50's to early 60's. Along with my normal duties in the squadron section I would fill in for hoisting duties as required. When VX10 where involved with the haul down trials for the Bear Trap System, HU21 was called upon to assist in these trials. As I recall I was involved with the very first attempt at one of these occurrences. It involved the use of an HO4S, equipped with a sling assembly which was mounted under the main cabin. On the cabin floor was a small access hatch which would be opened by a crew member to control the hooking up or releasing of any slung cargo.

On the day of the trial we were dispatched for flight to a concrete pad adjacent to Air Supply Depot. There waiting, was a crew of about a dozen maintenance personnel from VX10. On landing, the sling was released, a large cargo style hook was attached to the release hook, a good sized line was then run through a block and tackle and secured to a deck ring which was secured in the concrete pad. On a given signal we did a vertical lift to about 30 ft. Power was maintained as the ground crew manned their line and proceeded with the haul down, which was quite successful. The pilot of the aircraft at that was the squadron C.O. LCdr (Shaky) Frayne.

Keep up the good work.

R.H. O'Grady (Rosie)





Flying Stations Secured, North Atlantic: Cold War



RCAF Sabre Ferrying, North Atlantic



Officer of the Army of Finland, In Magnificent at Port Said

'Magnificent PORTS

Athens (Phaleron Bay)
 Belfast
 Bermuda (Five Fathom Hbr)
 Boston
 Bridgetown, Barbados
 Chaguaramas Bay
 Colon
 Copenhagen
 Genoa, Italy
 Gibraltar

Silver S

The Navy knows a
 To overmaster thou
 At every sip with
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 And "Warrant Shipwri
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 Guantanamo, Cuba
 Halifax
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 Marseilles
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- Oslo
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- Port of Spain (Trinidad)
- Port Said
- Portsmouth

hackles

ripe and heady wine
 ight and fill the veins
 racing loyalties;
 ords antique and rich,
 d the hearts and mind
 mpion", "Make-and-mend"
 at", "Tiller-flat", "Belay"
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 into them like spice
 "Liberty Boat", "Caren",
 eeve", "The Forenoon Watch",
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 , and "Master of the Fleet"
 "Captain of the Gun"
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 choes in your head.
 yes. You hear the sound?
 r, and you are bound.

& SEAS

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- Rosyth
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- Victoria
- Wakeham Bay



UN Mission 1957 to Egypt, (Army vehicles and troops to Port Said)



RCAF Otter aircraft on deck, Ready to launch (Port Said 1957)



Navy H04S (Horse) supporting Army in Egyptian Desert.

READERS COMMENTS & SELECTED NAVAIRGENS

Laurie Farrington writes:

Further to my letter (SAMF Newsletter Summer 2001 page 20) which commented on Eric Edgar's 'Rotary Wings in the RCN' (SAMF Newsletter Spring 2001 pg 18) additional information about wartime Canadian naval helicopter pilots has surfaced.

It will be recalled that records indicated two RCNVR pilots were posted to RAF/RN/USCG School Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn, New York, for helicopter course in 1944, and these were identified as Canadian Raleighite Jean Paul Fournier and Eric McLean Marshall. Other Canadians also underwent training so the search engine for their names was activated. Thanks to the wide readership of the SAMF Newsletter out-standing feedback has been obtained from Len and Iris Page of Qualicum Beach BC. Len Page himself was one of the RCNVR helicopter pioneers. [See Canada's Naval Aviators by John MacFarlane & Robbie Hughes.

An interesting article appears in Canada's National Magazine of Flight: Aviation Quarterly Fall 1995 - Canada's Second World War Helicopter Pilots by Robert S. Petite. It confirms the names of the Canadians who trained to fly the Sikorsky YR4 helicopter in 1944. The first course from 5 Jun to 27 Jul 1944 included four Canadians: Lt Paul Fournier RCNVR, Lt E.M. Marshall RCNVR, SLt Ken Parker RCNVR (who was killed in a Barracuda over the North Sea in 1945), and SLt W.D. Bill Jackson RNVR. On the second course from 4 Aug to 7 Sep 1944 were Lt J.W. Stewart RCNVR and SLt L.F. Page RCNVR. Most of these people were interviewed by the author of the article so their personal helicopter experiences are well documented and illustrated. Another very useful reference book is *Hoverfly File* by Eric Myall (edited by Ray Sturtivant), ISBN 0 85130 262 9, which also names these Canadians.

Closely associated with this helicopter training was LCDr Dennis Foley RNVR who was serving as the British Naval Liaison Officer (Air) at the US Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia. He also converted to helicopters in late Nov 1944 at Floyd Bennett Field and flew them at Norfolk until Dec 1945 when the RN office closed. He transferred to the RCN in Jan

1946. He later claimed he was the 'last Canadian trained on a helicopter before the end of the war.' He was certainly the only wartime trained helicopter pilot to remain in naval service and fly helicopters with the RCN.

(P.S. As an aside, there is a Canadian association with the Fleet Air Arm's first helicopter known as the 'egg beater'. Some of the 24 purchased by the Admiralty, the two-seat training and rescue Sikorsky Hoverfly, were delivered to 771 Squadron at Scapa Flow in late 1944. In early 1945 I was serving in 771 Squadron, a Fleet Requirements Unit, at RNAS Twatt, HMS Tern, Orkney Islands, when Canadian Peter Fournier was in charge of the Helicopter Flight until replaced later by another Canadian Len Page. With SLt Alan Bristow RNVR (who had been on Len Page's helicopter training course in 1944) as pilot of Hoverfly 'C', I crewed with him in helicopter trials with the battleship HMS Anson. On 16 Apr 1945, operating from the escort carriers HMS Trumpeter and Searcher, we landed successfully on X turret of the Anson.)

From Leo Pettipas

In the Fall 2001 issue of the Shearwater Aviation Museum Newsletter, editor Bill Farrell noted that the publication is now at a crossroads, and some decisions will have to be made as to where it is to go from here, considering that a changing of the guard is in the offing. This memo will probably be the first of several that I will send out addressing this question, with more to come as further ideas come to mind. I am sending it to the Navairgeners in the hope that it will encourage others in our group to come up with ideas of their own, and knowing that the SAMF people will see it because the Foundation is a Navairgen member.

First off, I think the point should be made that the SAMF "Newsletter" really isn't a newsletter: it's a magazine. A newsletter primarily contains announcements of planned events, reports of events recently completed, and notices of whatever. Newsletters are practical, throw-away vehicles of information with a limited life span.

The SAMF Newsletter may contain all of the above, but in addition it carries letters to the editor that are often, if not usually, of historical value that could legitimately be incorporated into articles or books by serious authors and researchers. Beyond that, it

presents feature articles such as Ernie Cable's "Continental Air Defence Before NORAD: Eastern Air Command Fighter Operations" and "Canada's First Ace" that appeared in the recent issue. To me, the publication has progressed well beyond a newsletter. And it is hardly a throw-away discard. The SAMF "Newsletter" is a keeper for future reference.

I think that the publication's existing magazine or journal character should be kept in mind in view of what else I have to say here. Potentially, it stands to enjoy a much wider readership, provided that enough people know about it in the first place, and it expands on its feature-article format.

Bill stated, "When the guard is changed - when we throw the torch to younger hands, as soon we must - our names and our stories will mean little if anything." With all due respect, Bill, I wholeheartedly disagree. Look at the very successful books "Certified Serviceable" and "Banshees in the Royal Canadian Navy", both of which are chock full of personal testimonies by former Naval Air personnel. I find it hard to believe that such items are of interest only to former service people. Re. Jeff Harvie's oft-uttered boast, "Who's the hottest pilot in 803 and why am I?": I never knew Jeff, and I wasn't there; but his declaration is clever, witty and amusing regardless of who said it and when. I can see stories like that always having a home in a magazine devoted to the history of Naval Aviation.

If the SAMF Newsletter must look to shifting to a new, younger clientele, who might such people be? I can think of one community right off the bat — the scale model builders, who always seem to be on the look-out for information about historic airplanes. The Museum Archives has a wealth of photographs right there on site that could be published for the benefit of the modellers.

How about libraries, as well as individual members? Are there other aviation and military museums in this country and overseas, not to mention universities and colleges, that would be interested in subscribing to a magazine devoted to the topic of Canadian naval and maritime aviation? Are there other magazines or journals already in existence with which we would have to compete?

As a former editor of a full-blown journal, I can say that a major challenge is consistently getting enough articles to fill

a magazine. Speaking for myself, I could crank out an article a month if you wanted me to, and I can only wonder how many others with an interest in the topic could contribute as well. This would have to be determined.

I don't recall there being much on the SAMF website about the "Newsletter", but if it could be given a higher profile there, who knows how many people (not only or necessarily former Naval Air servicemen, but also others like myself with an interest in the topic) would be prepared to come forward with articles, once they knew the opportunity was there? Again, some kind of survey would have to be done to suss this out.

Finally, there's the inevitable question of expense. How much would an enhanced publication cost? Many of the photos that appear in the Newsletter are of good quality, others less so. Scale modellers need goods pics – photos and drawings. More casual readers like good imagery as well. Colour may not be an option, but if the publication on the topic is the only act in town, and people are interested in the topic, and the price is right, they'll probably go for it.

That's all I can muster for now. I hope others among us can come aboard and offer SAMF other thoughts as to the "Newsletter".

Ted Kieser wrote:

There has been some considerable comment on the usefulness of our Newsletter. Here are mine.

It is the only vehicle we have to keep in touch with ex-Shearwater personnel. The oft touted Navairgen is a fine communication device, but it reaches less than ten percent of our target audience! (Current subscribers to Navairgen number only 116) The Newsletter is a fine way to keep people informed of current and historical events, a source for publishing of letters and photos from subscribers, and, of course, the primary vehicle in which to solicit funds for our objective of supporting the museum

As indicated by the number of letters and emails received and comments on Navairgen, the vast majority want this publication to continue. So do I. I believe that the Foundation can support the cost of publication three times per year. However, with the aid of a good advertising programme, such as has already been started, the Newsletter could be self-supporting, thus allowing for improvements, such as colour, glossy

pages and the like.

From Robbie Hughes

BZ Leo,

I have many anecdotes that were sent to me buckshee when I was looking for Bio material for "CANADA'S NAVAL AVIATORS". Much of it is still in my possession and is eventually destined for our Museum at Shearwater, the earlier original replies I send on to my co-author John MacFarlane who, in turn, deposited the raw material with the Museum that he used to be curator of—THE MARITIME MUSEUM OF BC. While that was convenient for him I am sure that they have few using it for research in that Museum and I feel that it should all repose in Shearwater. Perhaps that can be done by a request, Museum to Museum, from Shearwater. I would certainly endorse such a request and I think that I might find John (last known in Vancouver) and get his blessing/support. There's a wealth of interesting and amusing data there. Some of it might need approval from the source(s). Some might need editing!! I also sent Bill Farrell some of my own stories, one or two have been used but others might stir a reaction. If Bill has lost/ filed the thing I can re-issue. How about questions and answers about past events and qualifications, records, etc.. There was a recent one about the last DL on Bonnie. For instance who was the last WW2 Naval Aviator to hang up his wings and military uniform? (Had to be qualified by end Sept 1945). Who had the most DL's (ex RCN). Who served in the most carriers? And so on ad infinitum.

From Fred Lynch

In reply to Robbie Hughes who was the last WW2 Naval Aviator to hang up his wings and military uniform? (Had to be qualified by end Sept 1945).

I am not sure if I qualify or not. However, I enrolled in the RN as a pilot trainee in Feb '43, qualified as a pilot (FAA) in Apr '44, served in 818 and 825 Squadrons until the end of hostilities.

I enrolled as a Chaplain in the Canadian Forces and was retired in Sep '82, being lastly posted to CFB Comox, where I did some flying with VU33 in their Trackers. Thus, with a bit of a gap between wartime service with the FAA and enrolling in the Chaplaincy service, I was wearing uniform with FAA Wings until Sep '82. The last time I wore those wings officially was at the end of May 2000, when I was part of the Prayer Vigil

for Canada's Unknown Soldier in the Hall of Honour in the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa. They were proudly worn on my Chaplains Scarf on that occasion. However, that may not count as full time service as I was only on duty for a couple of days.

I am looking forward to the time when the Firefly project is finally completed, as that was the last aircraft I flew during my wartime service.

From Jim Burns

There are a lot of stories out there waiting to be told. Naval Air grew from the "Ugly Duckling Stage" where we hardly knew what we were doing, to the "Beautiful Swan Stage" where we were second to none at our profession. And, in the process, we created an esprit de corps that had to be experienced to be believed - witness even after all these years we are closer to one another than we are to family members. We are family.

I think Leo's comments are pertinent in that we may find a wide audience willing to subscribe to a regular publication given the material hiding in the woods, and worth careful consideration in the detail of publication. We notice our grown up ankle biters are taking more interest as they mature, for instance.

Most of the really fun stories I know, unfortunately, involve the Honorable Editor and I am not sure that the time is appropriate.

From Douglas Jesmer

I am renewing my membership for 2002. Enclosed as well are post dated cheques for monthly donations to keep the flame going. One must not forget our naval aviation history. (Note from SAMF. Thank you - that's very generous.)

From LCol Tom Byrne

I read with interest the comments by Stan Brygadyr and Ted Gibbon (SAMF Fall 01) regarding the question of "who was the last serving Canadian Carrier qualified pilot." Since my son's and my name have both been bandied about I thought it might be worthwhile to put forth the following for further discussion.

I joined the Navy through the Venture training plan (class of 61) and was a member of 880 from Apr 63 until Oct 66. For most of my co-pilot tour I was teamed up with Dick Davis (a great time with a great guy) and when I became a crew commander it was Russ Rhode who had to suffer as my co-pilot. In 1966

I was posted to VU 32 jet flight. When integration reared its ugly head I was posted to the Air Force with the likes of Larry Lott, Don Monk, Larry O'Brien, Walter Sloan and Ben Oxholm with many more to follow.

It is not my intention to create a controversy over this question nor would I refute Brian MacLean's explanation and claim (SAMF Fall 01) as we are good friends and fellow carrier pilots but I would contend that the original question was phrased incorrectly.

The question would have been more correctly phrased as follows, "who is/was the last **Regular** Force serving Canadian Carrier qualified pilot." Posed in this format it may well be correct that Brian is the last **Regular** Force serving officer but asked as it is the answer to the question may well be myself. In explanation I offer the following. After retiring from the Regular Force I, like all retiring members who request it, was transferred to the Supplementary Holding Reserve (SHR). I was pulled from the SHR to work in the position I presently hold. I now have unbroken service time from Sep 59 to the present. Although I am over the normal retirement age for a Reservist (55) it is quite permissible for me to continue to serve until sixty-five from the SHR in support of cadets. Unlike some officers who are serving in support of cadets (Wes Postma, Bill Blake) I have never relinquished my Air Operations hat badge to join the Cadet Instructor Cadre, which is another component of the Reserve Force.

I am presently the Regional Cadet Air Operations Officer for Pacific Region and as such I am responsible for all cadet flying, power or gliding in this Region. In the summer time I don my other hat and become the Commanding Officer of the Regional Gliding School so as you can see it is a full time position. It is an interesting fact that upon the closure of CFB Chilliwack where the gliding school was situated, it was Brian MacLean who, as the Wing Commander 19 Wing Comox found the cadet flying operation a new and permanent home at the Wing. In so far as my son Shawn is concerned I believe he can safely claim the title of the last Canadian pilot to complete an operational fighter tour on a carrier albeit American. There have been and probably will be others who came behind him who became deck qualified but it was very special circumstances that allowed him to sail on a full six-month deployment. Those circumstances are not likely to ever repeat

themselves.

I have no intention of retiring this year and if I can retain my health and with it my licences I fully intend to continue to serve. I was just recently presented my third clasp to the CD by the Chief of the Air Staff signifying forty-two years of, in my case, continuous service. I believe this length of service time, the fact that I am still serving and if Brian MacLean does indeed retire will put me in the running to be the last serving Venture cadet and the last serving Canadian Carrier qualified pilot.

From Reg MacKinnon

Dear Kay: Having been known to 'speak my mind' on occasion during my almost 30 years in Naval Air (not always appreciated), I understand plain clear language. I appreciate your quite direct comments and find they fit the situation exactly. Up here in the Northern Ontario boonies, I really enjoy the excellent publication that is the SAMF Newsletter.

Reading the article on Eastern Fighter Ops, I recalled, as a very young teen, watching a Westland Lysander almost take out our fence and potato crop beside the Atlantic in Cape Breton.

The picture of Mickey Owens in France brought back memories of good friends and great professional people.

Keep up the good work.

PS Have a Merry Christmas and, if you got your wrist slapped, it was worth it - right?

Leo Pettipas asks:

Does anyone know if "Barehead" was always the c/s for VS881, even when it was still 826 Sqn and later 881 Sqn? Did I change over time? If so, what were the call signs at the different times in question? I'm on final approach with a manuscript on the history of 826/881/VS881 and am looking to finalize a number of details.

Ted Fallen Speaketh!

I read the article by Doug Robinson in the Fall 2001 newsletter entitled Rotary Wings in the RCN. I am afraid there are a few inaccuracies in the article that I hope I can straighten out as I was involved in that project.

I have the advantage over Mr. Robinson in that I have my log book and copies of the Report on the evolution that were made on completion of my St Laurent landings. After a couple of pier-head jumps I was appointed OIC Helicopter Detachment in HMCS

Magnificent on 3 Aug 56.

While I was in Labrador. I heard of trials being carried out with a temporary flight deck on HMCS Buckingham. I believe LCdr Rod Bays was involved with the trials. Around the middle of Aug 56, I was asked by Cdr Bob Timbrell (later Admiral) to pay a visit to St Laurent who was in company with Magnificent, and to bring my helicopter.

This was discussed with Captain Fraser-Harris who was CO of the Carrier and Cdr Hal Fearon, who I believe, was Commander Air. The Captain approved the evolution. I asked Cdr Fearon to be the Landing Officer on St Laurent and P1AT4 Sopko, who would act as crewman - in the event we needed to carry out any hoisting as it was the intention to use the hoist to place Cdr Fearon on St Laurent. Cdr Fearon and I discussed the idea of landing on the limbo hatches and St Laurent was advised to shore her limbo hatches, lower guard rails and ensign staff. On the first approach, I was able to hover low enough so that Cdr Fearon was able to jump to the deck.

When landings were commenced, we tried it with the wind on both the port and starboard bow. All told, a total of two hours, including taking Capt Fraser-Harris from Magnificent to St Laurent and then returning him to Maggie. I thought the landing on the limbo hatches was a good idea and confirmed the helicopter could land on shored up limbo hatches and recommended that pilots carry out landings whenever possible. When I became the CO of HS50, I had it added to the pilots Exercise Schedule.

I do not believe operational flying was carried out from Saguenay as there was no place to lash a helicopter down unless they welded tie down rings to the deck and fuel would not be available in the destroyer. The helicopter would have had to be shut down and with the engine and the rotor stopped. With the rotor and engine stopped the H04S would be quite unstable in any kind of sea state.

If I remember correctly, Assinaboine was the first destroyer to have a permanent flight deck. Cdr Walter Blandy, Captain of Assinaboine and I had some heated discussions when said he was Captain of Canada's second Carrier.

Art Percy writes:

I really enjoy getting the newsletter for the articles and seeing names that I have not come across in years. Hats off to Ernie Cable for holding

up the “light-blue” end in a sea of dark blue. I had the pleasure of working with Ernie back in the 70’s when I was one of a very small minority of the dark blue persuasion working in a light blue organization, so I know the feeling.

Best wishes for Christmas and the coming year to all the staff. Keep up the good work.

P.K. Bamford writes:

I really enjoyed the article ‘The last Word’. Let’s hope it may encourage more Naval and Air Force personnel to join the group.

On 12 Sep we were booked to fly Iceland Air, Halifax - Glasgow, but 11 Sep changed and cancelled our plans - we didn’t even get to Halifax. Hope to make it next year. I am anxious to see the new building. Congratulations, job well done.

From Marsh Dempster

Hi Kay. Am in Trinidad but will try to get out of here Thursday weather permitting. Heading for Martinique and Antigua. Bob (Bissell) left for Venezuela, Curacao, Bonaire and Honduras. I think that he must be near Honduras by now. Have tried to get him on Single side band but propagation has been bloody awful. (Note: *Keep in touch Marshall.*)

TOMMY’S GONE AWAY

BY Mick Owens

I don’t think that it’s proper to let the event pass without a tribute to my old friend Scotty Guthrie. He was a living legend for some years in Naval Air and he probably pulled off more capers and antics than any other lower deck rating in our midst. I should also point out that each and every one of his practical jokes were designed to ensure that nobody was hurt in their application. He was a good guy.

A few of these stunts were not well known but some will remember when he was the lifeguard on duty at the Shearwater Pool. He explained to a concerned mother that he couldn’t swim but he knew where the plug was. The concerned mother was my wife. She knew Scotty!

On the occasion of Scotty being placed on light duty, he was employed at the Shearwater infirmary. It is rumoured that he had a few young pilots eating raw carrots while they waited for their eye tests. I can believe it. I do know that during that period, our squadron underwent complete physicals and Scotty

was collecting urine samples. On his desk he had a sign annotated, LS Guthrie, Pissologist!

Scotty was in NAMS on a TG2 course and he asked permission to bring his pet in for the day and got the OK. He showed up with this massive Great Dane about four feet tall at the shoulders. The young sailors really took to King and at stand easy treated him liberally at the canteen. The class next lesson was a technical movie in the stuffy little cinema and King joined the group. There were no windows and one narrow little door to exit this place and King decided to get sick right inside the door. He puked a stinking pile of half digested hotdogs that you couldn’t shake hands over in that hot, humid room. A few sailors learned how to abandon ship without further instruction. Scotty cleaned up the mess and said, “Poor King!”

Everyone hated going to Divisions and did what they could to be excused. At this, Scotty was a master. He was working in the hangar workshop on a project when he was approached by a PO who asked what he was building. It appeared to be a hardwood dowel about three feet long with an elaborate brass chain attached to one end and a pulley and nylon rope on the other end. It was well constructed and had the first coat of varnish, looking quite impressive. “This is an EXCUSED DIVISIONS tool,” stated Scotty. The PO said, “Tell me no more”. The Squadron XO at the time was quite an arrogant fellow and Scotty felt that it would be beneath his dignity to ask a LS the function of this tool. On Friday morning Scotty approached him on the hangar deck, tool in hand, and asked to be excused Division to complete this project. The Two-and-a-half studied the thing, studied Scotty and said, “Good job, Guthrie, certainly!” Scotty had studied both the PO and the XO and took his chances. I do believe that this acting PISSOLOGIST should have been a psychologist!

RIP Scotty, you were one of a kind.

W.P. Rikely writes:

I was reviewing my pilot’s log book recently, in response to a request for information concerning the original 803 Seafire Squadron, of which I was a founding member. It is interesting to note that we flew from our Base in Northern Ireland on 28 Feb 46 to Lee-on Solent, in southern England. This was

in preparation for deck landings on our new carrier HMCS WARRIOR and for final embarkation when the ship sailed for Halifax. My log book records that we landed on board on 23 Mar 46 and then sailed for our new home port. We were launched at sea to fly into the former RCAF Station Dartmouth, landing there on 31 Mar. I will always remember the warm welcome we received from Air Force members at all levels. I was a very proud young Naval Pilot as I taxied my Seafire MK15 (J375) into the area of assembled dignitaries on hand to welcome Canada’s newest Naval Aviators.

Jake Kennedy writes:

Reference Dave Shirlaw’s article pg 20 of Fall 2001. The deranged sailor in Bermuda could have been suffering from acute inanition.

After 30 days on deployment, our parsimonious government cut off “lodge and comp” money, so there was no money for food. I heard some of the VS880 Officers saying they were attending as many cocktail parties as possible in Bermuda, in order to sneak home the hors d’oeuvres for the troops.

In VU32 Jet flight at Kindley, CPO Andy Swan was feeding his men in his cabin, using an illegal electric burner. Beans mostly. I guess we got by.

The Animal used to call us “beggars of the North Atlantic”. I hope things are better now.

The Animal? Enlighten us please?

Dear Bill,

I am sorely disappointed that I have read nothing in the Newsletter about that splendid band of soldiers at Shearwater that tried desperately to bring a touch of colour and class to the naval aviation business (you can edit that last bit as much as you like; I wouldn’t want to alienate the few friends that I have). The “splendid band” that I am referring to were the “seaballs” (more properly the “carrier-borne air liaison officers”) who used to hide away in that big, old building almost next door to Terry Goddard’s operations room. A few of the “unemployed” aircrew used to visit occasionally to be subjected to army propaganda and the mysteries of naval air support of land operations. We used to do a rather good simulated artillery reconnaissance exercise at Chezzetcook Range which the pilots seemed to enjoy but our troops hated because, armed with thunder flashes pretending to be

exploding artillery rounds, they had to gallop up and down the line Oboe/Tare at the whim of the pilot.

The unit, No.1 Air Liaison Group, was divided into three sections (one for each air group, 18,19 and TAG) and the sections tended to embark in Warrior, "Maggie" and possibly Bonaventure (after my time), with their respective air group. Very popular with the lucky Seaball and, occasionally, they were very popular with the aircrew if they had taken their wireless-equipped jeep with them on the deployment; free taxi services are welcome anywhere.

When embarked, the sections normally consisted of two Seaballs, a clerk (writer to you) and a driver if the jeep went along. The sections were part of the Air Department and one of our great "patrons" was the late Zeke Gratton-Cooper who had started life as a subaltern in the Army. Just to prove that we weren't errant cowards we used to "ballast" the back seats of some flights if we were invited; my favourite was the Firefly. At other times, we might keep the "tote board" in operations or just "goof". The troops, on the other hand, used to find themselves amending Admiralty charts and other wildly exciting jobs. Generally speaking, however, we tried to make ourselves useful or - at least - unobtrusive; and we occasionally gave talks when there was no flying. The Seaballs were probably at their most useful when the air groups spent their "holidays" at Rivers.

Just to "drop a few names"; the unit numbered amongst its "heroes": "Red" Johnson, Jean Picard, George ("Do you want to buy a good radio?") Teather, Arthur Currie, Frank Wiggs, Jock Usher (a rather elegant Dragoon), Jim Cowan and others whose names escape me; I ask their forgiveness.

It was a very happy inter-service relationship and I think that we achieved a little but sadly the whole business which had begun in North Africa with the 8th Army and RAF ended when the RCN changed its air operational roles, aircraft and lost its carriers. But it was great while it lasted!!

(PS. It hadn't entirely ended there. When I was commanding a company in 1st Bn., The Black Watch while on a Gagetown exercise in 1966 I was delighted to have my company moved by RCN helicopters. It was almost like old times.)

Charles Barter

Greetings Charlemagne!

What a delight to hear from you after so many moons! VMT for your contribution to our memories. Of course, I will not edit a word. Let's have more — and if you have a scurrilous cartoon or so for illustration we'd be delighted to have that too.

My weak excuse for delinquency in recognizing in print our brothers-in-arms is that I have fallen victim to the insidious affliction known as "naval gazing".

Cheers! and may we have a chance to hoist an 'orn before you join your fellow pongo's in the Nether Regions while I join my fellow aviators aloft in the Elysian Fields.

Bill Farrell

Bob Bissell writes:

Hi Kay:

Did not want you to think that I had swallowed the anchor.

Arrived back in Trinidad in Sep after the 11/9 think and got the good vessel Meander 11 launched and running again. Hung around there for a period getting some personal medical things sorted out, then joined marsh Dempster for a shake down cruise to Carriacou. All went well but Marsh is unfortunately becoming a very competent single handed sailor.

Tied up with another ex naval cruiser who you may know, Reginald McClusky, met him in Bermuda on the last trip north and together planned a western Caribbean trip. Because he had quite a few boat problems, we finally got away end of Nov and visited the eastern Venezuelan islands. Christmas on the beach at Isla Coche, New Years on margarita Island at Juan de Greco, then spent a week or so at Don Churnsides favourite island, Blanquilla.

A blissful week was spent in the unusually bleak Gulf of Carriacou. My brother and sister-in-law joined us for a casual downwind sail through the islands to Puerto la Cruz. They could not believe the luxury of the marina/hotel there and almost wished that they had their visit there — obviously not sailors!

Stayed the month of Feb and enjoyed the carnival holiday scenery around the pool. Also took a very interesting inland tour to the Andes

mountains. The highlight was a cable car ride (four of them) to the summit 4700 meters, higher than I have been in a Tracker! The deep breathing there and the eyestrain around the pool has been more physically demanding than sailing. Reg was a diver at Shearwater at one time and with the change to the CF, re-mustered as Military Police and returned at a later date as a P2 or whatever that is now. He has called his boat 'Heart of Oak' and we have to listen to the royal marines playing away when entering or leaving harbour. Anyway, he had more yacht problems, so I sailed up to the Virgin Islands, where I am now. He reports that they are serviceable again so will sail south (4 days), rejoin and continue our cruise west, more islands, Dutch ABC's and Columbia.

Have not heard from Marsh lately, but suspect he has returned to Trinidad for some reason and left his yacht in English Harbour Antigua.

I have to return to YYZ for my mothers 100th birthday party in June. Quite an achievement for her but it sort of gives me away.

Best wishes to all,
from Meander 11.

Bob Bissell
(Heavy breathing and eyestrain around the pool? Hmm - you haven't changed.)

NAVAL AIR LIVES?

Leo Pettipas wrote:

Is it correct to say that Canada still has a "Naval Air" arm? I thought we officially lost it in '68. Aren't the crews on the Sea Kings light blue? The choice of words is not unprecedented; as recently as a couple of years ago I heard a serving Sea King pilot refer to the existing maritime helicopter community as "naval aviation". In a somewhat similar vein, it can be argued that, strictly speaking, Canada never did forego "carrier aviation", since the DDHs, helicopter frigates and supply ships all accommodate rotary-wing a/c and hence, strictly speaking, are "aircraft carriers". Vacuous word games, or is perception indeed reality?

Ernie Cable responds:

Leo: You are quite correct Canada is still involved with "carrier aviation" in that we operate aircraft from ships. However, in NATO parlance, air operations conducted from destroyer/cruiser size ships are generally referred to as "shipborne aviation" so as not to be confused with the USS Nimitz aircraft

carrier type of operation. Shipborne aviation generally extends the range of a ship's fighting systems, whereas the thrust of carrier aviation is to provide an independent air striking force for counter-air or offensive-air operations.

I also believe that you are correct to question the existence of the "Naval Air Arm". The Sea King air and technical crews are all light blue and indeed the aircraft are on the light blue inventory and the light blue pays for the gas even when the Sea Kings are embarked on the ships. But these are not just ordinary light blue personnel, these are maritime airmen who pride themselves in the special skills required for shipborne aviation and the unique joint working relationship they enjoy with their dark blue brethren. Technically, without a "Navy" you can't have a "naval" air arm or "naval" doctrine or "naval" anything; similarly, without an "Air Force" you can't have an "air force" doctrine, etc. But we do have a "Maritime Command" and joint maritime doctrine that effectively integrates our maritime air (includes Auroras) and maritime seaborne forces (includes submarines). This modus operandi is held out as a model to the rest of the Canadian Forces as to how "Joint" operations should be conducted. Here endeth the lesson.

Leo Pettipas wrote:

Kay: Ernie's reply to this query is precisely the kind of thing I suggested a couple of months ago that SAMF might want to collect and publish in the "Newsletter". His statement subject the above is an excellent explanation of the current "naval/air" set-up in the Cdn Forces.

John Kinross-Kennedy writes:

The question seems to be whether the DDH aviators are indeed Naval Aviators. Of course they are.- they are very proud of it actually. Some historical justification might be in the name "Fleet Air Arm" of the Royal Air Force, RAF personnel that served on board Ark Royal and Illustrious in the 30's, before they were transferred en masse to the Navy. The RN retained the name Fleet Air Arm, in which many Canadians served. Canada did not adopt this name for the RCN. Dickie Bird said that he and those in NSHQ in the fledgling days of Naval Aviation refused to have it, because it was an Air Force term!

Kay reacts: **Really! Do YOU think your 'Naval Air' lives on through today's light blue 'naval' aviators?**

WINE, CHEESE, BREW AND KULTURE

 n Groundhog Day, the 2nd of February, 2002 we had our second annual function of this type and, thanks to the generosity of those who attended, a very successful fund raiser as well as a fun evening. We had many more paintings, a wood carver, punch, a wonderful variety of cheeses, root beer, ginger beer and beer as well as a wide variety of wines. Of course we featured wines from our own Jost Vineyard in Malagash and the beers, both alcoholic and non alcoholic came from John Allen's Propeller Brewery of Halifax. We were to have a wine tasting from Lunenburg County Winery owned by CPO (Ret'd) Leslie Southwell, however the icy roads prevented Les from getting here. Maybe next year. The Dartmouth Visual Art Society provided most of the paintings and John Horne provided some wonderful examples of the art of wood carving. Many of the attendees were first time visitors to the Museum which is one of our main aims, on top of that we will add over \$800 to the Building Fund kitty. One of the features of the evening was the presentation, by David Fountain, Chairman of the Nova Scotia International Air Show (NSIAS), to Eric Nielsen, President of SAMF, of a cheque for \$11,167.93. This magnificent amount represents our share of the proceeds of the Sikorsky/SAMF 2001 Charity Golf Tournament organized by NSIAS. BGen. (Ret'd) Colin Curleigh represented Sikorsky Canada and was instrumental in arranging their very generous sponsor-ship of the tournament.

My heartfelt thanks go to Jost Vineyard, Propeller Brewery, Windward Foods, International, Mike & Marina Kelly, Owen & Shirley Walton, Jav Stevenson, Bob Grundy, Susan Ballard, Shelley Williamson, Jane Templeton, Barb Ryan, Mary Ellen McWirter, Rob Lepine, Michelle Anthony, Chuck Coffen and his staff at SAM and last but not least the attendees for their generosity. Without which we could not possibly succeed. Thank you all!

Eric Edgar



Anchormen

Al Snowie

In his encyclopedic volume *Canadian Airmen and the First World War*; S.F.Wise states that 936 sons of Canada joined the Royal Naval Air Service. Our country's naval aviation roots are anchored to this "ship's company" of men. Yet at best we know only of Raymond Collishaw (from Nanaimo BC) and his 60 victory Naval Ace of Aces status in the 1914 - 1918 conflict. The Summer 2001 edition of this newsletter introduced readers to F.G.T. Dawson (Chester NS). "Wuffy" joined the RNAS in September 1914 becoming Canada's first naval pilot. Following English Channel patrol work he served in the ill-fated Gallipoli Expedition and was invalidated out of the service by October 1915. He then became a co-founder of Fairey Aviation.

"Red" Mulock, (Winnipeg MB) our second aviator, was also our first ace. His story, in the following newsletter, was a grand overview of the conflict. Mulock finished the War as the highest ranking Canadian pilot in the new Royal Air Force. The RAF was the political marriage of the navy's RNAS with the army's Royal Flying Corps in April 1918. Today we would call that integration... and other names.

Dawson, Mulock and Collishaw are but three, begging the question, who were the other 934? Their stories, in chapter or paragraph form will constitute the book "Collishaw & Company" to be published in 2004. Our Canadians were accepted as aviators by a Royal Navy loath to release their own watchkeepers to flying. The RN saw the conflict as a glorious opportunity for a second Trafalgar and kept most trained officers in the fleet.

What follows herein is a very much abbreviated sketch of a few of our many. We have evolved from these records and that is why a true perspective of history is so important. Much of what we are and how we see ourselves comes from the written word. They must, therefore, be recorded accurately and not "Hollywooded". Your involvement and input is solicited.

The ace factor is the biggest draw of any aviation book about the War. We see numerous covers depicting a red Fokker Triplane, and the "Snoopy vs Red Baron" cartoons proliferate. In brutal reality, the ownership of the skies over the Western Front was a bloody hard fought battle

conducted in flying machines that initially were little better than kites with engines. Von Richthofen, the Baron, brought down 80 Allied aircraft. A.S. Todd (Georgetown ON) was his 16th victim. After that combat Richthofen wrote: "...One of the four English planes attacked us and we saw immediately that the enemy plane was superior to ours. Only because we were three against one did we detect the enemy's weak points. I managed to get behind him and shot him down. The plane broke apart whilst falling." Had the fight been one-on-one what might have been the outcome? A.E. Cuzner (Ottawa ON) was the Baron's 52nd kill but it was our own A.R. Brown (Carleton Place ON) who was instrumental in bringing down the red Fokker in April 1918. The "Black Flight" was a fighting team that Collishaw put together in June 1917.



Consisting of W.M. Alexander (Toronto ON), G.E. Nash (Stoney Creek ON), J.E. Sharman (Oak Lake MB), and E.V. Reid (Bellville ON), they accounted for 68 enemy aircraft in just two months. Reid and Sharman were killed in the actions and Nash became a prisoner of war. Compare their totals to that of the famed French Lafayette Escadrille comprised of 38 American pilots who accounted for 199 enemy aircraft over a period of 2 years. The second highest Canadian Ace was J.S. Fall (Hillbank BC) with 36 kills. A.T. Whealy and G.C. MacKay (both of Toronto

ON) downed 27 and 18 respectively. Prairie lads A.W. Carter (Calgary AB) shot down 17; J.A. Glen (Turtle Mountain MB) 15; and H.LeR. Wallace (Lethbridge AB) 14.

The human costs were high on the Canadian side. S.V. Rosevear (Walkerton ON) was himself killed after bringing down 25 of the foe; and C.R.R. Hickey (Nanaimo BC) was lost after his 21st victory. It might be superstitious to speculate, but after each achieved 13 victories, J.E. Greene (Winnipeg MB) and F.C. Armstrong (Toronto ON) both died horribly in "flamers". W.B. Craig (Smith Falls ON) was another very aggressive fighter, scoring one triple and two doubles before he was brought down.

While an even fifty Canadian naval airmen became aces, including Observer L.A. Christian (Armstrong BC) with 9 kills, the average aviator was fortunate just to live through flying training. Our first casualty was D.A. Hay (Owen Sound ON) who was lost on a North Sea trainer in September 1915. In three separate instances, F.R. Bryans, H.T. Coe, (both Toronto ON), and H. McK Reid (Bellville ON) were killed in midairs. J.H. St.J. DeBeauvais (St Constant PQ), our first French Canadian to join the air services died learning to fly. J.L. Lavigne (Grand Mere PQ) also suffered the same fate as did dozens of English Canadian students.

"Pilot Wastage" the cruel term that the Royal Navy used to describe the deadly attrition continued once in action. First loss to the enemy was J.T. Bone (Calgary AB) in October 1915 during a bombing raid on Zeppelin sheds in Belgium. Among the nearly 100 that followed were A.J. Nightingale (Toronto ON) by anti-aircraft guns over Palestine; W.H. Peberdy (Toronto ON) in combat over Macedonia and N. Johnston (Westmount, PQ) attacking the cruiser *Goeben*. Diving into a dogfight L.A. Sands (Moncton NB) and W.A. Moyle (Paris ON) collided. Another midair befell R.A. Blythe (Toronto ON) who mangled with an enemy Albatross.

Over Flanders fields pilots needed to quickly develop a situational awareness in order to survive. Two Westmount PQ lads never really got the chance. P.H. Goodhugh was killed on his first day on squadron and E.V.P. Grace only lasted a week.

Several sets of brothers served. Not all survived. The Magor brothers of Montreal were both shot down and killed on the same day. Norman was lost during a massive dogfight between four

RNAS flying boats and several of the Kaiser's naval seaplane fighters. Brother Gerald died in his Sopwith Camel over the Western Front. The Trapp family of New Westminster BC lost all three sons: Stanley and George with the RNAS and Donovan with the RFC.

While it is depressing to write this role of the dead, these names must be remembered. Perhaps individual SAMF members will consider sponsoring memorial wall plaques. On a more positive note, Marmaduke Pearson of Guelph survived as did his RFC brother Mike who went on to become Prime Minister in the 1950's and 60's.

Should one be brought down it was best to attempt a glide into neutral Holland. This would mean internment and not prisoner of war status. Thus, D.A.H. Nelles (Simcoe ON) had a parolee's freedom. Falling on the wrong side of the line A.J. Chadwick (Toronto ON), W.A.W. Carter (Fredericton NB) and D.M. Shields (Mt Albert ON) each managed to evade capture. Sadly K.M. VanAllen (Summerland BC) and L.E. Smith (Mystic PQ) both died of aerial combat wounds in POW hospitals.

On other war fronts, seaplane pilot W.E. Robinson (Winnipeg MB) lost an engine and floated for several days drinking rusty radiator water before he came ashore into the hands of the Turks. Another guest of the Ottoman Empire was H. Aird (Toronto ON) who was flying copilot to Alcock (of later Atlantic fame) when AA fire brought them down over Constantinople. A.C. Burt (Brantford ON) lost a fight with an enemy seaplane that promptly landed and picked him up. C.StC. Parsons (Toronto ON) crashed alongside the armed trawler he was attacking and was rescued by them. A.T. Cowley (Victoria BC) met the crew of a U-Boat when his engine failed. As noted by the last paragraph, not all aviators flew fighters. In fact, anti-submarine patrols and fleet flying duties were the primary roles to which most naval pilots were assigned. J.A. Barron (Stratford ON) transferred from the RCN and was assigned to pilot "Battlebags". J. Sproston (Montreal PQ) and J.O. Hoddard (New Glasgow NS) also flew airships while T.D Fitzgerald (Hamilton ON), R.W. Waage-Mott (Victoria BC), and L.B. Calnan (Picton ON) became Observers in Kite Balloons.

Initial shipborne flying really consisted of being lowered over the side in a seaplane and recovered aboard in the same manner. B.N. Harrop (Indian Head SK), C.E. Moore (Fort William, ON), K.F.

Saunders (Victoria, BC), H.B. Kerruish (Fergus, ON) were among those who served in such HM Ships as *Campania*, *Riviera* and *Ark Royal*. F.C. Henderson (Toronto, ON) was aboard the carrier *Ben-My-Chree* when she was sunk by enemy submarine. Later the Royal Navy started launching aircraft off a platform rigged above the gun turrets of their battleships and Canadians N.J. Laughlin (Thuroid, ON) H.W. Cooper (New Westminster BC) and W.S. Lockhart (Moncton) flew these one way missions which could only lead to recovery on land or a ditching alongside. Pilots paid particular attention as to which destroyers had the best drilled boats crew!

G.M. Breadner (Winnipeg MB) and A.H. Allardyce (Vancouver BC) took part in the early deck flying tests. When the first true aircraft carrier, HMS *Furious*, became operational R.W. Frost (Hamilton ON) served in her.

What were these lads like? Their "local" pub in London, England, retains a war log and one can peruse their high spirited



comments and happily scrawled cartoons. This youthful exuberance was exhibited by V.A. Bishop on a home leave to Vancouver. He crashed an experimental aircraft into the downtown and survived to local fame. On the romantic front, D. Hammond (Toronto) was publicly sued by an English review actress, Miss "Teddie" O'Neil, for breach of promise of marriage. Who were these lads? They not only represented Canada from sea to sea; but from past to future. H. Cowasjee Gooch (Dundee ON) was our first native Canadian naval aviator. H.V. Reid of St Johns came from a land that was not yet part of Canada. His early transfer from the Royal Newfoundland Regiment probably saved his life as the "Blue Puttees" were all but wiped out on the first day of the Battle of the Somme. From Carleton Place, Ontario, the entire junior hockey team joined up together.

As one may gather from the clips above, our Canadians brought home a large

number of distinguished awards. S.D. Culley (Vancouver BC) was put up for the Victoria Cross but in the event received a DSO. Culley had taken off from a towed barge to shoot down a Zeppelin. R.G. Leckie (Toronto ON) received the DSO, DSC and DFC. He brought down two Zeps, and, had his frozen hands been able to clear a gun stoppage his tally would have been three. Observer H.J. Arnold (Queen Charlotte Islands BC) won his DSO ranging guns to cripple the raider *Konigsberg* in German East Africa. T.D. Hallam (Toronto ON) sank two submarines for two bars to his first DSC won in Gallipoli.

Following the War, several aviators saw action in Russia with the White Army against the Reds: C.M. LeMoine (Toronto ON) and D.MacDougall (Winnipeg MB) both died in aircraft accidents at Archangel. Pilot H.S. Broughall (Toronto ON) and Observer F.R. Bicknell (Dunville ON) served with Collishaw in the Crimea. Still others remained in service through to the Second World War. H.G. Edwards (New Aberdeen NS) and B.D. Hobbs became Commanding Officers of Shearwater in 1934-38 and 1941-44 respectively. Among the dozen who rose to Air rank was L.S. Breadner (Carleton Place ON) who became the only Air Chief Marshal in RCAF history. F.S. McGill (Montreal PQ) and W.A. Curtis (Haverlock ON) were also RCAF Air Marshals while Calgarian H.S. Kerby reached that rank with the RAF.

As civilians, our lads continued to be high achievers. J.B. White (Manitoulin Island ON) became President of the Toronto Stock Exchange and B. Wemp Mayor of Toronto, the city of his birth. An interesting number became doctors: D.B. Aitchison (Hamilton ON), W.A. Crich and J.A. Munn (both Seaforth ON), D. MacPherson and H.H. Gilbert (both London ON), and J.H. Johnston (Kenora ON). H. McD Keith (Toronto ON) rose to the position of Professor Emeritus at the Mayo Clinic. The first Chairman of the Board of the Royal Canadian Flying Clubs association was Doctor H.A. Yates (Ottawa).

Of those who remained in aviation; A.F. MacDonald (London ON) survived a wounding in Sopwith Camels to write *From The Ground Up*. It has been the manual of elementary flying for thousands of Canadian Private Pilots. D.S. Fraser (Gore Bay ON) flew the first mail to Newfoundland in 1930. S. Graham (Wolfville NS) flew the first photo survey in Canada and is recognized by

the Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame in Wetaskiwan as our First Bush Pilot. In October 1930, J.E. Boyd (Toronto) became famous as the first Canadian to fly the Atlantic. His exploits are covered in the book "*Lindberg of Canada*"

This is not to say that the losses did not continue. S.T. Edwards, a member of the Carleton Place hockey team, crashed during Armistice celebration aerobatics on November 12th. He is our first peacetime naval aviation casualty. C. MacLaurin (Lachine PQ) joined the new Canadian Air Force and took part in the first Trans-Canada flight in 1920. He was killed in a flying accident at Jerico Beach, Vancouver in 1922.

This is only a very brief overview of some of the stories that have emerged so far. In a perfect world each of our 936 individuals would have their photograph and their story in the book. Can you help?

I am actively seeking letters, photographs, and any other papers pertaining to these gentlemen. Anyone with information or queries can contact me:

by email at: snowieja@aol.com

—By Fax 360-756-1663

— or by regular mail:

909 Marine Drive, #103
Bellingham,
WA 98225 USA

All material will be copied and returned — and, of course, all contributors will be given proper recognition in the final publishing.

For example, information is needed on any enlisted Canadian personnel who "did their bit" with the RNAS. While most of the squadron ratings were RN only two colonial names have surfaced thus far. CPO Robert McIntyre Coram of St John NB was a machinist. Leading Seaman Richard Belzard Brock of Hamilton ON was the only Canadian to be awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal in the First War.

Another question concerns R. McN Keirstead DSC, (Wolfville NS) an ace with over a dozen victories. Was he the father of our Doc Kierstead of Bonaventure?

On the other hand, Bob "Windy" Geale, MBE, of the RCN and Royal Australian Navy has papers and photographs of his father, Charles Norman Geale (Westmount PQ),. The senior Geale (yes, there was someone senior to "Windy") joined in 1915 and was in command of 206 Squadron RAF by

1918.

Captain (N) A.E. "Tony" Delamere OMM, RCN(Rtd) has the aerial photos that his uncle R.D. Delamere took over Scapa during the surrender of the German High Seas Fleet in 1919 — before they self-scuttled with arrogant Prussian precision.

The family of J.R. Pendergast made his RNAS uniforms and papers available to the Naval Museum in Calgary where they are proudly displayed. From the nearly 700 who survived the War perhaps other relatives could be located to make such a donation to SAM.

From Ottawa, Bob Murray sent a package of notes containing a casualty list put together by himself and Scottie Grant. Also included was a letter written by Raymond Collishaw and several address lists from WWI reunions... a real treasure trove of information. Bob and Scottie, together with Glenn Cook, Dave Tate & Ed L'Heureux, are writing the histories of the Naval Aircraft in the National Air Museum collection.

Michael Whitby, who is Head of the Naval History Team at the Directorate of History and Heritage in Ottawa, has also been in contact. He is the son of Pat Whitby (RCN pilot 1945-1968). The

Navy has commissioned the Directorate to write the official history of the Post-war RCN in time for the 100th Anniversary of the service in 2010. Michael will be chief author.

My VS-880 Crew Commander, Jack Ford, scrounger extraordinaire, saved a collection of the *Canada Gazette*, 1914-1918, from the garbage dump. Similarly, one of my Venture seniors, Dave Bayne, another hawk-eyed scavenger, rescued two classic volumes, *The Development of British Naval Aviation*, from becoming land-fill. Jack and Dave have very kindly loaned these books for research.

Canada's aviation roots are anchored deeply by these men from the First World War. As a last couple of examples: "Hap" Botterell of Toronto is the last living fighter pilot of that conflict at 105 years of age. Aviation artist Robert Taylor recently immortalized him in a painting called *Balloon Buster*. A soggy field that "Wuffy" Dawson purchased and drained for Fairey Aviation in the late 1920's continues to operate to this day. It is now known as Heathrow.



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CNAG MEMBER OF THE YEAR

ALAN MOORE 2001

(From Across the Flight Deck)

The CNAG "Member of the Year" Award was instituted when Roger Rioux, while working at Tul Safety Equipment, was commissioned to locate a trophy that symbolized the ongoing spirit of Naval Aviation. The trophy embodies three Shearwaters in flight, connected at their wingtips. The birds represent Canada's 3 aircraft carriers that Canada operated between 1946 and 1970 (Warrior, Magnificent and Bonaventure) and are winging their way ashore to their home nest at Shearwater. In 1990, the trophy was renamed the "Tul Safety Equipment/Fred Lucas Memorial Award" to honour Fred Lucas, one of the Founding Members. The trophy is awarded annually to the member judged to have made significant contributions to CNAG or the preservation and promotion of Naval Aviation history.

This years recipient of the trophy is Alan E. Moore of Atlantic Chapter and is awarded in recognition of his long and dedicated service to the aims and objectives of CNAG. Alan is a Charter Member and the first President of Atlantic Chapter and Chairman of the first reunion hosted at CANAS in 1975. Alan continues to make a significant contribution towards enhancing the reputation and image of CNAG while promoting the preservation of Canadian Naval Air history through volunteer work with the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation. In particular, he is one of the originators and present coordinator of the "Wall of Honour" project that has raised considerable funds for the Museum. Congratulations Al on a well-deserved award. "Bravo Zulu" from all your old shipmates.



CNAG REUNION 2002

The Rum Issue Crew from the 1996 CNAG Reunion posed in front of the prize exhibit of the SAM, the Fairey Swordfish. **CNAG Atlantic** will once again be hosting the Reunion in 2002 and UP SPIRITS will again be held in the Museum following the church Service. We know that at least three of the crew picture will be with us and perhaps if Ed Janusus has his health, he may be back too. The main venue for the Reunion will be the **Westin Nova Scotian** but a full day of activities is planned for Shearwater on Sunday 13 October. Note: For those who know Ed, his favourite expressions was "If I only had my health." I expect and hope that he does. Stay tuned for further bulletins on the Reunion as planning progresses. Eric Edgar

2002 CNAG REUNION - SHEARWATER CNAG Atlantic Hosting

This is a picture of the Rum Issue Crew from the 1996 CNAG Reunion posed in front of the prize exhibit of the Shearwater Aviation Museum, the Fairey Swordfish. **CNAG Atlantic will once again be hosting the Reunion in 2002** and **UP SPIRITS** will be held in the Museum following the Church Service. We know that at least 3 of the crew pictured will be with us and perhaps if Ed Janusus has his health he may be back too. The main venue for the Reunion will be the Westin Nova Scotian but a full day of activities is planned for Shearwater on Sunday, Oct. 13". Note: For those who know Ed, his favourite expression was "If I only had my health". I expect and hope that he does. Stay tuned for further bulletins on the reunion as planning progresses. Eric Edgar



Rum Crew

Flying With “The Boss”- Fall Cruise 1969

Brian Worth

I was looking through my little version of Canadian Naval Aviation History (my log book) and thought that some people might want to share in the gripping excitement, the omnipresent danger, the sheer delight and the tremendous pride I experienced as a very young Naval Aviator. The particular period I'm relating was the 'Fall Cruise 1969' aboard HMCS Bonaventure from 09 Sep to 30 Oct which involved us, the RCN and VS880 in a multi-national exercise off the coast of Britain

To set the scene, I had been in VS880 flying Trackers since Jun '67 and had flown with S/Lt Jim Tough and S/Lt Fred Sanders both ashore from Shearwater and on several cruises on 'The Bonnie' during which time these very patient men had tried (some say in vain) to teach me the skills required to be a good Naval Aviator and I thank them for their efforts. My time with these two crew commanders was very exciting and because of the environment involve with Carrier Aviation, always dangerous but because of their excellent flying skills and coolness under pressure coupled with some good luck, was relatively incident free.

However for the 'Fall Cruise' I was crewed up with LCDR Pete Hamilton, the squadron OpsO. Now this man was impressive in many ways. He was an imposing man physically being tall and rangy and was an aggressive pilot when the situation dictated but smooth and he never once scared me. He was a natural leader who led by example; friendly, approachable, and had a tremendous sense of humour while still maintaining the decorum and discipline required in the unique situations of 'Carrier Aviation'.

I enjoyed every moment I flew with him. A few times I did cross the line of familiarity and was firmly but fairly set on the right path and soon felt very comfortable flying with 'The Boss'. I've settled on the term 'The Boss' because as a 'Subby' I was not comfortable with nor would I ever refer to my crew commander as 'Pete' or 'Hamilton'. In the cockpit I'm sure that often I used his pet name 'Sir' but that was often stilted and I think we

settled on the term 'Boss' very easily in the operational environment. I was, quite correctly, 'Worth' with the very occasional 'Brian' when operations became hectic. To round out our little band of merry men, we had crewmen and sensor operators P2 Monty Montgomery and LS Larry Moody. Now these guys had guts!! Their job was to sit in the cramped, dark, noisy, smelly, vibrating and gyrating compartment and provide us, the tacticians with enough information to do the our job. All the while I'm sure they were suspicious that our only job as pilots was to try to make their life uncomfortably scary and even try to kill them. I thank them for their bravery!

Our adventure commenced the 10 Sep '69 as 'The Bonnie' and 5 or 6 destroyers, including HMCS Kootenay, and one supply vessel (I think it was Preserver) left Halifax for a War Game called Peace Keeper of the east coast of Britain. The Canadian task in this exercise was to protect the supply and replenishment group that was to support the main carrier attack force involve in an opposed approach to positions in the Britain. From the 10th until 16th the Canadians transited the ever-active fall North Atlantic to the exercise area all the while honing our skills for the upcoming exercise. We arrived on station and were greeted by weather that was, to say the least, interesting.

For most of the following month the Bonnie and the whole Canadian fleet sat in the middle of or close to a very tight low pressure area which had a large effect on our adventures.

'The Boss' being a very experienced carrier pilot, drew a night launch for our first mission of the exercise and we launched off at midnight into the black for an expected 4hr. flight before recovering on 'Bonnie' at 4 am and a welcome beer and a cigarette (everybody still smoked back then). We carried out our assigned patrol and returned to our recovery position 10 miles from 'Bonnie' on the reciprocal of the expected 'Foxtrot Corpen' or flying course to be used for the upcoming launch and landing of aircraft. As senior officer of the four aircraft of the flight the 'Boss' was the first to depart the holding fix and be picked up by the Carrier Controlled Approach Radar and brought down to the point where a visual landing could be carried out. Well the weather was not co-operating. It was night, it was cloudy and since our launch

4hrs.earlier 'Bonnie' had steamed right into the middle of this tight low. We broke out of the goop in good time to make transition to a visual landing and we continued down towards the deck. The 'Boss' stated he had the 'Meatball' on the Fresnell Lens and I made the appropriate call...70, Props, Ball, Hamilton, 70.. (aircraft number, props full fine, we have the meatball, pilots name, and a repeat of the aircraft number), and we continued towards the deck. I don't know who the Landing Signals Officer was but somewhere below 100ft. he determined that the deck was moving too much and gave us a wave-off. We roared off into the night and commenced a visual circuit back to the carrier. Just about the time we were turning back on short final, we were advised that 'Bonnie' had ceased flying operations due to heavy weather and we were to proceed to St. Mawgan in Lands End, England. While we set about our duties for the transit to land I did a quick fuel check and discovered that because of the high power settings during our approach, overshoot and second approach and overshoot we were dangerously shy of fuel. I methodically worked out the calculations again before I opined that we were a little shy of fuel for St. Mawgan.

"Let me see that", said the 'Boss' and I handed him my E6B computer. He spun the wheel, did the calculations and then agreed with my assessment. "Get back to Highground (that was Bonaventure's call sign) and advise them of our situation and see if they have anything they can offer us as an alternative".

Initially 'Bonnie' didn't have any alternatives but assured us they were working on it. Both the 'Boss' and I thought that was a good idea. At this point I glanced back to the rear and saw four very bright, very round and very anxious eyes staring back at me. I think it was Larry Moody that made the rather nervous observation that there were some very high cliffs around St. Mawgan and I gathered that he would surely prefer to ditch rather than plow into those cliffs because of fuel starvation. About this time 'Bonnie' came back with a bearing and distance to the USS Yorktown in the main battle group and we happily set off for our safe haven while the other three aircraft from our launch continued to St. Mawgan.

It was now dawn and I was entering a very new world of carrier aviation, that of the US Navy and while I had some experience on our small Majestic Class CVL, I was about to get an eye opener as to how it was done in the 'Bigs' on a fleet class carrier of the USN.

The 'Boss' had flown aboard one before and was prepared for what was to happen but my learning curve was somewhat steeper. The landing on Yorktown was almost routine until very short final when we were given a 'cut' by the LSO or cut the power in order to pick up a particular arrestor wire on the deck. This took me by surprise and got the adrenalin going as it was certainly different than the Bonnie where we kept the power on until you felt the deceleration of the arrestor gear. No biggy, the 'Boss' knew what to do and I knew he wasn't about to kill us. I had completed all my post landing duties...hook up, flaps up, start the wings folding before I had a chance to look around. Despite it being the smallest class of American carrier, the Yorktown was huge. Where was the dammed follow me truck? No, just pay attention, boy. It'll all happen properly if you pay attention and you won't get hurt. We were marshalled to our parking, shut down, climbed down from the plane to a very busy and crowded flight deck and were promptly met by an officer and told we were to meet the Admiral.

There is a line in the song "Oh Give Me Bonaventure" that goes as follows, "Don't give a CS2F. The bastards will make you all deaf. They're short and they're stubby, their pilots are grubby. Don't give a CS2F". Well, we certainly fit the bill. Aside from the required 'Poopy Suits' with all the accompanied mustard, ketchup, grease and oil stains, Bonaventure was in the second week of a beard-growing contest. Nature and I had agreed that I was not to participate but the other 3 members of our troop were covered with eight days of stubble. Additionally, the 'Boss's' choice of under garment that night had not been considered with the possibility of meeting an admiral much less an admiral of another navy. It was the skuzziest, rattiest excuse of a turtleneck I had ever seen and could better be described as a turtle shoulder, but hell, it was a night flight anyway. Needless to say we presented a rough and ready picture when introduced. The admiral, however,

being a fellow airman and I suppose used to such things was more than gracious and invited us to breakfast on 'Steak and Grits'. I declined the Grits...no guts no glory! During the breakfast we were informed that Bonaventure had re-commenced flying operations and that our 'Stoof' was refuelled and ready for the next launch at 0800. Again we offered our thanks and set off to find our bird, which we found out was parked aft of the island in an area called the 'Pea Patch'.

Again with this learning curve, I quickly discovered that my SEEK Kits (Survival, evasion and emergency kits) had been rifled and the drugs in them were stolen (we still carried drugs in those days). That should have been anticipated, it was the 60's. Then as I was doing my cockpit preflight duties I noticed an 'air bosun' standing beside the aircraft looking up at me expectantly. "What does he want, Boss?" "Our all up weight."

I quickly flashed him some numbers and returned to my duties and tried to make sense of the foreignness of this strange flight deck and I thought I was doing splendidly until we hit the catapult. You see, on the 'Bonnie' there was only one type of aircraft using the 'Cat' and therefore only one power setting for the catapult while on the Yorktown there were five or six different types of aircraft all with different weights depending on type and tasking. That was what the 'Air Boatswain' had been about, that's what boy wonder and garcon aviator hadn't understood and I had therefore given him the all up weight of the Tracker fully loaded. Well, we were not anywhere close to that number what with a reduced fuel load and no ordinance. Needless to say, the resulting 'Cat' shot was an eye cager. I think we were airborne in the first third of the shot and it was several seconds before the 'Boss' was able to ask, "What the hell happened there?" It was after my somewhat embarrassed explanation that I received a short sharp and well-deserved rap on the helmet. It had been an exciting shot though.

Back to Bonaventure: We arrived back in our patrol area and were give some sort of task to occupy us until the noon recovery at which time we took our slot as the fifth aircraft of an unusually large 8 aircraft recovery. (The other three aircraft that had successfully reached

St. Mawgan had now rejoined us.) The two flights of four received their signal Charlie (the order to commence landing) and we all went through the break on the normal day VFR flight pattern on the ship but as we rolled out on down wind and just prior to the bow of the ship the 'Boss' said, "Jesus, would you look at that!" My former crew commander, Fred Sander had, quite innocently, just been involved in a freakish accident on landing and ended up hanging over the port side of the ship in the landing area thus fouling the deck for all who followed. "Your bearing and distance to St. Mawgan is..." and off we went again only with six aircraft this time and thankfully with sufficient gas to make it this time.

We made it this time and were greeted by the very gruff but proper SWO or Station Warrant Officer, RAF Station St.Mawgan, a position of tremendous power and esteem. I often wonder what went through his mind as this ragtag, scruffy and by now very malodorous group of colonial naval crewmen poured out onto his tarmac on his station. To his credit, it never really showed that much and he efficiently had everyone snug in proper quarters with proper arrangements for warm meals and a soft bed...a true professional. We all tried to clean ourselves up as much as possible before going to the officers mess but you can't make silk purse out of a sow's ear and I don't think we pulled it off. Twelve naval officers in full dress Poopy Suits, several days' growth of beard (even I had some soft but discernable stubble by then) and two day old graunches doesn't quite pass muster in the RAF.

We spent the night in St. Mawgan and launched early the next morning and this time nailed an OK three on Bonaventure, thus bringing a two night, three day, one incident and one accident odyssey to a successful conclusion. We were glad to be back on our still pitching home and our familiar quarters. (Continued - next issue)



THE TRAGEDY OF SUCCESS

by Stu Soward

How Politics Destroyed RCN Aviation

Politics:

- Factional scheming for power;
- Implications of seeking personal or partisan gain;
- Strife of rival parties.

The formation of RCN Aviation began with a study report in August 1943 by Captain H.N. Lay, RCN, in which he proposed the establishment of a Naval air service modeled upon the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm. Lay in his memoirs candidly expressed his preference for an Air Branch modeled on the USN, but believed this would not be politically acceptable to the pro RN senior RCN officers.¹ There was one major modification. The new branch would be carrier-based only. The role of the surveillance of coastal operations would continue to be provided by RCAF shore-based aircraft. The proposal was presented to the Cabinet War Committee on 7 September 1943, which authorized the formation of a joint RCN and RCAF Committee to study the proposal. A month later the Committee recommended the formation of the Naval Aviation Branch. It was also recommended that the development of supporting shore-based facilities be delayed for the time being, since it was expedient in wartime for facilities to be provided by the Royal Navy as applicable and by RCAF when in Canada.

In spite of the War Cabinet decision authorizing the carrier force, service politics reared its ugly head in November 1943, at a Joint RCAF and RCN Technical Committee, when RCAF Air Commodore Guthrie flatly stated that it was stupid for RCN to be undertaking a carrier program when it had been proven that carriers were completely obsolete.² Fortunately Captain Lay was present as an observer and shot Guthrie down in flames, with the tart rebuttal that since the USN and RN were currently building over 100 carriers for the Pacific War, they should be immediately informed of this major mistake. Guthrie's comments were incredibly obtuse when one considers the enormous impact the carrier strikes at the battles of Taranto, Pearl Harbour, Coral Sea and Midway had upon the course of the war. Significant however was that such a point of view was expressed, and if

nothing else brought out into the open the deep antagonism toward RCN Aviation held by senior influential RCAF officers such as Guthrie.

In May 1945 the Cabinet War Committee established an RCN force for the Pacific War Theatre of 13,000 officers and men. Included was a fleet involving two Light Fleet Class carriers, two naval air stations and 10 naval air squadrons totaling almost 2000 aviation personnel. There was no indication that shore-based support facilities were to be provided by the RCAF.

Although the requirement for an RCN Aviation Branch was greatly reduced following the end of the Pacific War, a smaller peacetime Branch was approved. Once more the RCAF opposed the RCN plans when, in October 1945, the RCAF insisted that the original 1943 RCN/RCAF Agreement was still valid and it was the mandate of the RCAF to control, maintain and operate the shore facilities for RCN Aviation. By 13 December 1945 the post-war permanent RCN Air Branch was approved in principle by the Canadian Cabinet to be 11% of the total RCN peacetime force of 10,000 personnel.

In March 1946, as a result of extensive RCN/RCAF discussions, the RCAF was granted funding and management of all RCN shore-based aviation facilities and supporting air services, including air stores, major aircraft repairs and overhaul.³ It was clear under the leadership of Air Marshal Leckie that the RCAF was determined to inhibit wherever possible the development of RCN Aviation. Certainly the long and acrimonious wrangling that took place between the RAF and the RN over the custody and control of the RN Fleet Air Arm from the early 1920's until 1938 was well known to Leckie's generation of airmen. Equally certain was the devastating impact of the split ownership on the FAA as the Second World War broke out. For the RCN to have blindly walked into the trap of dual control with respect to the shore-based RCN Aviation facilities was a colossal and expensive blunder.

Political influence became apparent when on 12 June 1946 a proposal to buy 50 USN Hellcats (\$500 each) by Naval Staff was rejected by the pro-British Naval Board. Finally in October, after being aired once more by Naval Board, the decision was made to proceed with the purchase of Sea Fury and Firefly aircraft (the Fury at \$80,000 apiece). As late as June 1947 the Hellcat

deal was still being pursued following delivery problems with the Sea Fury. Again it was rejected, largely due to the strong pro-British RCN senior officer cadre, and the influence of the newly appointed Director of the Naval Aviation Division, Royal Navy Captain G.A. Rotherham.⁴ It was always well known that Rotherham and the subsequent Royal Navy successors to the Directorate had a mandate to lobby and encourage the RCN to "Buy British" on behalf of the British Board of Trade.

The difficulties being experienced by the RCN with the RCAF were not unlike those of the Royal Australian Navy which, in June 1947, was given approval to form its own Naval Air Branch with two Light Fleet Carriers. The strongest objection to the decision was mounted by the RAAF Chief of Air Staff with the argument that it would be more efficient if the RAAF provided personnel. This argument was considered specious not only by the RAN but even by a joint RAAF/RAN Committee. The viewpoint of the RAAF once more indicates the total lack of understanding held by the RCAF and RAAF of the expertise and knowledge required in performing the unique role of Naval carrier aviation operations in the maritime environment.

It was not until the summer of 1948 that Naval Board re-opened negotiations with the RCAF to commence transfer of RCAF Station Dartmouth to RCN control. By this time RCN Aviation had grown to 900 personnel with 56 aircraft and operating from 11 hangars. The RCAF detachment on the other hand was installed in two hangars with 250 personnel and two aircraft. The original agreement had turned into a real farce with virtually no funds being provided by the RCAF for infrastructure upkeep, while providing indifferent service in their assigned responsibilities. Although Leckie had indicated he was sympathetic to the need for the RCN to assume a major role in the operation, it was only through a unilateral decision by the Cabinet Defence Committee in September 1948 that the process to transfer the Air Station to the RCN was grudgingly accepted by the RCAF. After brief negotiations the station was taken over by the RCN in December 1948.⁵

One of the most obvious attempts by the RCAF to destroy RCN AviatibVon was at an Armed Forces Five Year Plan review by the Chiefs of Staff Committee on 31 January 1950. When the plans for RCN Aviation was

being discussed, the CAS Air Vice Marshal Curtis describing Naval Aviation as a 'problem' asked "It be placed on record that the CAS recommended the disbandment of the Naval Air Arm and a study be made of how the funds saved could be more suitably allocated among the three services." The CNS Vice Admiral Grant, although not a strong advocate of the Air Branch and lacking knowledge of aviation generally, bristled at the effrontery of Curtis' remarks and declared that RCN Aviation was an organic component of the RCN, and as such Naval aviation plans were purely an internal naval matter. Further, Naval Aviation had been established by the authority and approval of the Canadian Cabinet. Although Curtis was rebuffed by Grant and the matter was obliquely diverted by Committee Chairman Lt. General Foulkes, it showed once again the high level of resentment and determination on the part of the RCAF to eliminate RCN Aviation. During this rather acrimonious discussion, Curtis complained that since the RCN was now developing a balanced force concept, it was only reasonable that the RCAF should be allowed to do the same by developing a strategic bomber force. This statement never made much sense, since the requirement for a Canadian offensive bomber force had never been nor ever would be a worthwhile factor when developing the post-war Canadian Defence policy.

It was at the Annual Senior Officers Conference of January 1951 that Commodore Lay first tabled a proposal to have the RCN take over the maritime aviation role in its entirety.⁶ He noted the RCAF had not only badly neglected their Maritime Air Command, but also the dual service involvement in the maritime environment was inefficient in the command, control and operational deployment of aircraft, systems and tactics. Lay's proposal was supported and he was directed to proceed with his concept and present a more detailed study the following year.

In December 1951, at the Annual Aviation Conference, the implications of RCN aviation being held to 11% of the total RCN strength was discussed in some detail. In comparison, the RN was at a 21.7% level. RCN Aviation, while assuming additional commitments with no increase in personnel, was facing a clear shortfall in manning. The inference was that the operations and role of RCN Aviation could become increasingly burdensome and less cost

effective without more personnel, as new equipment and aircraft would increase the need for additional manpower.

In January 1952, at the next Senior Officers Conference, the subject of Maritime Air was again discussed.⁷ Two significant points were emphasized by Commodore Lay. One, that the RCAF was now questioning naval supremacy in the command sphere in maritime warfare and now wanted co-equal status with the RCN. The second was that the rapid development of aviation sensors and weapons in ASW warfare was propelling the aircraft to the forefront, while the development of more effective ASW surface units was relatively static. In addition to other recommendations in his strong endorsement of his original proposal to assume Maritime Air, Lay summarized his paper with two principal recommendations:

- that future naval policy should emphasize more strongly the growth and development of Canadian Naval Aviation;
- this policy should concurrently include the planning for the absorption by the RCN of all maritime air operations.

In a surprising rebuttal - CNS Admiral Mainguy stated it was the task of the RCN to convince as many as possible of the importance and place of Maritime Air, and encourage the RCAF to build up an efficient Maritime Air Arm. This complete and personal rejection by CNS of the previously accepted recommendations was a disturbing and sudden change of policy which had a potentially serious and negative impact on the future of RCN Aviation.

One must question this about face. Was this a move to obtain RCAF support for the RCN in the surface fleet rebuilding program in exchange for RCN support of Maritime Air Command at the expense of developing and expanding RCN Aviation? It is particularly significant that there was no further mention of Lay's recommendation to emphasize more support toward the growth of Naval Aviation.

A final discussion of major concern to Naval Aviation was a paper presented by Lay, which outlined the case for helicopters in the ASW role operating from ship platforms. He logically stated that by concentrating on seaborne helicopters it would avoid the major joint control problems currently being encountered by the RN and RAF Coastal forces in the employment of helicopters in the ASW role. This was an astute move because, if nothing else, it could hardly

be subject to criticism by the RCAF, since without question the ASW role of the ship-borne naval helicopter could be justified as an exclusive and integral extension of the ships' overall detection and weapons systems. Whereas it would be very difficult for the RCAF to try and justify a new role for shore-based ASW helicopters operating in Canadian coastal waters.

In April 1952, at a meeting of Cabinet Defence Committee, the decision was made to acquire an aircraft carrier to replace the loaned Magnificent.⁸ Such a carrier, i.e. ex-Powerful Class, also a British Light Fleet would be purchased by Canada and incorporate the latest carrier modifications, including improved arrestor gear and the steam catapult. Significantly the angled deck and mirror landing system were not proposed. Initial cost estimate for the ship was \$15M. There was no evidence to suggest that any other ship than a British Light Fleet Class carrier was ever considered.

In May 1952 a visit was made by Commodore Keighly-Peach, RN Asst. Chief of Naval Staff (Air) to Washington, to discuss a replacement fighter aircraft for the Sea Fury. There was intensive pressure on the RCN to purchase the next generation of British carrier aircraft, namely the Sea Venom jet and the ASW Fairey Gannet. The purpose of the visit was to study the most suitable and available USN fighter aircraft.

The outcome of the meeting eliminated the British fighter as unable to satisfy the requirement and the USN Banshee became the logical choice for a replacement fighter. This was a major breakthrough for RCN Aviation since Keighly-Peach ignored his mandate from the Admiralty and the British Board of Trade and chose to support the best fighter aircraft, rather than follow the "Buy British" policy of his RN predecessors. The decision to buy a British carrier, however, was to a considerable extent due to the political climate which was affected by the limited financing available and the close ties with the Admiralty. In short, the decision to purchase a Light Fleet Carrier was made because it was cheap, available and the only ship ever offered.

Whether such a carrier would ever be capable of being operationally compatible with the type of aircraft being planned by RCN Aviation had yet to be established. In fact there was virtually no aviation expertise sought when the selection for a carrier was being made.

In September 1952 Naval

Headquarters approved the purchase of USN Banshees. Simultaneously, and although not widely known, the prevailing official USN view was that all weather jet aircraft cannot be operated 'efficiently and economically' from CVE and CVL class carriers in the North Atlantic.⁹ This had ominous implications for the RCN since the proposed carrier was not only classed as a CVL but it was also considerably slower.

In the Spring of 1953, and assuming the Banshee and S2F aircraft would be the RCN choice, the USN proposed the loan of an Essex Class carrier to the RCN for \$1 per year. This was rejected by the pro British Light Fleet advocates apparently due to the fact that the ship would require a larger crew and major changes to the existing catapult. The fact that it was the USN view that a ship the size of the proposed Powerful Class could not operate efficiently and economically in the North Atlantic did not appear to have been a consideration.

In the Summer of 1953 the RCN purchase of 60 Banshees was approved at a cost including spares of \$39M, but the Treasury Board decided at the last minute to delay payment until March 1954... this killed the program.¹⁰ The USN was justifiably annoyed at the Canadians for renegeing on the deal, particularly since special cost saving production arrangements had been made purely for the benefit the RCN.

Before departing in June 1953 a detailed Memorandum by Commodore Keighly-Peach was prepared which proposed major changes to the RCN Five Year Fleet Plan from 1961-1965.¹¹ He roundly criticized the one carrier force with 43 escorts, and stated "this fleet composition was arrived at without sufficient attention being paid to present and near future technical advances vitally affecting naval warfare." He noted RCN Aviation has remained virtually static in numbers of operational aircraft over the past decade in spite of the fact that the emphasis on aircraft in maritime warfare has greatly increased. During the same period, the RCN surface fleet has more than doubled.

He proposed shifting the concentration upon a sizeable fleet of Destroyer Escorts and Patrol Frigates by transferring existing or planned manpower and financial resources to a balanced force of two hunter killer groups built around one Essex Class carrier, the proposed Light Fleet carrier and 25 Destroyer Escorts. This would place the

emphasis upon flexibility encompassing ASW capability, support of ground forces, offensive air operations against enemy land targets and enemy naval forces, and providing air defence of shipping. Keighly-Peach also noted that a fully supported proposal and justification for a second carrier had never been made. But if successful, by 1965 it would ensure the RCN an effective capability to participate in limited wars and in the peacekeeping role.

The Commodore also warned that if the RCN fails to pay nothing more than lip service to the requirement for naval aircraft in maritime warfare, the RCAF will become the prime maritime authority in the Canadian defence organization. Recognizing the shift in emphasis in ASW to the aircraft with its obvious speed, mobility and weapon-carrying capability, the surface fleet would accordingly have a diminished role.

A key point emphasized was if the RCN was willing to provide the personnel and funds from within existing RCN resources, the RCAF would have no legitimate reason to begin an inter-service squabble over how the RCN allocated internal resources in fulfilling its naval mandate.

Keighly-Peach's report appears to have been virtually ignored, suggesting senior RCN officers were obviously quite content to live with the imbalance and lack of flexibility inherent in a navy composed almost entirely of small ships and capable of only a limited role.

It is worth mentioning at this point that an agreement was finally reached in March 1954 for delivery of used Banshees, but unfortunately expected deliveries were now spread over a 30 month period commencing in late 1955. For the saving of a mere \$14M, the fighter program was delayed a year, numbers reduced, with the added cost of refurbishing old aircraft which in some cases were in a barely flyable condition.

In December 1955 a highly classified and candid assessment of the future of Canadian Naval Aviation was sent to the Admiralty by the senior Naval Liaison Office Ottawa, Capt. W.G. Parry RN.¹² In his view, RCN Aviation was about to fight for its life with increased pressure from the RCAF, on the grounds that the RCAF could do the job better and cheaper. Although Parry considered this argument both specious and insidious, he noted that politicians are attracted by such statements.

Parry also expressed the view that the

Naval Board did not support the proposal that the navy should take over Maritime Air Command. He further noted that there were senior RCN officers brought up in a small ship navy who found the present size and configuration of the RCN "beyond their mental digestion", and accordingly would oppose any assumption of Maritime Air Command by the RCN.

Parry also forecast the gradual demise of Canadian-based RCAF fighters rendering it imperative the RCAF maintain their Maritime Command, since there would be little else left except a Transport Command.

He pointed out the determination of the RCAF to be the dominant shareholder of the defence budget, while the services were under pressure to reduce their expenditures. Parry believed the RCN would be tempted to downgrade Naval Aviation in order to protect the planned surface escort construction program.

There was an interesting Admiralty response to assist the RCN, where possible, by continuing to emphasize the need for carriers in the ASW role while stating "Also global war likelihood is steadily decreasing, whereas emphasis is shifting strongly for a need for more forces for cold and limited wars requiring mobile, versatile forces with other members of the Western Block and Commonwealth, providing ability through carrier forces which are the only force unaffected by limitations and restrictions i.e. overflying, landing rights, refueling rights etc. and can bring pressure to bear in any part of the world accessible by sea where there is trouble."

The Royal Navy's Director of Air Warfare noted as follows: "There is a good case for a strong Canadian Fleet Air Arm which alone can give Canada a mobile versatile force. A Canadian naval force of 2-3 carriers could be built at the expense of a declining RCAF...the time is indeed ripe for the RCN to attack the kind of defence policy advocated by the RCAF and press for a strong FAA which could do far more to maintain and extend Canada's prestige as a world power than her already moribund Air Force."

It is ironic to note that the foregoing mobile concept has been recognized and implemented over the years e.g. the Falkland War and the formation of mobile NATO and UN Peacekeeping Quick Reaction Forces.

An opportunity was provided in the Summer 1956 to enhance the

capability of the RCN in a letter from UK Prime Minister, Anthony Eden, to the Canadian Prime Minister, proposing that Magnificent be retained by RCN (on loan) in addition to the purchase of ex-Powerful (Bonaventure). Naval Board were prepared to keep the carrier in de-humidified reserve but the Federal Cabinet decided to return Magnificent to the RN. If retained, the carrier could have played a significant role in the RCN. As subsequent events proved, Magnificent would not only have been an economical proposition as an ASW helicopter carrier manned with a greatly reduced crew, but in addition would have been indispensable to the Canadian army units subsequently assigned for UN peacekeeping duties.

In December 1955 the Deputy Minister directed that a critical review be conducted of RCN Aviation due to his concern about the considerable number of units (squadrons) and aircraft in use to support the two front line aircraft squadrons assigned for Bonaventure.

The review, recognizing that RCAF reserve squadrons were being disbanded, also proposed the disbandment of the reserve navy air squadrons. However, the Committee came up with a greatly different series of conclusions and recommendations and in a Top Secret report stated:¹³

- In the Eastlant role, Bonaventure would require an AEW capability, fighter air defence and an ASW squadron. The carrier was too small to perform these functions.

Conclusions:

Bonaventure could carry only a mix of ASW aircraft consisting of fixed wing and helicopters and was therefore inadequate for the assigned role.

Recommendations:

The ASW group (hunter killer) should comprise two Light Fleet Class carriers which combined could provide AEW aircraft, fighters and ASW aircraft (helicopter and fixed-wing), or

A single carrier e.g. (USN Essex Class) be procured, which could fulfill the need for the required AEW, air defence of the fleet and the ASW role.

Observations:

Current naval plans failed to reflect the growing importance of the power of naval aviation in maritime warfare;

Operational Research

Studies established that under certain circumstances two CS2F aircraft are more effective than a St. Laurent Class escort;

Developments lead to the

conclusion that a more effective navy could be achieved if a better balance of air to surface units was contemplated;

A serious imbalance of forces exists in the RCN insofar as the surface forces have steadily increased in personnel and ships, whereas Naval Aviation, even though re-arming with new aircraft, had not grown proportionally;

Helicopter platforms for escorts were proposed to augment the range of carrier-based ASW helicopters and have an independent increased search capability.

The reference to the carrier limitations, although disturbing news to some, confirmed exactly what the USN had earlier stated. Now four months before the commissioning of Bonaventure, it was now officially established that the ship was incapable of meeting its assigned role. Air defence of the fleet was virtually impossible without severe degradation of either the ASW or AEW capability.

As far as can be determined, the report prepared by non-aviators and remarkably similar to the one previously proposed by Keighly-Peach, was never discussed by Naval Board. There was no immediate reduction of aircraft and squadrons. There was no change of emphasis and the RCN continued with shipbuilding plans. This is not surprising since it would be suicidal for the CNS to admit to the Minister that naval planning had been on the wrong course, that the new carrier was inadequate, the new St. Laurent ships too slow, and an unbalanced fleet existed. The Committee clearly suggested the RCN, by concentrating on a small ship navy, was not only unable to meet its assigned role but remained inherently inflexible. Planning would continue unchanged.

Following the successful helicopter operating trials in 1956 aboard HMCS Buckingham, the decision was made to modify the St. Laurent Class ships to provide a ship-borne ASW helicopter capability. This was considered essential in the light of the recent developments in submarine high underwater speeds and would considerably enhance the detection ranges of the D/E's while at the same time offering a greatly improved level of protection for the relatively slow ships against submarine attack.

With the commissioning of HMCS Bonaventure in 1957, fitted with the angled deck, mirror landing system and steam catapult, the RCN

was able to operate successfully with the Trackers. The Banshees however, although flyable from the carrier, were never fully operational in their assigned role of air defence of the fleet. This was due to a variety of reasons, including lack of sufficient carrier time, the recognized limitations of Bonaventure, but also the difficulty of maintaining and operating the necessary number of used Banshees with their shortened life span and reduced numbers. Also confirmed, as feared, were the major problems in operating a Light Fleet Class, slow carrier, with a requirement to maintain a first-line carrier readiness capability of two ASW squadrons, two jet squadrons and an ASW helicopter squadron.

In 1958 a detailed study to transfer Maritime Air Command to the RCN was implemented under the authority of Commodore Tony Storrs, Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Air and Warfare).¹⁴ This was a well prepared document which outlined financial savings by eliminating the duplication of manpower and resources. It was proposed that this be a gradual process which would amalgamate the shore-based RCAF Maritime Air with RCN Aviation. A further benefit would result from providing a more stable, rewarding and varied career for aircrew. To have all Maritime Aviation assets combined in one service was obviously functionally desirable from the perspective of organization, command and control. The study never saw the light of day and was rejected outright by CNS Vice Admiral DeWolf. One assumes he believed it was not a politically acceptable risk to antagonize the RCAF, since RCN policy was co-operation not confrontation. Perhaps the policy even became conciliatory, bearing in mind the fact that the RCN, the smallest of the services, needed all the support it could get from the more influential and powerful other two services. On direct order of the CNS all copies of the report were ordered destroyed.

A significant section of the Report disclosed that by the end of 1958, with the introduction of the Argus aircraft, Maritime Air Command would total a staggering number of 4600 uniformed personnel and a civilian complement of 750 to support a mere 50 aircraft. At the same time RCN Aviation was supporting over 100 aircraft with no more than 2100 uniformed personnel.

By 1959 Naval Board, recognizing the need to extend the range of the ships' ASW weapons

system, agreed that new helicopters were required.¹⁵ A program was therefore approved to integrate ASW helicopters into the fleet. About the same time there were reductions imposed upon the fixed-wing training squadrons which followed on from the Deputy Minister's previous directive to cut back support squadrons. Similarly, as a result of limited carrier time available and shortage of aircraft, the two Banshee squadrons were reduced to one through amalgamation. By the end of the year another squadron identity was lost with the amalgamation of VS 880 and VS 881.

In 1960 a letter, written by Air Commodore Lister to the CAS, once again revealed the ongoing attempts by the senior RCAF brass to limit the scope of RCN Aviation.¹⁶ In this memo Lister pressed for the rejection of an application for an RCN pilot to serve on exchange duty with an Argus squadron. Lister's reasons were that the RCN had been attempting to have one or more of their officers fly the large RCAF aircraft. He was concerned this could happen if a naval pilot was sent to the Greenwood Argus base. There never was an exchange of aircrew between the RCN and RCAF, yet the RCAF exchanged their aircrew on a regular basis to fly in USN Neptune squadrons. This was a clear intention on the part of the RCAF to avoid any intermingling of RCN and RCAF Maritime aircrew.

In 1961, when the selection of an RCN ASW helicopter was finally approved, one justification made at the Naval Board level in favour of the Sea King (HSS2) was that it could be considered as a possible replacement of the Tracker.¹⁷ Subsequent discussion with senior naval aviators, including Captain Ted Edwards, disclosed that there never had been any suggestion that the Sea King could or would be suitable as a replacement for the fixed-wing Tracker and such a justification had never been considered by Naval Staff. It would appear therefore that it been solely the result of a Naval Board initiative.

This initiative, however, falls in line with the so-called Brock Report by VCNS Rear Admiral Brock, which proposed a restructuring of the RCN by 1975 through building the fleet around what was called a General Purpose Frigate, Helicopter ships and submarines.¹⁸ Although generally supported by Naval Board this concept eventually died 'stillborn' for a variety of reasons including financial. There was

also major concern expressed by the current government that the GP frigate did not have the flexibility to satisfactorily carry out the ASW task. In short, by being a general purpose ship, although capable of performing a number of roles, it would not be on a cost effective basis. If nothing else, however, it did indicate that there was a decided lack of overall support for future fixed wing carrier aviation being expressed by the current Naval Board. They saw the ASW helicopter as the only ship-borne weapon system that could provide not only an improved level of detection but also greater defence of the individual surface units from submarines.

The emphasis on the surface fleet was to a degree later affirmed in the fleet review by the CNS Vice Admiral Rayner in a year-end summary.¹⁹ Rayner disclosed that the number of ships in the RCN had tripled in ten years. Meanwhile RCN fixed wing aviation was currently undergoing a reduction. It was now becoming evident that there was shift toward helicopters at the expense of fixed wing carrier aviation where growth had virtually slowed to a standstill.

By 1962 the Banshee fighters were withdrawn from service, leaving the RCN bereft of any air defence capability of the fleet. Recognizing the limitations of Bonaventure, exploratory discussions at the Naval Staff level with the USN established that a fully modernized Essex Class carrier could be provided for \$5-6M. Nothing ever resulted from this attractive offer which would have created a balanced RCN fleet.

There was also a growing concern being expressed by the surface executive branch officers at the number of aviation specialized officers who were filling sea-going command and XO billets.²⁰ For example, during the Cuban missile crisis there were 11 ships commanded by aviators, another five were in XO appointments. Overall 25% of the operational ships were commanded by airmen or ex-airmen. An additional 33 more air officers were in the process of obtaining their upper deck watch keeping certificates. This situation had culminated in a growing groundswell of antagonism from the regular executive officers, who were now more and more being denied full access to what they considered to be their exclusive career-making appointments. Not only was the RCN Aviation Branch in direct competition with the surface fleet for the budget allocation, but as Executive Branch members, the airmen were increasingly becoming rivals

in the officers' personnel career structure.

As overall budget restrictions came into play during 1963, a further cutback in RCN fixed wing aviation took place with a reduction of 10% in aircraft numerical strength. The surface fleet remained virtually unaffected as only 10 auxiliary vessels were withdrawn out of a total of 125 surface vessels. This disparity further suggests that as progressive financial restrictions were applied, invariably Naval Aviation would be the most adversely affected.

As integration was finally implemented in 1964 and the Defence White Paper was presented, there was considerable political in-fighting among the three services. The RCAF, with a large well-trained staff and a powerful lobby, was in the best position to capitalize upon the absolute confusion that prevailed. There was an attempt to apply the flexibility and mobility requirements of the White Paper by a triumvirate of senior officers at the Commodore level from the three services. Their proposed sea-lift with a brigade-sized capability and tactical fighters for UN operations never gained the necessary degree of support, even though at the final Naval Board meeting in July 1964 the A4E fighter was approved for Bonaventure. Later, the capital Maritime program assigned it the lowest priority along with the heavy sea-lift requirement for the Army.²¹

Bonaventure, flying with Trackers and Sea Kings, together with the surface escort squadron, was consistently providing a level of ASW proficiency that was the envy of other NATO ASW carrier groups. VS 880, the Tracker squadron, meanwhile was establishing a standard of carrier all-weather ASW operations not being achieved by any other squadrons. Similarly, the Sea King helicopters were now becoming increasingly proficient in combined ASW tactics with the Trackers, while breaking new ground in developing innovative ASW tactics and procedures for integrated helicopter and DDE operations.

Although, operationally, RCN Aviation was at its highest level of ASW excellence, all did not appear to bode well for the future of the fixed-wing ASW forces. In November 1964 Rear Admiral Landymore, replaced Maritime Commander Rear Admiral Brock who was forced into retirement. Some time later in a visit to Shearwater, Landymore made a candid and somewhat ominous speech to the assembled squadron commanders. There he made it abundantly clear that the

future emphasis of RCN Aviation would be directed toward integrated helicopter operations aboard the destroyer escorts.²² This was a disturbing statement which flew in the face of the concept of a balanced RCN Aviation Branch, with fixed wing and helicopters working jointly in the ASW role.

The Naval Aviation staff had initiated and developed the concept of the Sea King helicopter in the tactical ASW role both aboard the carrier and the destroyer escorts. Any change in this concept of operations was certainly not known or supported by the Naval Aviation Staff at Canadian Forces Headquarters and Shearwater. How much of Landymore's statement was a personal belief or a hidden agenda that was yet to be finalized, will probably never be known. What is known, however, is that a variety of options were surfacing which collectively appeared to indicate that the surface fleet was increasingly dependant on the integrated helicopter/DDE concept to help justify their operational existence. Accordingly, the prime concept of the fixed wing/helo carrier team could well be in jeopardy in the years ahead. In addition, as unification commenced, there would be few influential senior naval officers at CFHQ who had the necessary understanding and appreciation of the scope and flexibility of carrier aviation to be their advocates.

By 1966 the Naval Staff, as had previously existed, was disbanded. Naval Board had been abolished. Next followed the resignation of the navy's most senior officer, Vice Admiral Dyer, and the firing of Rear Admiral Landymore. The exodus of Admirals began. Among them was Rear Admiral Welland, who was the only senior naval officer serving at CFHQ in a position to speak for Naval Aviation with any authority. By late Summer, Commodore J.C. O'Brien was promoted to Rear Admiral and replaced the forced out Landymore as Maritime Commander.

While the turmoil continued unabated at CFHQ, another problem arose with the announcement at the end of 1966 that the major refit of Bonaventure had risen in costs by an additional \$3M, which extended the refit an additional six months. Although the increase was unforeseen, the costs were well justified in light of the fact that the hull of the carrier was over 22 years old and many repair items could not have been accurately identified and realistically costed until all spaces and compartments could be opened up. The adverse publicity that

resulted from the cost escalation and the extended time the carrier was out of service however was a situation just waiting to be exploited by those who were unsupportive of carrier aviation.

By 1967 the Sea King helicopter air detachments of HS 50 had commenced operations aboard the modified destroyer escorts, while Bonaventure returned to operational service with her complement of newly-improved Trackers and the Sea Kings. The often criticized refit, although over budget, provided the carrier an estimated 10 year period of operations with an enhanced performance provided by the various modifications to operational equipment and crew habitability. In spite of the size and speed limitations of the carrier, flying operations and the ASW performance of Bonaventure and her escort group over the next 18 months was second to none in the ongoing NATO exercises involving both the USN and other western navies.

Maritime Commander, Vice Admiral O'Brien, however, was under increasing pressure from the highest levels at CFHQ. O'Brien, facing an often unsupportive Defence Council with its controlling majority held by the top echelons of the RCAF and Army, was constantly having to defend his management and policy decisions. With virtually no senior naval staff in positions of influence at CFHQ, the Maritime Commander was on many occasions almost completely isolated. In one graphic example he was told to provide no further fuel for Bonaventure, which was scheduled for a major exercise. He managed to bypass that directive by filling the supply ship Provider with fuel and then transferring it to the carrier.²³

With regard to career planning for the naval aviators, they were almost completely blocked off for promotion. Air Vice Marshal Reyno, when in the position of Chief of Personnel, adroitly filled many officer billets with newly promoted and available Wing Commanders and Squadron Leaders as the positions were established. Many of the experienced naval aviators in the similar ranks of Lt. Commander and Commander were conveniently bypassed during the confusion, and until each individual was laboriously transferred to the Air List from the naval Executive Branch, virtually no career planning took place.

In another equally discriminatory move, the qualifications and specifications for the newly established MARS (Maritime surface officer branch) neatly excluded,

with but few exceptions, the existing naval aviator cadre as they were automatically transferred to the Air Force dominated and administered Air List.

In the Spring of 1969, with cutbacks facing the forces, rumours began circulating that the carrier was a particular target insofar as Prime Minister Trudeau's announced change in defence policy included a phased reduction of the Canadian Commitment to NATO. Later in June a stated personnel reduction for the forces over the next three years was announced along with cutbacks in the budget.

There was definitely a sense of foreboding following word of the defence reductions and it was inevitable that it would have a negative impact on the number of operational ships in commission. On the night of 20 September 1969 Bonaventure and her escort group were in the midst of Exercise Peace Keeper, one of the most intensive and wide-ranging series of manoeuvres to date involving major fleet units of the USN, RN and other NATO Forces.

The bombshell arrived in the form of a CBC short wave news service. Bonaventure was to be scrapped, and VS 880 was slated for disbandment. The duplicity of the new Defence Minister Leo Cadieux together with his insensitivity was unpardonable. Only one week earlier he had dismissed a report of Bonaventure's retirement as pure speculation. Captain Jim Cutts, the CO of the carrier, had been assured by Vice Admiral O'Brien that he would inform Cutts if there was to be any change of status in the carrier. Even O'Brien, the navy's top operational commander, was not given the courtesy of being advised prior to the media that his most valuable fleet asset was being scrapped. Also humiliated was the Parliamentary Committee aboard Bonaventure who had prepared a complete dossier of the role and scope of Maritime Command for presentation to Parliament.

Those who engineered the demise of the carrier well knew the implications of what they were doing. It would not be long before Canadian Naval Aviation was to become a non-entity, since the withdrawal of the carrier virtually ensured the demise of the Tracker squadron and the operational fixed wing training units. The remaining support units would be progressively eliminated through amalgamation and reductions, as would the associated aviation infrastructure.

Today there is little information

provided about the rationale behind the decision to scrap the carrier. There are many theories including: - the political fallout from the cost overrun of the carrier's refit - Trudeau's antipathy toward the military and NATO generally - the financial cutbacks - limited personnel to man the new Tribal escorts - a separate unpublicized naval agenda to shift to a helicopter only force - a lack of will to maintain a balanced Canadian Naval Aviation - a muted naval voice with no common objective - a determination of the Air Force to eliminate the sharing of aviation funds with the rival carrier Naval Aviation. All the foregoing are no doubt likely factors, all bearing a degree of credibility. Individually none are dominant, collectively they are overwhelming.

As retired Admiral Bob Falls stated some years ago, the proposal to scrap Bonaventure could well have been made by the Minister of National Defence in a one-on-one meeting with General Fred Sharp, the Chief of Defence Staff.²⁴ Sharp, then the highest ranking military officer and a former senior officer of the RCAF, would have little reason to disagree. It is highly doubtful if it was ever even discussed by the Defence Council.

So ended the painstakingly developed, proud, highly motivated and skilled RCN Aviation which in its assigned role was second to none. The 25 years of Canadian Naval Aviation and ultimate successes were not achieved without cost since 101 aviation personnel were killed on duty serving in their chosen field.

Cynics will no doubt say politics is a way of life in all endeavors. One might ask however, can political actions ever be justified that result in the calculated destruction of a proven force which in 1969, for its size, was one of the most operational and cost effective branches of the Canadian military forces?

Who was responsible?
Was there ever any measurable benefit?
We will probably never know!
See Hands To Flying Stations
by Stu Soward

BOB BISSELL REVEALS SKELETON IN FAMILY CLOSET

I have always been embarrassed to mention this thing before, but my father was a CRABFAT!

During WW1 he joined the Royal Flying Corps and became an Observer/Navigator (some similarity there) and later on was a Flying Officer in the new RAF. During his lifetime, he really never told me anything about his wartime experiences.

Later in his life, he joined a group called the WW1 Flyers Association and through correspondence and meetings (as we do now) they resurrected tales of past glories. It was then that I learned a bit.

I guess he flew in the S Camels etc. Apparently their machine gun was prone to jamming. Their missions were usually bombing raids, so they'd navigate to the target, drop the bomb(s), return to the target and try for a picture of the damage, if any, using something akin to our old K20 and then attempt to return safely to base camp. After the war, he was seconded to the army of occupation.

He never did understand my interest in the sea and why I joined the Navy.

(This letter got trapped in a "time warp" which means Kay mislaid it.)



Any names for this Tracker Class?



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UNISEX HAIRSTYLING
SENIORS MON - FRI 15% OFF
PENHORN MALL
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The Last Word

Hi there. Well here it is April 2002. Almost eight months to Christmas. Ha.

We are working very hard on the newsletter and have progressed to where the cover is in colour - again - this time we hope to keep it that way. We now have advertisers to help defray the newsletter expenses and to keep us within the budget as laid down by the Board of Directors.

Did you see all those letters to the Editor? They're great! Maybe we'll hear from you too. You will note in this issue that Leo Pettipas' name comes up often - someone has to help us. Mickey Owens found time to drop us another line or two. Know what I'm getting at? We need more of you to get involved. Please share with us some of your stories - good, bad, happy, sad - whatever. By the way, your comments on the newsletter are appreciated, especially by Bill Farrell our Editor. What sort of articles do you like to see - are

some too long - too short etc? And while I'm on a nagging streak, why haven't some of you joined SAMF?

I'm sure you won't believe this, but sometimes I get down right biased when the subject comes up about the light blue of the RCAF/Air Force, as opposed to the dark blue of the RCN and the SAM. Ernie Cable and other ex-Air Force board members have on occasion worn the brunt of this bias streak. I'll try and do better, guys. Having said that, I can't help myself. I just like Navy Blue best. (What do you expect from a Navy Brat, and someone who had some of the best times of my life at Naval Air Station Shearwater.) Ernie is the SAM Historian and he does a great job. There is no doubt in my mind that when he writes his articles he writes from historical facts whether they are about Naval Air or the Air Force. Ernie is certainly needed around the SAM.

The new building looks great and it's sitting there waiting for all the gate guardians - Banshee and T33 are in there so far. That's what it was built for, so our appeal notices read, to house the gate guardians (and Firefly). Members of 12 AMS are working hard to find the time to restore the others, but with deployments to the war zone etc, 12 AMS is pretty busy. We're very grateful for their assistance.

Also, in the new building is a Snowbird Tutor jet (donated to the museum in recognition of support for the Nova Scotia International Air Show).

Rumours are floating around about the closing of Shearwater. The news that Canada Lands Company has received part of it, the most important part, doesn't help. If it does close, it should not affect the SAM, but SAM will be affected if we do not have your support. We can't allow this new generation of military to forget what was here and what was your heritage. Hopefully, Shearwater will be around for years to come.

Well that's it for now. Don't forget CNAG's reunion this year. It may be your last chance to see what is left of Shearwater.

Take care and write soon.

Kay

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A - 25

They gave me a Seafire to beat up the Fleet
I beat up the Nelson and Rodney for a treat
Forgot the tall mast that stood on the Formid
and seats in the goofers were worth 50 quid

CHORUS:

Cracking show I'm alive
But I still have to render my A25

When bats gives me high, I always fly higher
I drift off to starboard and prang my Seafire
The boys in he goofers all think I am green
But I get my Commission from supermarine

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CORMORANT

JUST FILLING ANOTHER CUSTOMER ORDER



The skies south of Baffin Island were clear as the two Cormorant helicopters left contrails for 10 miles behind them, just like two Boeing 747s. Helicopters don't normally leave contrails in their wake. But then it is not very often that helicopters cruise at 10,000 feet in Arctic temperatures after crossing the Atlantic. Sixty-two hours over some of the most hostile terrain on Earth at the worst time of year. It was all part of a filling a customer order for Team Cormorant.

Two Search and Rescue (SAR) Cormorants left Italy on Jan. 20 for the Canadian Forces Base at Comox on Vancouver Island. They landed at CFB Comox on Feb. 7. They join two Cormorants delivered to Comox in October in the same way as part Canada's order for 15 new SAR helicopters to replace the aging Labrador. For the Canadian Forces crews flying the helicopters to Comox, it was a chance to gain some unique experience through all sorts of foul weather.

For Jerry Tracy, Team Cormorant's chief test pilot, it was a chance to watch an aircraft he has helped develop through several prototypes do its stuff in the sort of weather for which it was designed. Mr. Tracy, who was along as a technical adviser, believes there is no other helicopter in the world as safe as the Cormorant. That's because of triple redundancy throughout the aircraft with three engines, three hydraulic systems and three electrical systems -- all backed up by a quadruple redundant auto-pilot. If an engine fails during a hover, the Cormorant can fly out of it with its two remaining engines. If a generator fails, there are two more to keep the big bird in safe operation. At one point in the trip, the Cormorants flew through back-to-back days of 11 hours and seven days respectively through rain, snow and night-time conditions. But Canadian flight engineers and maintenance crews from IMP took it all in stride.

"The aircraft instills confidence. It's built with so many redundant systems," Mr. Tracy says. "It's an aircraft that breaks the rules because it has so much inherent safety built into it."

**WE KNOW CANADA WILL HAVE AS MUCH PRIDE AND CONFIDENCE
IN THE CORMORANT AS JERRY TRACY DOES.**