

WARRIOR
Winter 2011

Merry Christmas

We Remember

HMCS ALBERNI

Commissioned 4th February 1941

Torpedoed and sunk by U480, southeast of the Isle of Wight.

Type of Ship: 'Flower' Class Corvette
Lives Lost: 59
Date: 21st August 1944

HMCS ATHABASKAN

Commissioned 3rd February 1943

On 29 Apr 1944 ATHABASKAN and HAIDA engaged two German destroyers off Ile de Bas, Brittany, destroying one. She assisted in the destruction of the German torpedo boat T29 in the Channel off Ushant, and three days later was sunk by torpedo boat T24 north of the Ile de Bas.

Type of Ship: 'Tribal' Class Destroyer
Lives Lost: 128
Date: 29th April 1944

HMCS BRAS D'OR

Commissioned 25th October 1940

While keeping the Romanian freighter 'Ingener N. Vlaspoul' under surveillance in the Gulf of St Lawrence, the minesweeper disappeared. Her last known position was 40 20N - 063 50W, near Anticosti Island.

Type of Ship: Auxiliary Minesweeper
Lives Lost: 30
Date: 18th/19th October 1940

HMCS CHARLOTTETOWN

Commissioned 13th December 1941

Torpedoed and sunk in the St. Lawrence, near Cap Chat Quebec, by U517. She had just delivered a convoy to Rimouski and was returning to Gaspé.

Type of Ship: 'Flower' Class Corvette
Lives Lost: 10
Date: 11th September 1942

HMCS CHEDABUCTO

Commissioned 10th April 1942

She was sunk after night collision with the cable vessel LORD KELVIN, 30 miles from Rimouski, Quebec.

Type of Ship: 'Bangor' Class Minesweeper
Lives Lost: 1
Date: 21st October 1943

HMCS CLAYOQUOT

Commissioned 22nd August 1941

She rescued 55 survivors from HMCS Charlottetown. On 24 December 1944 while taking station on convoy XB.139 she was torpedoed by U806 and sunk three miles from Sambro Light.

Type of Ship: 'Bangor' Class Minesweeper
Lives Lost: 8
Date: 24th December 1944

HMCS ESQUIMALT

Commissioned 26th October 1942

While on A/S patrol she was torpedoed and sunk in the approaches to Halifax by U190.

Type of Ship: 'Bangor' Class Minesweeper
Lives Lost: 44
Date: 16th April 1945

HMCS FRASER

Commissioned 17th February 1937

She was Sunk on 25 June 1940 when in collision with the British cruiser Calcutta.

Type of Ship: 'River' Class Destroyer
Lives Lost: 60
Date: 25th June 1940

HMCS GUYSBOROUGH

Commissioned 22nd April 1942

Built for the RN but transferred to the RCN. Torpedoed and sunk in the Bay of Biscay by U878.

Type of Ship: 'Bangor' Class Minesweeper
Lives Lost: 51
Date: 17th March 1945

HMCS LEVIS

Commissioned 16th May 1941

She was torpedoed by U74, 120 miles off Cape Farewell Greenland. The remainder of ship's company were taken off by her sisters Mayflower and Agassiz.

Type of Ship: 'Flower' Class Corvette
Lives Lost: 18
Date: 20th September 1941

HMCS LOUISBURG

Commissioned 2nd October 1941

Attacked and sunk by an aerial torpedo from an Italian aircraft east of Oran, while escorting a convoy from Gibraltar to Bone, Algeria.

Type of Ship: 'Flower' Class Corvette
Lives Lost: 40
Date: 6th February 1943

HMCS MARGAREE

Commissioned 6th September 1940

Formerly named HMS Diana commissioned in the RCN. The ship was lost in the North Atlantic, after collision with the freighter PORT FAIRY, while escorting the five ship convoy OL.8. 142 of her ship's company were lost, many of which were survivors of FRASER's tragic sinking.

Type of Ship: 'River' Class Destroyer
Lives Lost: 142
Date: 22nd October 1940

HMCS OTTAWA

Commissioned 15th June 1938

Purchased from the British and was formerly called HMS Crusader. Torpedoed and sunk by U91 in the North Atlantic, while escorting convoy ON.127.

Type of Ship: 'River' Class Destroyer
Lives Lost: 119
Date: 13th September 1942

HMCS OTTER

Commissioned 4th October 1940

She was destroyed by accidental explosion and fire off Halifax.

Type of Ship: Armed Yacht
Lives Lost: 19
Date: 26th March 1941

HMCS RACCOON

Commissioned 31st December 1940

Torpedoed and sunk by U 165, while escorting convoy QS.33 in the St. Lawrence River. There were no survivors.

Type of Ship: Armed Yacht
Lives Lost: 37
Date: 7th September 1942

HMCS REGINA

Commissioned 22nd January 1942

While employed as escort to UK-Mediterranean convoys she sank the Italian submarine Avori on 8 Feb 1943. She was torpedoed and sunk by U667, off Trevose Head, Cornwall, England.

Type of Ship: 'Flower' Class Corvette
Lives Lost: 30
Date: 8th August 1944

HMCS SHAWINIGAN

Commissioned 19th September 1941

While on independent anti-submarine patrol in the Cabot Strait, she was torpedoed and sunk by U1228.

Type of Ship: 'Flower' Class Corvette
Lives Lost: 21
Date: 24th November 1944

HMCS SKEENA

Commissioned 10th June 1931

Skeena & Saguenay were the first warships built to Canadian specifications. On 31 July 1942 HMC Ships SKEENA and WETASKIWIN sank U-588 in the North Atlantic. On 25 Oct 1944 SKFFNA dragged her anchors in a storm and was wrecked on Videy Island, near Reykjavik.

Type of Ship: 'River' Class Frigate
Lives Lost: 15
Date: 25th October 1944

HMCS SPIKENARD

Commissioned 6th December 1940

Torpedoed & sunk by U136, South Ireland, while escorting convoy SC.67. There were only eight survivors.

Type of Ship: 'Flower' Class Corvette
Lives Lost: 57
Date: 10th February 1942

HMCS ST. CROIX

Commissioned 24th September 1940

Formerly named USS McCook, transferred to the FCN. On 24 July 1942 she sank U-90 in the North Atlantic. On 4 May 1943 HMC Ships SHEDIAC and ST. CROIX sank U-87 in the North Atlantic. While escorting convoy ON.202, south of Iceland, HMCS ST. CROIX was torpedoed and sunk by U-305. She became the first victim of an acoustic torpedo. Five officers and 76 men were rescued by HMS Iichen, but only one of these survived the loss of Iichen two days later.

Type of Ship: 'Town' Class Destroyer
Lives Lost: 148
Date: 20th September 1943

HMCS TRENTONIAN

Commissioned 1st December 1943

She was torpedoed by U1004 and sunk near Falmouth, England

Type of Ship: 'Flower' Class Corvette
Lives Lost: 6
Date: 22nd February 1945

HMCS VALLEYFIELD

Commissioned 7th December 1943

She parted company with convoy ONM.234 and shortly afterward was torpedoed and sunk off Cape Race, Newfoundland by U548. She was the only RCN ship of her class to be lost.

Type of Ship: 'River' Class Frigate
Lives Lost: 125
Date: 6th May 1944

HMCS WEYBURN

Commissioned 26th November 1941

She struck a mine laid off Gibraltar by U118.

Type of Ship: 'Flower' Class Corvette
Lives Lost: 9
Date: 22nd of February 1941

HMCS WINDFLOWER

Commissioned 20th October 1940

She was the first corvette built in Canada, commissioned in the RN with a Canadian crew and was turned over to the RCN the following year. While escorting convoy SC.58, she was rammed by the Dutch freighter Zypenberg in dense fog off the Grand Banks.

Type of Ship: 'Flower' Class Corvette
Lives Lost: 23
Date: 7th December 1941

A wise nation preserves its records, gathers up its muniments, decorates the tombs of its illustrious dead, repairs its great public structures, and fosters national pride and love of country by perpetual references to the sacrifices and glories of the past.

Joseph Howe, 31 August 1871



WE REMEMBER.

Submissions: Text submissions can be either paper, email or electronically produced - Word Perfect (preferred) or Word. We will format the text for you. No need to centre headings, indent paras etc.

Graphics are best submitted electronically, they should be 300dpi and a .tif file. A jpg file at 300dpi is acceptable if no compression is used. We will attempt to use any pictures, whatever the format.

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

Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation or

SAM Foundation
PO Box 5000 Stn Main
Shearwater, NS B0J 3A0

Deadlines for receiving submissions are:

Spring	1 March
Summer	1 July
Winter	15 October

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IN REMEMBRANCE OF THOSE WHO DIED IN NAVAL AVIATION

S/Lt Alan R. Johnson, RCNVR 22 May 42	30 Jul 45 Lt Robert Hampton Gray, VC, DSC, RCNVR 9 Aug 45	ABAN Joseph R.H. Cambray, RCN 28 Mar 49
Lt John B. Diamond, RCNVR 10 Jul 42	Lt Gerald A. Anderson, RCNVR 9 Aug 45	Lt Glenn W. Hutton, RCN 28 Mar 49
S/Lt Ross M. Wilson, RCNVR 8 Sep 42	Lt Frank W. McCarry, RCNVR 8 Sep 45	Lt Douglas Stevens, RCN 31 May 49
Lt John L.S. Cunningham, RCNVR 13 Jan 43	Lt George F. Clarke, RCNVR 18 Sep 45	LCdr Clifford G. Watson 23 Aug 49
Lt James E. Gaunt, RCNVR 3 Jun 43	S/Lt L. Wade, RCNVR 2 Oct 45	Lt Alfred C. Elton, RCN 23 Aug 49
SLt Donald N. Crysler, RCNVR 29 Mar 44	S/Lt Lloyd A. Nash, RCNVR 2 Oct 45	Lt Leslie F. Peever, RCN 18 Feb 50
LCdr Digby R.B. Cosh, RCNVR 14 Jun 44	Lt Robert A. Jacobs, RCNR 8 Feb 46	ABPN Walter D. Mitchell, RCN 30 Jun 50
S/Lt David A. Cary, RCNVR 18 Aug 44	S/Lt James C. Philley, RCNR 8 Feb 46	Lt Mervin C. Hare, RCN 30 Jun 50
Lt Edward G.L. Morgan, RCNVR 7 Nov 44	S/Lt Douglas J.V. Shortt, RCNVR 11 Mar 46	Lt William M. Phillips, RCN 13 Sep 50
Lt Bernard Kennedy, RCNVR 6 Jan 45	Lt George A. Greenwood, RCN 17 Oct 46	Lt John B. Hartle, RCN 28 Feb 51
Lt Arthur W. Sutton, RCNVR 24 Jan 45	Lt Clifford R. Gavel, RCNR 31 Jan 47	S/Lt John J. Morehouse, RCN 27 Mar 51
Lt Robert R. Sheppard, RCNVR 22 Mar 45	LCdr Oscar Tattersall, RCN 31 Jan 47	Lt John E. Anderson, RCN 17 Apr 52
Lt Charles R. Thurston, RCNVR 13 Apr 45	Lt Robert M. Galbraith, RCNR 17 Jul 47	Lt William J. Hutchinson, RCN 17 Apr 52
Lt David W. Baker, RCNVR 16 Apr 45	Lt John M. Lamon, RCN 17 Jul 47	Lt John K. Mason, RCN 17 Apr 52
Lt Jack A. Crogan, RCNVR 19 May 45	Lt Alexander L. Warren, RCN 16 Oct 47	Lt John S. Murphy, RCN 17 Apr 52
Lt Herbert M. Little, RCNVR 6 Jun 45	PO James W. MacDonald, RCN 4 Nov 47	S/Lt Phillip J. Plotkins, RCNR 17 Apr 52
Lt John J. Feeney, RCNVR 27 Jun 45	Lt Gerald Quarton, RCN 17 Jan 48	ABOM William J. Hunter, RCN 17 Apr 52
Lt William B. Ashbridge, RCNVR 18 Jul 45	Lt George A. Carter, RCN 24 Aug 48	ABOM Douglas S. Moffatt, RCN 17 Apr 52
Lt Charles P.R. Stevens, RCNVR 28 Jul 45	Lt Joseph T. Murphy, RCN 13 Oct 48	Lt William J. Spencer, RCN 24 Apr 52
S/Lt A. Forbes, RCNVR 30 Jul 45	Lt John S. Berge, RCN 14 Oct 48	Mid Winthrop F. Wood, RCN 28 Apr 52
Lt James F. Ross, RCNVR	Lt John M. Stewart, RCN 6 Dec 48	Lt Michael Milovich, RCN 13 Jun 52
	Lt Thomas A. Coultry, RCN 1 Feb 49	A.S/Lt James F. Washbrook, RCN 3 Mar 53
	Lt Clarence J. Pulfer, RCN 28 Mar 49	LSOM Ernest V. Marshall, RCN 3 Mar 53
	LCdr Robert A. Monks, RCN 28 Mar 49	

LSOM William E. Dutfield, RCN 3 Mar 53	S/Lt Gary E. Logan, RCN 2 Apr 59	S/Lt P.E. Kaersvang 3 Feb 68
Lt Fredrick G. Rice, RCN 9 Apr 53	ABOM Jean Nantel, RCN 2 Apr 59	S/Lt M.G. McRadu 3 Feb 68
Lt George W. Noble, RCN 4 Oct 53	Lt George B. Daugharty, RCN 2 Apr 59	ABAF M. Schofield 3 Feb 68
P1EA George W. Wraith, RCN 4 Oct 53	P2OM Alan Moore, RCN 2 Apr 59	Capt (S) R.B. Walker 19 Apr 71
Lt Leslie H. Terry, RN 26 Jan 54	ABOM Francis D. Dawson, RCN 12 Dec 59	Lt (A) D.C. Magee 19 Apr 71
A.S/Lt John A. MacLeod, RCNR 6 May 54	LCdr Roger S. Harris, RCN 12 Dec 59	WO (S) G.J. Brown 19 Apr 71
S/Lt James. D Holden, RCN 6 May 54	P2OM Jack A. Bottaro, RCN 12 Dec 59	Cpl (A) D.J. Mitchell 19 Apr 71
S/Lt Robert H. Jones, RCN 6 May 54	S/Lt Gordon G. Mowat, RCN 12 Dec 59	Capt. L.M. Ostaficiuk 7 Nov 71
P1RA John A. White, RCN 6 May 54	ABNA William D. Taylor, RCN 15 Aug 60	Lt A.E. Dick 7 Nov 71
A.S/Lt Edmund W. Alexander, RCN 4 Oct 54	Lt Louis I. Veronneau, RCN 15 Aug 60	L/S J.O.R. McCrea 7 Nov 71
A.S/Lt Ian Robertson, RCN 11 Oct 54	LSAM Edward J. Henderson, RCN 13 Dec 60	Capt E.R. Bade 20 Sep 73
S/Lt Charles L. Wright, RCN 4 Dec 54	ABNA Philip K. Lowery, RCN 12 May 61	Capt L.T. Schaufele 20 Sep 73
Lt Reynold Poulton, RCN 15 Jun 55	S/Lt J.K Rassow, RCN 16 Jun 61	Sgt S.W. Pye 20 Sep 73
Cadet John M. Glenister, RCNR 2 Aug 55	Lt William P. Dall, RCN 25 Aug 62	M/Cpl J.R. Scammell 20 Sep 73
ABAC Stuart R. Tock, RCN 16 Aug 55	Lt Larry A. Viczko, RCN 25 Aug 62	Capt K.J. McDonald 21 Mar 74
Lt Donald A. Wardrop, RCN 22 Apr 56	Lt David F. Matheson, RCN 11 Jun 63	Capt A.P. Wilson 5 Oct 76
ABAF Fredrick J. Ford, RCN 30 Jan 57	Lt O.S Clark, RCN 23 Nov 63	Capt R.A. Ross 5 Oct 76
LCdr Henry F. Utting, RCN 1 Mar 57	Lt N.J. Ogden, RCN 23 Nov 63	
S/Lt Morris Komarnisky, RCN 18 Mar 57	P2NA Robert A. Hammer, RCN 11 Jun 63	
S/Lt Conrad R. Bissett, RCN 14 May 57	S/Lt A.L. Atree, RCN 22 Dec 64	
Lt Derek A. Prout, RCN 31 May 57	P2AT Victor M. Porier, RCN 7 Jan 65	
S/Lt Julian G. Freeman, RCNR 27 Aug 57	LCdr Victor A. Williams, RCN 8 Oct 66	
Lt Edward K. Trezinski, USN 27 Aug 57	P1RN Ronald D. Greenbury, RCN 22 Mar 67	
S/Lt Howard G. Cooper, RCN 2 Oct 57	CMD.O Claire G. Tully, RCN 1 Dec 67	
Lt William T. Troy, RCN 25 Feb 58	P2OM R. Mander 1 Dec 67	
LCdr Brian Bell-Irving, RCN 4 Mar 58	S/Lt W.J. Boles, 3 Feb 68	

Rest in Peace



FROM THE CURATOR'S DESK

by Christine Hines

I must confess to a bit of writer's block for this issue of the "Warrior"; your museum team has been very busy with a number of projects since I last wrote this column, and where to start to relay these projects is really a bit daunting!

The Firefly project is coming along nicely: slow and steady wins the race, as they say. 12 Wing has allowed the museum to use some hangar space in F Hgr, to work on the aircraft in close proximity to the GRA in order to facilitate safe ground runs, rather than try to do them here at the museum. We ran into problems with the prop governor, but that has been looked at, and it has been returned to SAM. Hopefully we'll get a few engine runs in soon. The Tracker 1501 restoration is proceeding nicely. You may be interested to know we received a grant from the Kenneth R. Molson Foundation to support the project this year, which is allowing for refinishing supplies, replacement of windscreen and other supplies to preserve this unique piece of Naval Air history.

The installation of our interactive Fairey Swordfish display in June was very well received; I am happy to report two more inter actives are in the works. The content for the next interactive on the Firefly is currently being assembled, and promises to be as interesting and "edu-training" as the Swordfish display has been. Along related lines, the SAM has been trying to develop a flight sim network here in Nova Scotia, with a view to having a large flight sim hobbyist event at the museum as a signature event. A volunteer team is currently looking into the feasibility of such a venture, making connections with other similar groups, and so far, interest is high.

Patti Gemmell, our shop manager, brilliantly coordinated the museum's souvenir sales at the Atlantic Canada International Air Show (ACIAS), held at Summerside, PEI, in late August. The shop sales were brisk, and volunteers also attended the show in our new information kiosk, a purchase sponsored by SAMF under the auspices of the Halifax Regional Municipality Community Grants program (thank you SAMF and HRM!), to share information about the museum and our collection to the ACIAS attendees. BZ to Patti and all of the volunteers who attended the show and worked so hard on our behalf.

Curatorial staff are also busy at work planning for improving the SAM exhibits. The museum won funding this year to improve the museum's signage and interpretation of the aircraft, so a number of projects are currently on the drawing board. These include preparing an exhibit plan for an exhibit highlighting the Sea King in Peacekeeping missions. Having this exhibit unveiled late in 2013 would coincide nicely with plans being made to celebrate the Sea King's Golden Jubilee in Canadian service. The Sea King 50th Anniversary Association is currently planning a number of events around the 1 August 2013 anniversary date. If you have Sea King stories, photos and artefacts to contribute, please let us know! If you have internet access, check out their website: www.seaking50.ca, and consider adding your photos and memories to the forum found there.



President's Report

By Buck Rogers

The Fall months of October and November is a time to pause to give thanks and to remember - observing the Thanksgiving season and 11 November. It's also a time to admire the wonderful red and gold leaves of our countryside.

The Garnet springs Golf Course was the beautiful location for the Annual Golf tournament held 7 Sep 2011. It was well attended - a great day was had by all and finished off with a delicious meal. DEFSEC Atlantic - coordinated by Colin Stephenson - hosted the event. It was supported by some SAMF members and others and eleven thousand dollars was realized. Many thanks to all who attended - to the companies that supported the event and all the many volunteers who made it a great day. 'Well Done!'

In the previous issue of WARRIOR, I mentioned that SAMF paid off their portion of the building loan - in reality, the last payment was not due until September. On the 30th of September, the Museum and SAMF jointly held a celebration to 'Burn the Mortgage'. Members and invited guests enjoyed a great afternoon of refreshments and conversation.

Memberships mean a great deal to SAMF. At the present time, there are about 750 members. Quite a few memberships for 2011 have not yet been renewed - although reminders have gone out y phone calls, letters - or both. So please make an effort to renew your membership. Make it now and your 2012 membership will be covered. It only takes the payment of this years dues to bring you up to date!

New members are always needed and welcomed - especially family members as well as serving and retired personnel from 12 Wing. After all when there are no longer any Naval Air people around - who will support this fine Museum we have created. Just give it some thought!!

Let's make 2012 a "donation Year" - as more funds are needed for a proposed new building. A substantial donation will benefit a tax receipt for 2011 year end. You will be remembered for your kindness.

The Tile Program is still a great fund raiser and we would like to see more familiar names on our Wall of Honour. Remember, most of us became who we are today by 'serving'.

The Annual General Meeting was held 9 Sep 11. A small number of members were present - but a good meeting resulted. The following members were elected for the year 2011-2012:

Chairperson	Owen Walton
Vice Chairperson	Bill Gillespie
President	'Buck' Rogers
Vice President	John Knudson
Secretary	Kay Collacutt
Treasurer	Peter Staley

Thanks to the members of the Board of Directors and the membership for their loyal support and dedication. Enjoy a healthy and safe winter.

Seasons Greetings to All!

CONTROVERSY *(A dispute, especially a public one, between sides holding opposing views. A reason or matter for dispute or contention.)*

Well that sounds simple enough. We've heard of a few 'controversies' that, to some, have not been satisfied.

Who was the last Pilot to fly off the Bonaventure?

Who shot down the Red Baron?

Then there is this huge controversy, not necessarily about Shearwater, but certainly Naval Air was involved. i.e. What ship's aircraft fired the torpedo that disabled BISMARCK? Who fired the torpedo that disabled the BISMARCK? Do you know? Throughout this edition, you will see articles on this subject. This info may help you decide. Let us know what you think. BTW, there are many very interesting books written about Bismarck and her ending.

So let's start off with 'controversy'.

Mr. Rodney Pattison writes:

In part: I recently read an article in your Spring WARRIOR magazine of an interview with John Moffat, and in case you are under a misapprehension, I thought you should know the full facts about who actually crippled the Bismarck, despite his book titled quite misleadingly, as 'I sank the Bismarck'. Incidentally, I wrote to both him, his publishers and Mark Rossiter at the time to try to get the title changed to more appropriately 'We crippled the Bismarck' but he never replied - obviously more concerned with sales of the book itself rather than the truth.

Ludovic Kennedy's well researched book Pursuit in fact gives credit to my late father Ken Pattison or Feather Godfrey-Fawsett who both successfully attacked her starboard side. Moffat, in fact, attacked to port in the first wave and when debriefed never claimed a hit. Sadly an American historian Mark Horan made a wrong assumption that he fired the lucky shot way back in 1997 and this 'myth' developed as a result, able assisted by Moffat himself. Fortunately when James Cameron, the film director, dived on the Bismarck with Russian submersibles and roaming cameras in 2002 all was revealed when he filmed the jammed rudder in her starboard steering compartment, and this can be seen in his documentary.

Regarding Moffat's comments on how he carried out his attack assisted by his observer, this can be taken with a pinch of salt. My father when he heard it said "Absolute rubbish, anyone would think we were a bunch of amateurs - anything but, we were trained to drop our torpedoes at 900 yds, 90 knots and 90 feet." As you know, the communication between pilot and observer in a Swordfish was a crude voice pipe, so how could his observer be leaning over the side calling the shots and of course no instruments, with him sitting in a separate cockpit behind the pilot? I think enough said on this matter. Yours

sincerely Rodney Pattison.

Swordfish - A Strike in the Stern
Ernest Cable, SAM Historian

One of the classic sea battles during the Battle of the Atlantic in the Second World War was the gun duel between the Royal Navy's mighty battle cruiser, *HMS Hood* and the newly commissioned German battleship, *Bismarck*. With her low freeboard the 48,000 ton *Hood* was long lean and fast, she was the pride of the Royal Navy and the symbol of British supremacy at sea. The 50,000 ton *Bismarck*, the flagship of German Kriegsmarine, was superior in firing and staying power to any single ship of the British navy. The *Bismarck's* sinking of the *Hood* in, May 1941, is well documented in the annals of naval history, as is the British pursuit of *Bismarck* to avenge the loss of the mighty *Hood*. Less well known is the pivotal role played by a small number of obsolescent Fairey Swordfish biplanes in preventing *Bismarck's* escape and leading to her ultimate demise.



Battleship Bismarck

Germany Attacks Convoys

By the autumn of 1940 the fate of Great Britain looked very dim. Nazi Germany had defeated and occupied all of Western Europe including Norway. The German invasion of Britain was stemmed only by the Royal Air Force's (RAF) razor thin defeat of the German Luftwaffe in the epic Battle of Britain in the summer of 1940. For its survival Britain depended on the American Lend-Lease program. Every bullet, gun, tank, truck and fighter plane that went to Britain under the Lend-Lease program had to go by sea. So did the cheese, beef, bacon, flour, oil and gasoline that kept the British people fed, warm, and healthy. These cargoes were shipped in huge convoys of freighters and tankers from the east coast of Canada and the United States.

Germany's strategy was to block the flow of goods that permitted the British to carry on the fight. The Kriegsmarine's fleet of submarines (U-boats) using "wolf pack" tactics was the first line of attack dedicated to stemming of the flow of shipping to Britain. The Royal Navy and the smaller Royal Canadian Navy were hard pressed to defend the convoys against the growing U-boat fleet. In all of 1940, the U-boats sank 520 ships

amounting to more than two million tons of shipping. By May 1941, U-boats had sunk another 215 merchant ships with a loss of more than one million tons of shipping. The U-boats were ably aided by the Luftwaffe's long range Focke-Wulf Condor bombers flying from bases in France and Norway that accounted for the loss of hundreds of ships and thousands of tons of shipping.

Bismarck Sails

The Kriegsmarine's small but very modern surface fleet was the third threat to Allied convoys. The greatest surface threats were the new battleships, *Bismarck* and *Tirpitz*, nearing completion in German shipyards. In April 1941, German Grand Admiral Raeder laid out a plan known as "Rhine Exercise" in which *Bismarck* in concert with other battleships were to raid the North Atlantic sea lanes, destroying merchantmen and their naval escorts alike. The battleship *Gneisenau* was originally to accompany *Bismarck* but she was heavily damaged during a RAF torpedo attack in Brest harbour and the smaller battle cruiser, *Prinz Eugen*, was substituted in her place. On 18 May, *Prinz Eugen* followed by *Bismarck* quietly slipped out of the harbour at Gotenhafen (Gdynia, Poland) into the Baltic Sea. Their course took them around the southern tip of Norway then northward into the Norwegian Sea. The two German ships were spotted from shore while passing Kristiansand, Norway and the information that the two German warships were at sea was passed to British intelligence; the secrecy of their attempt to break out into the Atlantic was blown! The British were alarmed that the *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen* had broken out into the open sea to raid the Atlantic convoy routes. Admiral Lutjens, in command of the German task force aboard *Bismarck*, decided that he could evade further detection by sailing north of Iceland then turning south through the Denmark Strait to enter his Atlantic operating area about 900 miles (1,500 km) west of Ireland.

After receiving special ULTRA intelligence that confirmed Admiral Lutjens' intention to raid the North Atlantic convoy routes, Vice Admiral Tovey, the British Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet, ordered Vice Admiral Holland to search for the German raiders in the Iceland-Faeroes gap. Holland's Battle Cruiser Force consisted of the battle cruiser *HMS Hood* and the battleship *HMS Prince of Wales*. Tovey also instructed the heavy cruiser, *HMS Suffolk* to join Admiral Wake-Walker embarked in the heavy cruiser *HMS Norfolk* to patrol the Denmark Strait to search the northern route for the *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen*. To cover the southern route south of Iceland, Vice Admiral Tovey sortied from Scapa Flow in Northern Scotland in his flagship, the battleship *HMS King George V*, accompanied by the aircraft carrier, *HMS Victorious*.

Hood Attacks Bismarck

On 23 May at 1922 hours, *Suffolk* radioed an enemy contact report: "One battleship, one cruiser in sight at 20°. Range seven nautical miles, course 240°." Rear Admiral Wake-Walker ordered *Norfolk* and *Suffolk* to shadow the German warships from a safe distance. *Suffolk* with her new Type 284 radar could track of *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen* from a range of 13 miles (21 km); *Norfolk* with her earlier Type 286M radar had a detection range of only a few miles.



HMS Hood

Suffolk's and *Norfolk's* 8-inch guns were no match for *Bismarck's* 15-inch guns so if either cruiser found itself within effective range of *Bismarck's* guns for more than a minute or so, disaster would be swift. *Norfolk* and *Suffolk* took up station on *Bismarck's* port and starboard quarters respectively at ranges of 10-14 miles (16-23 km).

From *Suffolk's* position reports, Vice Admiral Holland in *Hood* now knew that *Bismarck* was only 300 miles (500 km) north northeast of his position and steered a course to intercept. Holland had the advantage of knowing *Bismarck's* position and course whereas *Bismarck* knew nothing of *Hood's* whereabouts. Meanwhile, back in London the Admiralty saw from *Suffolk's* reports where *Bismarck* and her consort would enter the Atlantic and realized the severe threat posed to eleven convoys. The Admiralty ordered Vice Admiral Somerville's Force H in Gibraltar to sea immediately to protect the convoys lurking into danger. Force H consisted of Somerville's flagship the battle cruiser, *HMS Renown*, the aircraft carrier, *HMS Ark Royal*, the light cruiser, *HMS Sheffield*, and the heavy cruiser, *HMS Dorsetshire*.

On 24 May at 0535, *Prince of Wales* sighted the enemy's mastheads on the horizon. *Hood* led the charge towards *Bismarck*, approaching *Bismarck* bow on. This limited *Hood* to firing only her four forward 15-inch guns and *Prince of Wales* to her six forward 14-inch guns; the aft turrets on each of the British ships were unable to engage the targets; the advantage was that *Hood* and *Prince of Wales* presented smaller targets. *Hood* fired first; her first salvo unleashed from 27,000 yards; no hits. Admiral Lutjens brilliantly manoeuvred *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen* to "cross the T" of the British so that their full broadsides, all eight of *Bismarck's* 15-inch guns and all eight of *Prinz Eugen's* 8-inch guns, could bear on the British ships. After *Prinz Eugen* had fired several salvos at the *Hood*, a rapidly spreading red-orange fire was observed; two of *Prinz Eugen's* shells stuck the ready-use locker for *Hood's* port after 4-inch gun. Both *Hood* and *Prince of Wales* were notoriously "wet" with their low forecastles; on their current course mountains of green water crashed over their forward turrets and optical range finders, making it difficult for the British gunners to find the range to the German ships. In mid-battle, Holland realized his precarious situation and changed tactics, altering to a course parallel to *Bismarck* to bring all of the British forward and aft turrets into play and slug it out with the German ships broadside to broadside. At 0600, *Bismarck* fired her fifth

broadside at the *Hood*, one or more of her armour-piercing 1,764 pound (800 kg) shells penetrated *Hood's* thin deck armour and exploded in her magazine. The mighty *Hood* quickly split in two and sank; all but three of her 1,416 man crew perished.

The Pursuit

Heavily out gunned, *Prince of Wales* made a hasty retreat with *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen* in full pursuit. In the ensuing sea battle *Prince of Wales* was heavily damaged but not crippled. Throughout the terrible pounding, *Prince of Wales* gunners scored three hits on *Bismarck*. The first 14-inch shell crashed through *Bismarck's* forecastle above the waterline but below the bow wave, entering the port side and exiting through the starboard side. En route the shell ruptured two fuel tanks and caused *Bismarck* to take on 4,000 tons of seawater in her forecastle. *Prince of Wales's* second shell struck *Bismarck's* port side below the waterline but did not penetrate the heavy armour; however, it seriously damaged a generator room and boiler room behind the hull plates and ruptured several fuel storage tanks in the ship's double bottom. *Bismarck* was now leaving a telltale streak of oil in her wake. The third 14-inch shell blew away the service boat and the catapult for the ship's floatplane. The *Prince of Wales* escaped to the southeast under a dense cloud of smoke and *Prinz Eugen* abandoned the chase to assist *Bismarck*.

Admiral Lutjens was forced to abandon "Rhine Exercise" and ordered *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen* to steer south-easterly for the French port at St. Nazaire. *Prince of Wales* joined *Norfolk* and *Suffolk* which continued to shadow *Bismarck* from her stern quarters. Emotions ran high in the Admiralty Operations Centre; the *Hood* had been more than just another large warship, she was the pride of the Royal Navy which *Bismarck* had sunk in less than 10 minutes. Every available capital ship in the British Navy had to be concentrated to hunt down the *Bismarck*.

That evening at 1800, *Prinz Eugen* separated from *Bismarck* by turning on a southerly course; her orders were to refuel from two pre-positioned tankers and continue her search for the convoys en route from Halifax. Lutjens hoped to evade his shadowers by making undetected turns in the rain squalls and fog banks of the approaching gale.

Swordfish Attack from Victorious

In late afternoon, Admiral Tovey ordered the aircraft carrier *Victorious* and four cruisers to detach from the main body of the Home Fleet and race to about 100 miles (160 km) off *Bismarck's* position and launch an air strike. At 2215, in appalling conditions of high foaming seas, low scudding cloud and a heavily pitching flight deck, *Victorious* launched nine Swordfish torpedo bombers from 825 Squadron under command of LCdr Esmonde. Making barely 85 knots in the face of the gale, Esmonde planned to find *Norfolk* and *Suffolk* then home in on *Bismarck* 15 miles (26 km) ahead. On spotting the *Bismarck* through the clouds, Esmonde commenced the attack from a steep dive of 180 knots; with open cockpits their faces were fully exposed to the wind and prop wash. The eight Swordfish (one aircraft lost its way in the clouds) began their pullout about a mile back from the target and levelled out at 100 feet (30 meters) above the sea, reduced speed to 90 knots, then descended to 60 feet (20 meters) above the ocean swell. The Swordfish formation then split into three flights. The first flight attacked from *Bismarck's* port beam as the second attacked from her port bow; the third flight flew across her bow

and banked sharply to attack from starboard. The pilots had to hold a steady aiming course in a slightly nose-up attitude so that the torpedo would enter the water at the correct angle and run true. *Bismarck* zigzagged violently to avoid the torpedoes, her pom-poms and Oerlikon anti-aircraft guns threw up a hail of fire at the torpedo bombers. Miraculously, none of the nine Swordfish was fatally damaged.

During the attack run Sub-Lieutenant Thompson, flying Swordfish C, witnessed a hit on LCdr Esmonde's aircraft and lost sight of him as his leader climbed into the cloud. The second aircraft in the flight, Swordfish B, flown by Lieutenant MacLean, also disappeared into the cloud. Thompson bore in on the *Bismarck* alone. At 500 yards, he released his torpedo; the Swordfish suddenly climbed without the weight of the torpedo. Thompson, his observer and gunner saw their torpedo strike the *Bismarck* on the port side causing a large belch of black smoke from her funnel. The only torpedo from the attack to hit *Bismarck* struck the armour belt around her hull. The hull remained intact, the shock from the 300 pound (120 kg) warhead caused only superficial damage, but the internal shock killed one sailor and injured another five. The nine Swordfish returned to *Victorious*, many of the pilots making their first night deck landing.

Bismarck Evades

Bismarck barely had enough fuel, 5,100 tons, to shape course from the mid-Atlantic to a port in western France. German destroyers, reconnaissance aircraft and bombers were being readied to escort *Bismarck* into either St. Nazaire or Brest. Admiral Donitz ordered six U-boats to take up position along *Bismarck's* track. Donitz also ordered four U-boats to take up station in the Bay of Biscay as a second trap for *Bismarck's* pursuers.

Admiral Tovey in *HMS King George V* accompanied by the battle cruiser *HMS Repulse* decided to close *Bismarck* from the southeast. However, their fuel was running low as was the carrier, *Victorious*. There was also concern that Vice Admiral Somerville's Force H high-speed steaming from Gibraltar would also be low on fuel.

Rear Admiral Wake-Walker in *Norfolk* accompanied by *Suffolk* and *Prince of Wales* continued to shadow *Bismarck* and in doing so drove the *Bismarck* toward Tovey. The three ships were positioned to detect a possible *Bismarck* turn to port toward the French coast with *Suffolk* taking position off *Bismarck's* port beam. The three ships zigzagged 30 degrees off their base course to confuse any stalking U-boats. *Suffolk* steamed for ten minutes outward from her base course, then for the same length of time inward. *Bismarck* was always out of *Suffolk's* radar range when she reached the last few miles of the outward leg of her zigzag but quickly reappeared on the inward leg. At 0300 25 May, Lutjens ordered *Bismarck* to steer west, then northwest and finally to the north. The *Bismarck* began to turn just as *Suffolk* reached the outward limit of her port zigzag. *Suffolk* expected *Bismarck* to reappear on its radar as she swung back to her base course. But she was gone! Lutjens had unwittingly cut back across the track of his pursuers before resuming his southeasterly course to St. Nazaire.

Rear Admiral Wake-Walker directed *Suffolk*, *Norfolk* and *Prince of Wales* to search from *Bismarck's* last known position by fanning out in an arc from west to south in fear that *Bismarck* intended to resume her hunt for convoys in the western Atlantic. The aircraft carrier *Victorious* was dispatched

to *Bismarck's* last known position so that her Swordfish could join the search. Vice Admiral Somerville was diverted from meeting a highly valued troop convoy carrying thousands of soldiers and ordered to head for the eastern Atlantic due west of the Bay of Biscay. The aircraft carrier, *HMS Ark Royal*, was part of Somerville's Force H and the only other carrier available.

Somerville's Force H was steaming into a gale. *Ark Royal* was pitching fiercely; it was slow and dangerous just to bring her 20 Swordfish up from the hangar deck to the flight deck and arm them; indeed, it would be near impossible to conduct flight operations. Somerville knew that he had to slow down to make life and fighting less difficult for his sailors, but he knew every knot lost improved *Bismarck's* chances of reaching a safe port. Indeed, a frenzied increase in German radio traffic along the French coast was a good indicator that *Bismarck* was headed for France. The Admiralty ordered Somerville's Force H to search for the *Bismarck* on the assumption that she was headed for Brest.

Bismarck Found

At 0345 on 26 May, two Royal Air Force (RAF) PBY Catalinas took off from Lough Erne, Northern Ireland to search an area that *Bismarck* would likely steam through on her way to Brest or St. Nazaire. Flying Officer Dennis Briggs, the captain of Catalina Z from 209 Squadron, descended to 500 feet after crossing the Irish coast; the weather for a visual search, even for a large 50,000 ton battleship, was atrocious. Briggs' co-pilot was U.S. Navy Ensign Leonard Smith. The second Catalina, M from 240 Squadron, had a crew with an even more international flavour; U.S. Navy Lieutenant (jg) Johnson was the aircraft captain and the navigator was RCAF Sergeant Gaynor Williams. As officers from a neutral country neither Smith nor Johnson should have been involved in the *Bismarck* pursuit, but the situation was so urgent that diplomatic correctness was ignored. Smith and Johnson were among 16 American volunteers who had agreed to accompany the first of the new American Lend-Lease Catalinas to England and train the RAF in their use.

At 1000, about 15 minutes after arriving in their search area Smith saw something off his port bow about eight miles away. Then there it was, a very large warship steaming at high speed to the southeast! Smith banked toward the ship and climbed into the cloud deck at 800 feet. He hoped to drop out of the overcast far enough away to shadow the ship without getting into anti-aircraft gun range. When Smith broke out the cloud he was right on top of the ship and the sky erupted with anti-aircraft fire. Catalina Z/209 was badly holed but managed to transmit, "One battleship bearing 240 degrees 5 miles, course 150 degrees, my position 49° 33'S 55° 21' 47' west. Time 1030 26 (May)". After assessing the extensive damage to their Catalina in the cloud cover, Briggs and Smith resumed the search but could not regain contact with the warship. The second Catalina, M/240, left its search area to join in the search and despite the low cloud and rain squalls managed to locate the *Bismarck*. Catalina Z/209 eventually flew along side M/240 and on learning that the *Bismarck* had been re-located returned to base. Following the Catalina's contact report one of *Ark Royal's* Swordfish was dispatched to the area and about an hour later spotted the *Bismarck*. Between the two Catalinas and *Ark Royal's* Swordfish the *Bismarck* was never lost again. The two Catalinas returned safely at Lough Erne after being airborne more than 20 hours.

Ark Royal's Swordfish Attack

Receiving the Catalina's contact report spurred Somerville to also dispatch the light cruiser, *HMS Sheffield*, from Force H with orders to close and shadow the enemy. Somerville thought the signal flags hoisted to his flagship's yardarm would announce to all that *Sheffield* was being sent ahead. But the chief yeoman of signals signalled *Sheffield* with a signal light instead, resulting in *Ark Royal* being unaware that *Sheffield* was being dispatched to trail *Bismarck*. This later led to near disastrous results.

The Royal Navy now knew the *Bismarck's* location and where she was headed. At *Bismarck's* speed of about 20 knots the British pursuers had only about 18 hours before *Bismarck* would have air cover from swarms of Luftwaffe aircraft based in France. *Bismarck* had to be slowed down. Somerville ordered *Ark Royal* to attack with her Swordfish. He knew the Swordfish's small 18-inch aerial torpedoes could not sink *Bismarck* but they may slow her down. There was a strong northwest wind blowing creating 10-foot waves; the *Ark Royal's* stern was rising and falling 56 feet (18 meters) at times. The flight deck was slippery with sea spray making it difficult to manhandle the Swordfish on the hangar and flight decks. At 1450, the first strike of 15 Swordfish struggled into the air.

The observer in first aircraft in the No. 4 subflight gained ASV radar contact and visually signalled the rest of the squadron the change in course to the contact. As the pilots took up attack position and dove through the clouds, the strike leader, LCdr Stewart-Moore and his pilot, Lieutenant Hunter recognized the twin-funnel target as the *Sheffield!* (*Bismarck* had three funnels.) The Swordfish were not equipped with air-to-air radios and could not talk to one another. Unaware that *Sheffield* had been sent ahead and would be in the area, many of the Swordfish crews did not question the ship's identity and one by one attacked the *Sheffield* as Stewart-Moore and Hunter looked on in horror. Miraculously, all but a few of the torpedoes exploded on hitting the water and *Sheffield* was able to dodge the rest. The cause of the torpedo malfunctions was unknown, perhaps faulty pistols or tired and seasick sailors who set them improperly.

At 1720, the first strike returned to *Ark Royal* and was refueled and checked for damage on the open sea-swept flight deck. For the second strike the Swordfish were rearmed with torpedoes with contact pistols vice the magnetic pistols that had failed so miserably in the errant attack on the *Sheffield*. By 1910, the second strike of 15 Swordfish, this time led by LCdr Tim Coode with LCdr Stewart-Moore second in command, launched from *Ark Royal* and headed for *Sheffield* as a reference point from which to attack *Bismarck*. After a 45 minute flight the *Sheffield* was spotted and signalled *Bismarck's* position ahead. At 2030, the Swordfish, in six subflights of two to three aircraft each, let down through the rain squalls and heavy clouds and attacked *Bismarck* from all directions. *Bismarck* responded with an intense barrage of anti-aircraft fire and zigzagged violently to throw off the pilots' aim.

LCdr Coode led the three Swordfish of No. 1 subflight in first; they were accidentally joined by a fourth aircraft from No. 3 subflight. All four torpedoes missed but Coode hung around some time in the low cloud and rain, saw no other attacks, and assumed they were the only ones to find the *Bismarck*. He signalled *Ark Royal* "Estimate no hits". But,

the three Swordfish of No. 2 subflight, led by Lieutenant. "Feather" Godfrey-Faussett (so called because of his bulk), in an attempt to get clear of cloud commenced their diving attack on a radar contact from 9,000 feet. When Godfrey-Faussett broke out of cloud he was on Bismarck's starboard beam and found that only Sub-Lieutenant Kenneth Pattison was with him, the third aircraft flown by Sub-Lieutenant Beale was nowhere to be seen. Godfrey-Faussett and Pattison pressed home the attack. *Bismarck* attempted to comb their torpedoes by turning hard to port, but the attackers thought they saw a hit.

While this attack was in progress five Swordfish from No. 3 and 4 subflights descended from the clouds astern of *Bismarck* and attacked from the port quarter. No hits were claimed. Meanwhile, Beale and his observer, Sub-Lieutenant Friend, had returned to *Sheffield* to get directions to the enemy ship. On finding *Bismarck*, Beale made a long, brave upwind attack at 50 feet and dropped his torpedo at 800 yards. Friend watched for signs of a hit and was rewarded by a plume of water rising on the port side amidships. The three Swordfish of No. 5 subflight and the two Swordfish of No. 6 subflight dropped their torpedoes without a hit. In a half hour the attack was over and by 2205, the first of the Swordfish returned to *Ark Royal*. All aircraft landed on safely but three were so badly shot up they would never fly again.

Swordfish Damage Bismarck

The torpedo that hit amidships on the port side exploded against the armour belt and like the one from *Victorious'* Swordfish did little damage. But, the strike in the stern by either Godfrey-Faussett's or Pattison's torpedo created chaos. Down in the *Bismarck's* engine rooms floor plates buckled, welds split, cables stripped, and water poured in through the port shaft well. The starboard engines shut down and the ship was temporarily without power. Damage control parties reported that the hole blasted in *Bismarck's* hull was so large that the steering rooms were flooded and had to be evacuated. Seamen standing over the steering mechanism stared down into the open sea. The twin parallel rudders were jammed 12 degrees port.

Without receiving any battle reports that *Bismarck* had been damaged or slowed, Admiral Tovey was distraught that *Bismarck* had eluded the British pursuit to avenge the sinking of the *Hood*. Then, one of the two Swordfish sent to shadow the *Bismarck* after the attack reported that her course was 090°, due east. This was followed by second report that her course was now 000°, due north; this did not make sense for ship fleeing to a safe haven to the southeast. Two minutes later the Swordfish reported enemy course 340°, northwest. Any skepticism about the reports was alleviated when *Sheffield* confirmed the unexplained course changes. Tovey concluded *Bismarck* was seriously damaged! Somerville's earlier faint hope had come true. The slow, obsolescent Swordfish had, indeed, slowed *Bismarck* preventing her from reaching the Luftwaffe's protective air cover before the Royal Navy could attack! Ignoring his critical shortage of fuel, Tovey raced for the kill.

Bismarck Destroyed

Tovey in *King George V* accompanied by the battleship *HMS Rodney* attacked *Bismarck* at 0847 the next morning. At 0902, a 16-inch shell from *Rodney's* 16-inch guns slammed into *Bismarck's* upper deck forward. *Bismarck* returned accurate straddling fire but scored no direct hits on her attackers. With her rudders jammed and unable to

manoeuvre she was at a severe disadvantage. *Norfolk*, *Sheffield*, and *Dorsetshire* joined the fight. Another incoming shell destroyed *Bismarck's* fire-control centre; her two remaining aft turrets fired their last shells at 0931. Then shell after shell slammed into *Bismarck's* superstructure, black smoke and flames rose from her decks. She was heeling dangerously to port when the order was given to abandon ship. At 1036, Tovey ordered *Dorsetshire* to finish the battleship off with her torpedoes. Over 2,100 of *Bismarck's* officers and sailors perished in her final battle. The sinking of the *Bismarck* was not only a decisive victory for the Royal Navy over an archrival, but also, it provided a much needed boost in esprit de corps for the British people who were disheartened by the loss of the mighty *Hood* and a war that was not going well.

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The Ballad of Roger Ball

(Written by the crew members of the USS BORDELON DD881, a plane-guard destroyer, who monitor all radio transmissions between the carrier and landing aircraft. "Roger Ball" is a mandatory call when the pilot has visual contact with the carrier's visual/optical landing system.)

Throughout the daty, we monitor the CCA.
Whose name stands out above the rest?
Who never seems to feel distressed?
By whom is BORDELON impressed?
Roger Ball.

Be it jet, or Able Dog or even Stoof -
As each plane rounds into the groof -
Who states his name with savoir faire
With pear-shaped tones coming o'er the air?
Who never seems to have a care?
Roger Ball.

What type of man, this aviator,
Who works through movie call and later?
In he a Hercules in might
With eyes that pierce the blackest night?
A paragon who is always right,
Roger Ball.

We're sure that Moms throughout the nation
Of sons who serve with dedication
Would res secure if they could know
Of this man who seems to make things so ...
This steadfast, staunch and sturdy pro,
Roger Ball.

When the Air Force had a navy

by BGen (Ret'd) Terry Leversedge



RCAF high-speed launch M-235 Huron speeds to a rescue.
Credit: Library and Archives photo PA-1179567

On May 2, 1944, off the east coast of Canada, buffeted by wind and waves, soaked, shivering and miserable from the cold, the pilot of a ditched Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) Hurricane fighter sat alone in his small dinghy and peered anxiously through the mist and rain for some signs of a rescuer.

With darkness fast approaching and the wind rising, he realized only too well that spending the night alone on the inhospitable North Atlantic was a risky and potentially deadly business. Then, barely audible at first – over the sound of the wind and water – came the faint throaty growl of powerful engines. Moments later, the RCAF high-speed rescue launch (HSL), M-407 Abadik, came alongside. Soon, another grateful friend of the “Air Force’s navy” was wrapped in blankets, sipping a hot drink, thankful to be safe and ready to fly again. This story was to be repeated numerous times by the HSLs of the RCAF Marine Section.

RCAF high speed rescue launches

For a brief period of time both the RCAF and the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) operated the same type of equipment in the form of high-speed motor torpedo boats (MTBs).

In the early weeks of May 1940, Hubert Scott-Paine, chairman of the newly-formed Canadian Power Boat Company (CPBC) – the Canadian subsidiary of the British Power Boat Company – arranged for a prototype model of the 40-foot armoured target boat (ATB) to be shipped from England, at the British company’s expense, for review by the RCAF Marine Section officials.

Later, on July 16, 1940, the prototype Private Venture model of his 70-foot motor torpedo boat also arrived from England, again at British Power Boat Company’s expense, for review by both RCN and RCAF officers.

CPBC then tendered a proposal to the newly-formed Department of Munitions and Supply in Ottawa, for six 71-foot HSLs and six 40-foot ATBs for the Air Force, and 12 71-foot MTBs for the Navy. The HSLs and the MTBs were

both based on Scott-Paine’s 70-foot Private Venture design. The HSLs were to become the “glamour boats” of the RCAF.

The Air Force had in fact first acquired a number of surplus prototype boats from the U.S. Navy as well as two similar ex-RCMP fast launches. The U.S. boats came from a variety of manufacturers and all were prototype MTBs that the U.S. Navy had first developed and then discarded as better designs came along. These prototype boats became surplus to requirements and were made available to the Canadian Government under the “Lend-Lease” arrangement instituted between the U.S. and her Commonwealth allies during the war.

The new HSLs were built primarily from African mahogany and were powered by two Packard-built Rolls-Royce Merlin engines of 1,350 horsepower, making them capable of speeds up to 45 knots.

The new HSLs were originally equipped with .50 calibre machine guns, mounted in a single, perspex-enclosed Dewandre turret, similar to an aircraft gun turret. But these particular turrets relied on electric power, which proved to be less satisfactory than the hydraulic turrets more popular during the war for aircraft use. During trials of a similar design for the U.S. Navy, the Dewandre turret misted up with condensation and, consequently in U.S. Navy use, they were removed. The RCAF boats kept their Dewandre turrets but they do not appear to have been used much operationally.

Similarly, when the U.S. Navy boats arrived, some had been fitted with depth charge racks. The RCN decreed that these should be left in place as they could then be used to attack enemy submarines. Although the RCAF Marine Section was happy to oblige and did drop one or two depth charges to see if they functioned properly, there is no official record of any RCAF boat attacking enemy submarines at any time during the war.

Of the six new HSLs, two went to the Eastern Air Command at Dartmouth, N.S., and four to Western Air Command in Vancouver

CPBC also built six ATBs for the RCAF Marine Section. Powered with three 110 h.p. engines, allowing a top speed of 26 knots, these 40-foot mahogany boats were intended to be armour-plated to withstand a standard 11-lb practice bomb and were therefore planned to be used as “live targets”. In practice, however, the armour plate was never fitted and these beautiful boats were primarily used for utility work or for towing targets.

The RCAF Marine Section worked extremely hard throughout the war years – fortunately with few major mishaps and personnel losses. Several vessels suffered severe damage but fortunately were able to be repaired and returned to service. The M-208 Nootka suffered a collision with the U.S. Navy stores ship Pontiac, which, at 2,321 tons, was considerably larger than the 40-ton Nootka. In the collision, the stern of the Nootka was

completely sheared off. The vessel was repaired at the marine squadron in Dartmouth.

Similarly, one of the Nootka's sister ships, M-233 Abanaki suffered an explosion caused by a propane leak. The wheelhouse was effectively destroyed by the force of the blast. Fortunately, there were no injuries and the vessel was also repaired and returned to service.

The squadron daily logs on both the east and west coasts unfortunately routinely noted both injuries and deaths of marine personnel from accidental causes.

A poignant example of the accidental deaths again involves M-233 Abanaki. On May 17, 1945, ten days after the declaration of victory in Europe, Air Craftman First Class Brenton Leslie Attwood, from Shelburne County, N.S., who was serving as an electrician, fell from the deck of the Abanaki while it was undergoing maintenance in the No. 102 Marine Squadron hangar in Dartmouth. While he fell only a distance of 10 feet, he landed with the side of his head on the concrete floor of the hangar. He suffered a skull fracture and other internal injuries and consequently was rushed to the station hospital. Two days later, he died as a result of his injuries and he was subsequently given a full military funeral.

The HSLs figured in many searches and several high-seas rescues until their eventual retirement in 1952. In keeping to the terms of the Lend-Lease Agreement with the U.S., the former U.S. Navy boats were returned to the U.S. in February-March 1945.

RCN motor torpedo boats

The history of motor torpedo boats (MTBs) in naval service was very brief. Although the prototype model of the 71-foot Canadian MBT was delivered before winter of 1940-41, construction of the remaining 11 vessels was hampered by delays.

Meanwhile, the British requested the boats of 1st RCN MTB Flotilla for operations in the Mediterranean theatre. The RCN agreed, since they were deemed as no longer relevant to anti-submarine operations in home waters, and the British took over the CPBC's contract. After the boats had been officially transferred to the Royal Navy, it is perhaps an ironic twist of fate that, while being ferried to their new service, a Canadian-manned boat engaged in combat operations.

While in transit to the Caribbean, MTB-332, although not equipped for anti-submarine warfare, engaged the German U-boat U-123 off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, in April 1942.

In yet a further twist, these MTBs ultimately did not serve in the Mediterranean with the Royal Navy. Instead they were briefly transferred to the West Indies and were then – in most cases – given to the Royal Air Force for use as high-speed rescue launches locally and as far away as India, in a role similar to those used at home by the RCAF.

The short-lived history of Canadian MTBs in domestic RCN service had now virtually come to an end.

SAR Formalization

Formal search and rescue (SAR) simply did not exist in Canada before the Second World War. Usually the best response available to any distress was the gallant efforts of whatever vessel or aircraft happened to be in the area at the time. They would simply respond to the emergency as best they could.

During the Second World War, when the volume of flying increased tremendously, the RCAF conducted search operations using whatever aircraft, vessels and personnel that could be spared from their primary operational or training roles. The RCAF cooperated in searches for civilian aircraft as well, but these searches were usually directed by the RCMP or other police forces.

Although a number of heroic rescues were accomplished in this ad hoc manner, by 1944 it became evident that a more structured search and rescue arrangement was required to support the growing aviation community in Canada. It would need specialized equipment, highly trained personnel, and better communication facilities to control and coordinate rescue resources.

Consequently, in 1944 the federal government created the Interdepartmental Committee on Search and Rescue. The Defence Committee agreed that an adequate rescue organization for aircraft in distress could be provided by a combination of existing services brought together cooperatively. It was decided that the Department of National Defence for Air would undertake responsibility for effect the necessary coordination. This principle was quickly accepted by government and, on Jan. 16, 1946, the RCAF assumed chairmanship of the Interdepartmental Committee on Search and Rescue.

These changes to the search and rescue structure and responsibilities plus the changes in technology with the introduction of helicopters all significantly affected the RCAF Marine Section.

Early in 1951, a meeting took place at Air Force Headquarters in Ottawa to discuss how to deal with the future. At that time, it was even suggested that the men, together with their remaining boats, should all become part of the RCN. In the aftermath of these discussions, a complete transfer did not happen but the decision was made to draw down activities and to disband the RCAF's east and west coast Marine Squadrons.

Both east and west coast units carried out their reduced operational duties until Nov. 1, 1951 when the RCN officially assumed the sea-rescue commitments. With the disbandment of the squadrons, many small boats held on RCAF marine inventory were turned over to Crown Assets for disposal.

However, the HSLs were not disposed of and – ironically once again – the RCN acquired the HSLs on both coasts for use in the sea-rescue role. But again, still not interested in MTBs, they operated the ex-RCAF rescue boats for only a very brief period of time. By the end of 1952, the Navy

turned over all of the HSLs to Crown Assets Disposal Corporation for final disposal.

Civilians purchased several of these vessels and, after extensive conversion, they remained sailing the British Columbia coast for several decades more as private yachts.

And so Canada's military involvement with high-speed motor torpedo boats and rescue launches had finally ended.

A longer version of this article originally appeared in Airforce Magazine, Vol. 35, No. 1.

Always look for the Silver Lining.

Tour boats ferry people out to the USS Arizona Memorial in Hawaii every thirty minutes. We just missed a ferry and had to wait thirty minutes. I went into a small gift shop to kill time. In the gift shop, I purchased a small book entitled, "Reflections on Pearl Harbor" by Admiral Chester Nimitz.

Sunday, December 7th, 1941--Admiral Chester Nimitz was attending a concert in Washington D.C. He was paged and told there was a phone call for him. When he answered the phone, it was President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on the phone. He told Admiral Nimitz that he (Nimitz) would now be the Commander of the Pacific Fleet.

Admiral Nimitz flew to Hawaii to assume command of the Pacific Fleet. He landed at Pearl Harbor on Christmas Eve, 1941. There was such a spirit of despair, dejection and defeat--you would have thought the Japanese had already won the war. On Christmas Day, 1941, Adm. Nimitz was given a boat tour of the destruction wrought on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese. Big sunken battleships and navy vessels cluttered the waters every where you looked. As the tour boat returned to dock, the young helmsman of the boat asked, "Well Admiral, what do you think after seeing all this destruction?" Admiral Nimitz's reply shocked everyone within the sound of his voice. Admiral Nimitz said, "The Japanese made three of the biggest mistakes an attack force could ever make or God was taking care of America. Which do you think it was?" Shocked and surprised, the young helmsman asked, "What do mean by the Japanese made the three biggest mistakes an attack force ever made?"

Nimitz explained. Mistake number one: the Japanese attacked on Sunday morning. Nine out of every ten crewmen of those ships were ashore on leave. If those same ships had been lured to sea and been sunk--we would have lost 38,000 men instead of 3,800.

Mistake number two: when the Japanese saw all those battleships lined in a row, they got so carried away sinking

those battleships, they never once bombed our dry docks opposite those ships. If they had destroyed our dry docks, we would have had to tow everyone of those ships to America to be repaired. As it is now, the ships are in shallow water and can be raised. One tug can pull them over to the dry docks, and we can have them repaired and at sea by the time we could have towed them to America. And I already have crews ashore anxious to man those ships.

Mistake number three: every drop of fuel in the Pacific theater of war is in top of the ground storage tanks five miles away over that hill. One attack plane could have strafed those tanks and destroyed our fuel supply.

That's why I say the Japanese made three of the biggest mistakes an attack force could make or God was taking care of America.

I've never forgotten what I read in that little book. It is still an inspiration as I reflect upon it. In jest, I might suggest that because Admiral Nimitz was a Texan, born and raised in Fredricksburg, Texas -- he was a born optimist. But anyway you look at it--Admiral Nimitz was able to see a silver lining in a situation and circumstance where everyone else saw only despair and defeatism. President Roosevelt had chosen the right man for the right job. We desperately needed a leader that could see silver linings in the midst of the clouds of dejection, despair and defeat.

There is a reason that our national motto is, IN GOD WE TRUST.

Writer unknown.

(Let us not forget 7 Dec 41 either. Ed.)

Photo # 80-G-266626 USS Utah capsizing at Pearl Harbor, 7 December 1941





Shearwater Bluefins Senior Team 1965 - 1967

Back Row L - R Lois MacKey, Janet Bruce, Anne Marie McCarthy, Robyn spicer, Debbie Moore, Sharon White, Maureen (unknown)

Middle Row L - R Bobby Dunbull, Rick Lane, Gary Adams, Randy Near, Stephen Plummer

Front Row L - R Coach Bill, Steve Creaser, Brian Lane, Ken Lane, Coach Jack MacKay

SHEARWATER BLUEFINS *by Robyn (Spicer) Lane*

Shearwater Bluefins, now there's a name that brings back some really fond memories. From 1964 to 1967, I had the privilege of belonging to one of the best swim teams in the Maritimes. Our numbers were small but we were a force to be reckoned with in those days. We'd train hard through the week and even on weekends. During the summer there were workouts outside, running around Shearwater working up a good sweat. In the winter, we had the use of the weight room and special weight training logs were kept. Heck we kept a log for everything back then. Before meets, we were encourage to eat big meals high in carbs and of course you couldn't go to a meet without having your Tiger Milk drink churning its way through your system. How much of that worked and how much was psychological is anyone's guess but it was good fun.

The Britton's and the Paul's were only there for a short time and I don't remember too much about that group. At this time we were coached by Jack McKay and his assistant was Bill Burke. The Senior Team was pretty much made up of the following guys: Ken Lane, Steven Plummer, Randy Warden, Randy Near, Gary Adams, Rick Lane and Brian Lane (no relation to Ken Lane), Bobby Dumbull, Dal Lowe. The girls names were Lois MacKay, Janet Bruce, Anne Marie McCarthy, Debbie Moore, Sharon White and Maureen (?) and myself Robyn (Spicer) Lane. There were a lot of brothers and sisters on the team including my own, Bobby, Ivey and Tara Spicer, the MacHutchinson's, Muncaster's, Clark's, McCarthy's, Paul's, Nears and McCormick's and many others whose names I cannot remember.

We would usually get a Service bus to take us to the meets down in Greenwood and one of the highlights was cheering and jeering between buses in the parking lot just stopping at the White Spot and getting in and out before the

Halifax or Dartmouth teams pulled in got us revved up for the cheering and yelling in the stands, trying to outdo each other. It was nothing to come home from a meet with laryngitis.

A lot of kids ended up calling my Mom, Mom at away meets. She was always in the stands and kids would run up to her with their rings, watches and assortment of towels to hold while they swam. She always packed extra towels, extra food and extra money. Sure as shoot in someone would have forgotten money or food or towels and they knew where to go in emergencies. If they forgot to give her stuff then Dad was hit upon at the blocks because he was always a timer so he'd get his pockets full too.

We went through several colors for the suits; red and white, blue and white, solid blue and solid red and even had some of the first innovative suits with zippers up the back, always a challenge to get in and out of those lovely things. We had great red and white sweat suits that went a long way to keeping us warm and dry while waiting for the next event.

Being a Military Swim Team always meant that at the end of the school year there would be tears around the pool as friends said their goodbyes. I think that there are many of us who think back and wonder what happened to those buddies. We worked hard, played hard and made the most of the time we had together, and for some of us, we even married our best friend. Ken Land and I were married in 1972 and are still 'swimming' through life.

Recollections:

Aug 11

1961 Sikorsky H04S aircraft 55886 from Bonaventure (VX10) burned after striking trees at Aspen Cove, Nfld. Pilot and 4 crew members recovered safely.

Aug 13

1951 RCN received 3 Bell HTL4 helicopters
1957 Avenger 53802 of VU32 flown into ground and lost.

Aug 16

1948 Avenger from Magnificent 53610 - ABAC Stuart Tock killed after he walked into propellor while aircraft running on deck.

1960 VS880 Tracker 1586 crashed - two killed on a night JULIE & MADD trapping exercise working with ships and a submarine. While in a turn, low and level returning to a smoke float marker, the port wing dug into the sea causing the aircraft to cartwheel.

Aug 20

1948 RCN Firefly IV aircraft VG 963 from magnificent ditched at sea. Lt(P) Charles Bourque and Lt (O) Ronald 'Dick' Quirt recovered.

1949

LCdr (P) Clifford 'Clunk' Watson and the 'Special flight' of Seafire aircraft - Watson's Circus - departed Shearwater for Toronto.

Aug 23

1949 RCN Special Flight, Seafire Mk. XV a/c #PP502, & Seafire a/c #PP461, Mid-air collision whilst practicing their rehearsal for the Canadian National Exhibition Airshow over Malton Airport. Lost was LCdr (P) Clifford "Clunk" Gordon Watson & Lt (P) Alfred Charles "Chuck" Elton both RCN. Watson was the commander of the unit and leader of the demo team.

Aug 20

1959 A CS2F Tracker (1519) a/c of Anti-Submarine Sqn 880 flown by Lt (P) Roger de Chounac Nantel & Lt (P) George Arthur "Murray" Caldwell both members of #8 JAOTC, crashed on take-off, while carrying out Field Carrier Landing Practice at HMCS Shearwater, the a/c stalled at about 150 feet from the ground & went into an uncontrollable slow roll before landing, right side up, in a revetment near the tower. The co-pilot managed to escape from the plane, but the pilot was unconscious, remaining in the a/c which was on fire. AB Jacques Pierre George Bouchard & AB Angus Kenneth MacLean, witnessed the accident & were among the first on the scene, without regard to their own safety, entered through the after hatch & attempted to remove the harness from the unconscious pilot. Being unable to unlock the overhead hatch, both held the pilot clear of the port side window while it was being smashed by the crash crew, & at the same time succeeded in removing the harness & other entangled gear from the pilot. While they were still assisting the pilot the flames spread aft, a sudden burst of fire engulfed the after fuselage section & one of the Officers assisting in the rescue ordered the two AB's out of the a/c. By this time, however, the port side window had been cleared & it was possible to remove the pilot safely from the burning a/c. Shortly after the a/c became a mass of flames.

Sep 19

1969 Bonaventure lost Tracker 1594. After landing, slipped over the side but held by arrestor wires - pilot and crew recovered safely.

Recollections gleaned from Three Wire - Today in history.

Their Location: 418-145 West Keith Rd
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 Williamson, A. (Whitey)
 Willis, Frank
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(If we missed your name, let us
 know and we will note it in another
 issue.)



Commander Terry Goddard

May 27th marked 70 years since the dramatic showdown in the North Atlantic that resulted in the sinking of the Bismarck and the demise of any dreams of surface Navy dominance for the Kriegsmarine.

In a series of presentations on Saturday June 11th, the Canada Aviation and Space Museum and Vintage Wings of Canada paid tribute to the role played by the venerable Fairey Swordfish biplane bomber in this and other engagements throughout the war. In attendance was 91-year old Commander Terry Goddard, a Canadian Swordfish aviator who participated in the attack on the Bismarck.

At this recent dedication, Robert Kostecka, VWoC volunteer and historian, cleverly set up an interview scenario between Rob Fleck and Cdr (Ret'd) Goddard. The audience was spellbound as Terry Goddard chatted about his direct personal experiences, especially relating to his missions against Bismarck. This unique opportunity to hear first hand about that fateful day will never be equalled. A day prior to the presentation, Vintage Wings dedicated their Fairey Swordfish to Cdr Goddard. In addition to participating in the attack on the German battleship Bismarck, Terry flew most of the Second World War in a "String bag" as a Naval Aviator, known then as an Air Observer.

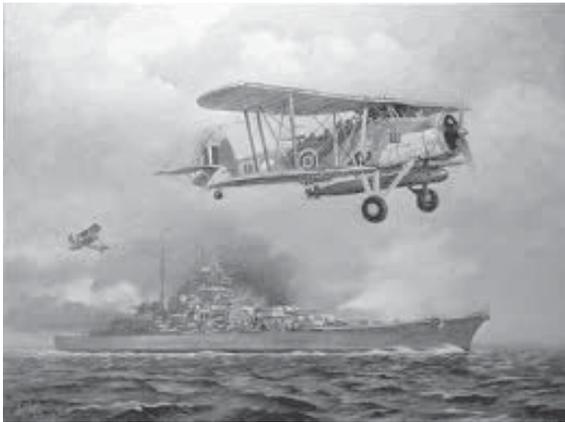
BATTLESHIP BISMARCK

By Baron Burkard von Mullenheim-Rechbert.

From Chapter 18

2330 hrs 24 May 41

...several pairs of aircraft were seen approaching on the port bow. They were beneath a layer of clouds and we could see them clearly, getting into formation to attack us. Naturally we did not know it then, but they were from VICTORIOUS, the carrier that accompanied Tovey's force out of Scapa Flow on the evening of 22 May. Tovey's objective was to intercept the German task force southwest of Iceland, in the unlikely event that, after Admiral Holland's attack with HOOD and PRINCE OF WALES, interception would still be necessary. It was.



Aircraft alarm! In seconds every antiaircraft gun on BISMARCK was ready for action. One after another, the planes came towards us, nine Swordfish, torpedoes under their fuselages. Daringly they flew through our fire, nearer to the fire-spitting mountain of the BISMARCK, always nearer and nearer. Watching through my director, which, having been designed for surface targets, had a high degree of magnification but only a narrow field, I could not see all the action. I could only see parts of it, and that only so far as the swirling smoke of our guns allowed. But what I could see was exciting enough.

Our antiaircraft batteries fired anything that would fit into their barrels. Now and again one of our 38 centimeter turrets and frequently our 15 centimeter turrets fired into the water ahead of the aircraft, raising massive waterspouts. To fly into one of those spouts would mean the end. And the aircraft: they were moving so slowly that they seemed to be standing still in the air, and they looked so antiquated. Incredible how the pilots pressed their attack with suicidal courage, as if they did not expect ever again to see a carrier.

In the meanwhile, we had increased speed to 27 knots and begun to zigzag sharply to avoid the torpedoes that were

splashing into the water. This was an almost impossible task because of the close range and the low altitude from which the torpedoes were launched. Nevertheless, the Captain and the Quartermaster, Matrosenhauptgefreiter Hans Hansen, who was steering from the open bridge, did a brilliant job. Some of the planes were only two meters above the water and did not release their torpedoes until they had closed to 400 or 500 meters. It looked to me as though many of them intended to fly on over us after making their attack. The height of impudence, I thought.

The enemy's tactics were such that torpedoes were coming at us from several directions at the same time and, in trying to avoid one, we were liable to run into another. Back and forth we zigzagged. All at once the sharp ringing report of an explosion punctuated the roar of our guns and the BISMARCK gave a slight shudder. At the moment, I was only aware that whatever had caused it must have taken place forward of my duty station. Although I silently cursed what I supposed was a torpedo hit, my immediate reaction was that it had not done much harm. Undoubtedly launched at close range, it could not possibly have reached its set depth - it would have been dangerous to us if it had - but had probably struck in the area where our armour belt was strongest: at the waterline amidships. That armour, I was sure, would not be bothered by a little aerial torpedo. Nonetheless, I took a careful look at the speed and rudder-position indicators. They showed that the engines and rudder were intact - thank God!

What had happened? A torpedo, perhaps the last one launched, and a surface runner at that, had struck the armour belt amidships on the starboard side and exploded, creating a tall waterspout. It was delivered by a Pilot who left his wingman and came in, unnoticed by us, in the glare of the setting sun.

... The concussion of the hit hurled Oberbootsmann Kurt Kirchberg, who was handling ammunition in the immediate vicinity of the explosion, against something hard. He was killed instantly: the first man to die aboard the BISMARCK. We sewed up his corpse in a sailcloth and laid it in a boat. His death made a deep impression on all his shipmates in that he was the only fatality, but it was especially distressing to those who had come to know him as a strict but capable and understanding superior.

Below, the explosion made it seem as though the ship had been thrust sideways with much greater force than had been the case when the shells hit that morning or than was created by the recoil of our own guns. Our damage control and fire parties lost no time in inspecting their areas of responsibility and phoning in their reports to the damage control center. In the record time of three minutes the ship's command knew the situation in every sector. Hardly any material damage had been done, although Oberartilleriemechaniker Heinrich Juhl and five other men had broken bones.

Shortly before the attack began, Matrosengefreiter George Herzog, on the port third 3.7 centimeter mount, spotted three planes to port and sang out - "Three aircraft approaching at 240 degrees". "I had the feeling" he said later, "that the British were putting their all into this attack and were coming in with exceptional daring to deliver their torpedoes. It seemed to me that they came with 15 meters of the ship before they turned away."

Matrosengefreiter Herbert Manthey, of the fifth 2-centimeter mount, noticed that, at first, the incoming planes tried to make a concerted attack on our port side, then they separated to attack from different directions. When he asked Oberleutnant zur See Sigfrid Dolker, his section commander, about this, he was told that three squadrons of torpedo planes had participated in the attack. Our constant zigzagging to avoid torpedoes had greatly complicated his efforts to bring his guns to bear. And towards the end of the attack he heard the explosion to starboard.

Morale on the ship after the attack, whose end was easily told by the cessation of anti aircraft fire, was outstanding. The crew felt even better when they heard that five enemy aircraft had been shot down. In fact, none had been.

Although we weathered it quite well, it cannot be said that we came out of the Swordfish attack unscathed. When we increased speed to 27 knots, water pressure increased correspondingly and that, together with our violent zigzags, caused the matting in the forecastle to rip, and water began rushing in again. The result was that we were still more deeply down by the bow. Furthermore, vibration from our gunfire enlarged the gash in the bulkhead between port boiler room No.2 and the adjacent electric power station, which had flooded after the shell hit that morning, to such an extent that the boiler room also flooded and had to be given up. We reduced speed and steamed at 16 knots long enough for the matting in the forecastle to be made watertight again. Meanwhile, we resumed course towards St. Nazaire.

Sometime after midnight Lutjens reported home, "Attack by torpedo planes. Torpedo hit on starboard" and around 0200, "Torpedo hit not important".

Matrosenhauptgefreiter	Seaman
Oberbootsmann	Warrant Officer
Oberartilleriemechaniker	Warrant Officer (Ordnance Engineer)
Matrosengefreiter	Seaman apprentice
Oberleutnant zur See	Lieutenant, Junior Grade

von Mullenheim-Rechberg was Adjutant to the ships Commanding Officer; fourth Gunnery Officer and the senior survivor.

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John Eddy, grandson of Allan Eddy of Eastern Passage, shown at the Vimy Ridge Memorial.

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READERS COMMENTS

Ernie Cable, SAM Historian writes:

British Sea Furies vs American Hellcats

The following is a reply to Mike Patterson's question on page 24 in the summer 2011 edition of the Warrior on why the RCN selected the British Sea Fury over the American Hellcat.

On 7 April 1948, *HMCS Magnificent* was commissioned in the RCN at Belfast, Northern Ireland. After completing flying trials, *Magnificent* returned to Belfast where she embarked 27 Hawker Sea Fury F.B. Mk 11's, the first of a batch 74 Sea Furies for the RCN, along with four Firefly T 1's and 12 Firefly FR IV's.

The embarkation on *Magnificent* of the 27 Sea Furies destined for 803 Squadron marked the end of a debate over whether to replace the Seafire with ex-U.S. Navy Grumman Hellcats or British Sea Furies. In June 1946, the Naval Board considered a recommendation to acquire 50 F6F Hellcats at a cost of \$3,500 each. This recommendation was made as a result of the delay in the production of the British Hawker Sea Furies to replace the Seafires. The Board noted that although the Hellcat would provide an inexpensive alternative to the Sea Fury, it was no longer a first-line aircraft and its acquisition would be a reversal to the present "buy British" policy. One of the most ardent and persuasive proponents of the Hellcat purchase was Lt. H.J. "Dicky" Bird on the Naval Aviation Staff in Ottawa. He had flown Hellcats during the war and knew of their excellent carrier performance. With his large number of U.S. Navy friends and associates he was able to mount a very effective campaign to convince the Naval Staff to buy the Hellcat. In July, the Director of Naval Aviation was directed to approach the U.S. Navy to obtain details about the purchase of Hellcats. At the same time the British Admiralty was also to be informed that the RCN was considering purchase of aircraft from the U.S. Navy. On 20 September, the Admiralty advised that the RCN would receive priority allocation of Sea Furies with the first being assigned to 803 Squadron in March 1947. The sudden change in delivery dates was no doubt prompted by disclosure to the Admiralty that the RCN was considering a U.S. Navy fighter replacement. The end result being that the RCN took delivery of its Sea Furies before the first FAA squadron (802 Squadron) received its Sea Fury FB 11's in May 1948.

It should also be noted that the RCN's Directors of Naval Aviation from January 1947 to October 1951 held the rank of Captain in the Royal Navy. These British officers were seconded to the RCN until the RCN could produce sufficient senior officers with air experience to fill the Director of Naval Aviation position. Although, their prime duty was to provide air expertise and direction to Canada's fledgling Naval Air Arm, they also had an unwritten

collateral duty to promote the sale of British aircraft. The RCN's buy British policy lasted until 1950 when the Firefly AS 5 proved unsuitable for Canadian ASW operations and was replaced by the American Grumman Avenger. Similarly, the Sea Fury was replaced by the American McDonnell Banshee in 1956.

Brant "Pop" Fotheringham writes:

In response to Mike Patterson (Warrior page 24) the British intended to fight the Pacific War with American types. Hammy Gray was obviously in a Corsair squadron, Bill Flavelle was flying Hellcats, Don Knox and I were in 1845 Sqdn. in Australia flying Corsairs working up for embarking in September 1945 which the Americans fortunately saved us from in August. *Pop Fotheringham*.

Dale Arndt wrote: Dear Kay, I could not pass on your comments about the seeming lack of interest in the Museum and it's Foundation from the current generation of personnel serving at Shearwater. As one who served in Shearwater as a TACCO Instructor at 406 Sqn from 2005 to 2007, I also volunteered at the Museum (but not become a Foundation member, for reasons unclear even to myself). While at the Museum, I found that, while everyone was polite enough, there was no real effort made to make me feel welcome. There was an unspoken sense that, anyone who had not joined when the RCN owned aircraft (pre-1968), did not quite measure up.

I do not wish to offend, but would like to remind the so called "old guard" of Naval Aviation of a few truths:

1) Pushing the current generation away, because we did not wear the right colour uniform (not something we got choice in, by the way) when flying at Sea from HMC Ships is short sighted. Many fine organizations have made themselves irrelevant because they did not continually and actively seek out new generations of members to bring new energy to the task of carrying the torch forward; and

2) None of the pre-unification Naval Aviators are getting any younger. Yet, they carry an important message about an incredibly dynamic and formative period in our military history. The stories and achievements are rich and need to be preserved and retold to future generations. Frankly, you need **our** help (the current generation and heirs to Naval Aviation) to keep those stories alive.

In short, many of the current generation are interested and do want to help. Don't push us away and don't fall into the trap of running the Shearwater Aviation Museum as a private shrine to Carrier Operations. Naval Air History in Canada did not end with *HMCS BONAVENTURE* being paid off- there are incredible stories, still to be collected and told, about Cold War HELAIRDET Ops, Gulf War 1, Somalia, the Adriatic, OP APOLLO, counter piracy

operations and, most recently, Libya. The Museum needs to find a way of getting the people who hold those stories excited about telling them. I love reading the stories in WARRIOR about Carrier Ops- but none of them are newer than 40 years old now. We need new blood and new stories- fast.

This is an important issue, Kay, and I am glad that you have raised it. I would suggest that all generations find a way to reach out and communicate better with each other- the very future of the Museum depends on it.

Dale Arndt, Major CO 17 Wing Detachment Dundurn (former member of 443 and 406 Sqns)

Kay Collacutt replies: Major Arndt. First off, there is a distinct difference between the Museum and the Foundation. The Museum is, of course, responsible for everything in it, volunteers etc. The Foundation has no control over anything that goes on there and they have no control over the Foundation which includes the WARRIOR magazine. Our claim to fame is that we fund raise for them for buildings, artifacts etc.

I do not know the names of all the personnel who volunteer or did volunteer at the Museum. I know several of them and know some to see them but that is about it. I do know they have volunteers who were/are Navy, Air Force and Army and it is hard to comprehend Museum staff not making you feel welcome or giving the 'unspoken sense that, anyone who had not joined when the RCN owned aircraft (pre-1968) did not measure up'. I am the only member of the Foundation working in the Museum building and if I did anything to offend, I apologize.

The 'few truths' you mention:

1. Neither the Museum nor Foundation have or are pushing the current generation away. On the contrary, we are trying exceptionally hard to get them interested in the Museum and Foundation. The Museum Historian Col Ernie Cable (RCAF Ret'd) made several trips to the Wing to give talks and ask for their assistance with articles for the newsletter and to have them visit the Museum. Although I never spoke at the Wing, I did urge, plead and beg for articles about the current serving members and their jobs etc. It was only this last issue or two that we received more than one article from the Wing - probably because I badgered their CO's.

We are well aware that we need new people and their stories etc. However, we have been told time and again that the majority of personnel on the Wing are too young and too busy with their families etc to be interested in the Museum at this time and perhaps as they get older or when the Museum gets a Sea King on display, things **may** be different. The last time we were told this was at our AGM earlier in September by the WComd and the WCWO. Perhaps this is why their articles are so few.

2. I am in agreement with what you say here. The Delta list grows steadily every issue. We do need help to keep these stories alive.

As for the rest of your email - I agree with that as well. However, it's not the Museum but the Foundation that has to find stories for our Magazine WARRIOR. I do know the Museum is not being run as a shrine to Carrier Operations. That is an unfair statement. Remember the Museum and Foundation are two separate entities and the magazine comes under the Foundation and we would love to have these stories; but give me some idea as to how to get them and I will go after them. It is not an easy task to have folks write articles at the best of times and therefore we have to rely on ones that have been written before. *As a matter of fact I don't recall having received any article(s) from you, Sir. How about it???*

May I take this spot to bring you up to date on an important item. To date, the majority of our 800+ members are former Naval Air members. Only about 10 - 15 are or were Air Force or Army. From a Wing of 1200 personnel serving at Shearwater today, **only two** are SAMF members (both my sons-in-law because I nag them to death). As the Wing Commander said at the AGM recently - you can lead them to water.....

Funding for the new buildings and artifacts etc comes from those dwindling Naval Air members. I was a DND employee at Shearwater for over 35 years as a Secretary and my loyalty to Shearwater is as strong as any military member. My loyalty to those who support the Museum Foundation in keeping their history alive as well as their financial assistance to the Museum Foundation (hence the Museum) holds no bounds. To me, they are the best! If WARRIOR shows this, then I am guilty.

As I said earlier, we have just started getting articles in from the Wing. Hopefully they will continue; but the outstanding articles as you have noted in your email are still not coming in. When members from that era and today's members do start showing their loyalty to the Museum and Foundation, then they will have mine to go along with theirs. *Respectfully, Kay Collacutt, SAMF Scy and WARRIOR Editor.*

From **Ted Cruddas**: Sitrep. I have finished my third round of chemo, with one more to go. It will start the final round this Thursday, 29 Sept, if all goes well with my blood work. The chemo is intended to ensure that this invasive cancer does not spread further. The bladder surgery will be scheduled sometime in November or December, depending on how well I recover from the chemo. That surgery will take away the bladder, prostate gland, some lymph nodes, and any other cancerous tissue the surgeons find.

I have received many cards, notes, phone calls and

e-mails, and I thank all those who sent them.
Best wishes.

Dave Williams writes: Warrior summer edition pg 35 front row far right Walter Brown , rear row far right Nelson. Page 39 far right Al Hawthorne. A wild guess on page 35 rear row left Milt Droeske, middle Paul Dunn. An even wilder guess, front row center holding dog, Jake Birks.

From **Leo Pettipas**: Sea Fury vs T-Bird

As any writer would be, I was most pleased to receive feedback about my article, "The T-33 in the Royal Canadian Navy, Maritime Command, and Maritime Air Group" that appeared in Warrior, Spring 2011. The respondents were former fighter pilots John (Stretch) Arnold and Dave Tate, both of whom had first-hand familiarity with the Sea Fury and the T-Bird. In particular, they commented on my statement, "As a jet, the T-Bird could out-perform the [Sea] Fury in all respects"

First, here is what Stretch had to say: "I would like to offer a couple observations on your article in the recent issue of Warrior magazine. I respectfully suggest that the T-bird could not out-perform the Sea Fury in all respects. The T-bird had a limiting Mach # of around 0.8 to 0.82, and I recall once bouncing one in a Fury at between 25-30,000 ft while it was cruising at or near it's limiting Mach. On that occasion I performed a roll around it. Have no idea what the limiting Mach # of the Fury was. Once I tried to find out how fast it would go straight down, but got a lot of buffeting, control problems and tuck-under below 20,000 ft. Lost a panel somewhere south of Greenwood in that unwise effort. The Navy's T-33s were straight flying trainers and were unarmed. On the other hand, standard maximum payload of the Sea Fury was 2x1000-lb bombs, or 12 rocket projectiles. The Fury also carried 4x20-mm cannons."

Dave wrote as follows: "I felt that the Fury was a far more pleasant, responsive, enjoyable and delightful airplane to fly than the T Bird. I'm not 100% positive about the Fury's limiting Mach, but I do know it was close to the Spit's and I think it was somewhere between 0.85-0.92. I do remember one time, however, in 1955/56 when Shamus Dawson and I were in VT 40. We were both airborne, Shamus in a T Bird and me in a Fury, and were up at 20-25,000 feet. Shamus got on my tail and although I could out-turn him, he could always get the height advantage on me. I don't know what prompted me to do it, but I pushed over at full power and guess what -- he hit limiting mach, started to buffet, and I literally 'walked away' from him without any effects on the controls or airframe. Sorry I can't be more precise but I do remember that flight as though it was yesterday; and at my age that's something."

For other reasons too, my notion that the second-line T-33 trainer could out-perform the first-line Sea Fury fighter-bomber in all respects is over-stated and in error.

Depending on whose statistics you use, the T-Bird arguably had a higher rate of climb and could fly faster, higher, and farther than the Fury. On the other hand, the weapons trainer version of the T-33 (not part of the Navy's inventory, as Stretch notes) only carried two (not four) 50-cal machine guns (not cannon), and eight (not twelve) rockets, or, in place of the rockets, two 1,000-lb bombs.

So in terms of payload, manoeuvrability and limiting mach number, I stand corrected.

I mentioned in my article that a Navy T-Bird set a long-range elapsed time record. Let's not forget that the Sea Fury set such a record of its own: on 15 December 1949, two Furies -- one flown by R. Creery, the other by E. Myers -- flew a non-stop flight from Malton Airport near Toronto to Shearwater in a record time of one hour and 54 minutes. They made the 825-mile-long trip at 20,000 feet with an average ground speed of 435.5 mph.
Cheers to all, Leo

From **Bill Cody**: Pat; That was a great report of your experiences at Nutts Corner and beyond.

How on earth were you able to stop the Seafury on three thousand feet of runway at Henstridge. I remember clearing snow by hand shovel when at Srafire OTU and it seemed like a long runway but flying on and off, did not seem long enough.

My CFI at the time was David Wilkinson and one of the Instructors was Jim Kirk who eventually ended up in Ottawa.
Aye. Bill

P2RP Bruce Mackintosh. Kay: I remember swimming at Shearwater, in swim meets & water polo. That was in the late 50's & early 60's. I was swimming for Stadacona.

I remember the faces of the Shearwater water polo team as shown in WARRIOR but could only put a name to one face "Tug Wilson"... Brought back memories of good times.

Well, best of luck with more stories like these.

From **Carl Wright**: Page 12 centre row directly behind Rolly - without head covering - his name is Bernie O'Hanley.

Know 4 others pictured there but cannot think of their names.

For general interest Bernie was 'Scruffy' O'Briens Jeep Driver, most of the time. Lot of perks in that job. (I was there!)

From **Bob Murray Ex XO HS 50:**

Another superb magazine. I especially enjoyed the articles on the Royal Waterbird and Nutts Corner .

With regard to the request for names on page 24 by John Eden. The Sonar operators in the HO4S were never Radar Plotters but were SNs " Sonar men" who specialized in torpedo anti-submarine warfare. (See A history of Canadian Naval Aviation by Kealy and Russell, page 60.) *Yours aye,*

Eric Nielsen writes: Dear Kay, I very much enjoyed the last issue of Warrior. I especially enjoyed Walter G. Henry's story of his experiences in Chaudière. I was one of the aircrew rescued by the Chaudière in the spring of 1964 in the recovery episode he writes about. I recall the scrambling nets lowered over the ship's side and trying to compete for space on the net with a sailor from the upended Whaler. After a few seconds of struggle, I thought, "Let him go ahead of me, I'm not injured, I'm in a 'poopy' suit equipped for long term survival, they can come and get me!" I then pushed off the ship's side with my feet and floated around for a few minutes until a swimmer came and helped me to a rope and I was hauled aboard. The rest of the story is history.

In 1992 I had an opportunity to say a final "good-bye" to Chaudière. We were cruising around Vancouver harbour in our 15 ft. boat when we came across Chaudière, all stripped and scaly ready to be towed out and sunk as an artificial reef. She looked rather sad but I took a picture of her anyway and gave her a thank you wave and wished her well in her final role as a home for sea life.

I am sending along two copies of the picture I took. I hope one of them is suitable for publication.

By the way, as a past President of SAMF, I wish to send my heartiest congratulations to the Foundation for successfully paying off the CFCF hangar loan. I feel honoured to have been a member of such a dedicated Foundation. Yours sincerely,

(Eric - we were lucky to have you as President. You did a great job leading us. Kay)

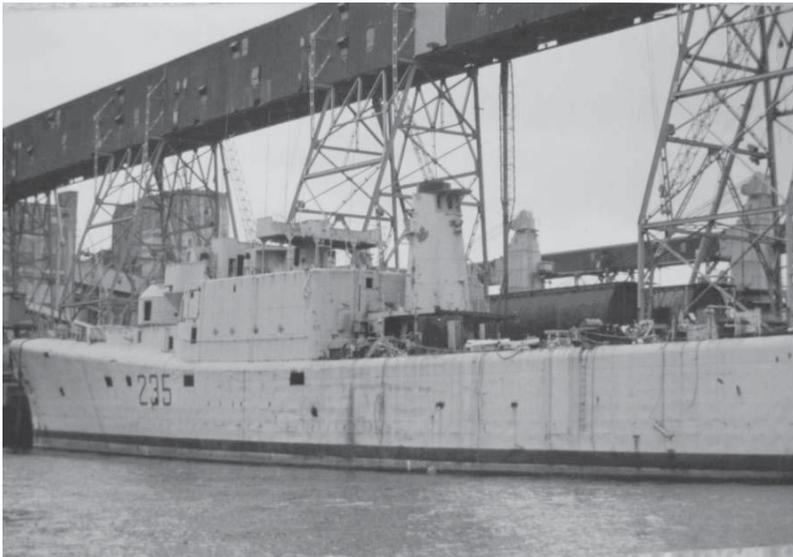
From **Bob Bissell:** We have had Marsh (Dempster's) visit and surprisingly good wx for it. Filled him full of history.

Turns out that HMS Sultan, now the engineering tech school, air and marine, is a huge base, used to be an airfield but still has helo pad. Saw more Sea Kings all in one place than I had ever seen before. Some were ASW version, some for the Royal Marines attack and transport and some with the AEW kit. Also a merlin which is a real machine. I hope your Cyclone is up to scratch. I was quickly told that the RCAF had got the Merlin OK for search and rescue, by calling it a Cormorant. A short course on how to manipulate a politician!

The Merlin has 3 turbines plus an APU so pretty safe and power for redundancy. Terrific radar, dipping sonar and plenty of automatic sono buoy stowage. The observer is now really a generic term, but still the same wings, but is really the equivalent of the ships warefare officer, so they are a team, all info being exchanged. The pilot being the equivalent of the officer of the watch. The Captain fights the ship from a computer consol in the ops room. As the aircraft is very much flown by computer some observers are left seat qualified to either land or hover in a dip.

It turns out that Sultan started live as Royal Flying Corps field for training in the first world war. In 1918 it became an RAF base and between the wars became the RAF HQ for the FAA when they were running it. When the FAA was handed back to the Navy it became HMS Siskin. After the second WW the tech schools that were in Scotland, where your Dad learned his trade, were gradually moved to Gosport and the name then changed to Sultan.

On the Army side we checked out the ring of forts around Portsmouth that were originally started by King Henry VIII. There are 2 forts on the Sultan base and another one just down the road from us. These recent ones were built in 1850's but were garrisoned up until the 1955's. Canadian army were billeted there prior to setting off in landing craft from all around Gosport.



12 Wing Shearwater dedicated this monument to the Nova Scotians who have given their lives in service of their country while deployed with the Joint Task Force Afghanistan. The events of 11 Sep 01 forever changed the way we must defend freedom. To this end, Canada made a commitment with its allies, under UN Mandate to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan; helping to stabilize and rebuild a nation torn apart by years of conflict. Canadian Forces Service members have sacrificed their lives so that the Afghan people could live in peace and freedom.

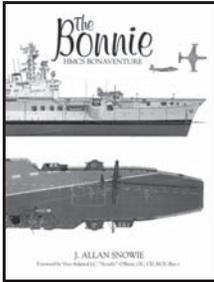




On Friday 4 Nov 11, the Halifax Mooseheads Hockey Club, a member of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League, held a DND Appreciation Night. To honour the fallen in Afghanistan, 158 seats marked with the names of all CF members who made the ultimate sacrifice, were marked with their names and left unoccupied for the duration of the game.



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- Option A:** One half tile 12" X 12" x 17" and triangular in shape with up to 5 rows of 3/4" letters for a maximum of 60 letters and spaces. The longest row can accommodate up to 20 letters and spaces. The remaining 4 rows will decrease in length as the border/edge of the tile dictates. It should be noted that the upper half of the tile will start with a short row and the bottom half will start with a long row.
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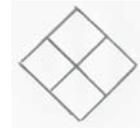
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Option B & C



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Option D



\$600

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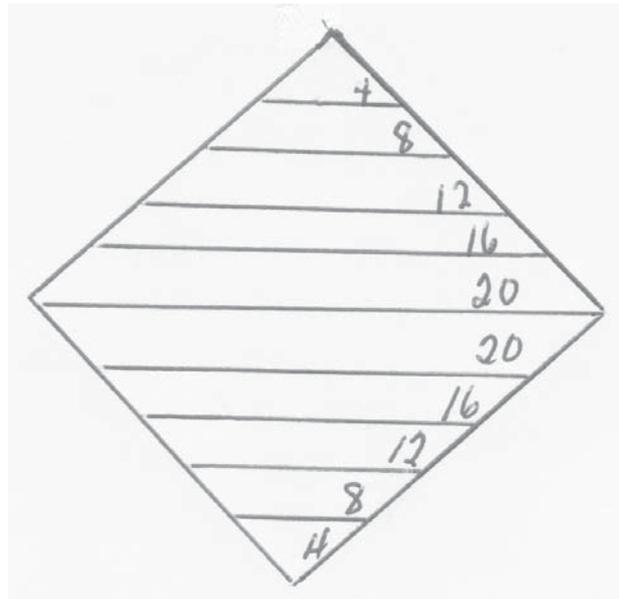
Full Tiles - \$200 day of purchase - \$ 100 per month for the following four months.

Continued next page

(Wall Tiles (continued))

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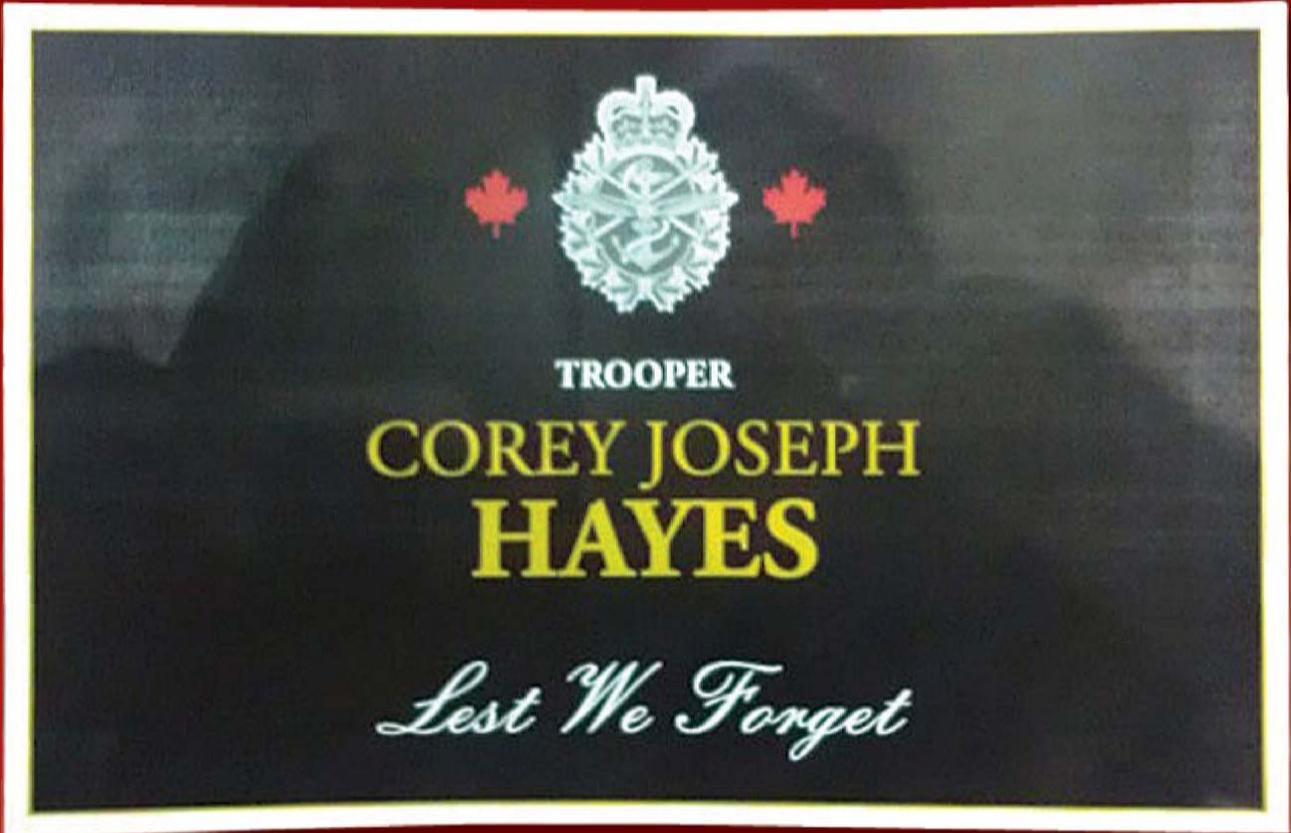
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One of the fallen, Trooper Corey Joseph Hayes', father is Sgt Joseph Hayes, AVN Tech, currently employed in the Technical Problems and Projects Section (TPPS) of the Maritime Helicopter Project (MHP) - 12 Wing Shearwater.



Sacrifices On The Island Of Crete

A Strategic Island In The Mediterranean

By: MCpl Terrance Chenard, Lead AES Op, HMCS Vancouver

It all began the 20th of May 1941, at approximately 8:00 in the morning, German paratroopers filled the sky as they jumped out of dozens of Junker JU 52 aircraft and subsequently landed around Maleme airfield near the town of Chania, Crete this signaled the launch of Nazi Germany's airborne invasion of the picturesque island of Crete under the codename *Operation Merkur*. Crete was defended by Greek and Allied forces (including Canadians) along with Cretan civilians. The battle was to go on for about 10 days but the lives of many would be changed forever.

On the 27th of September 2011, just over 70 years later the Air Department of *HMCS Vancouver*, embarked from 443 Maritime Helicopter Squadron in Patricia Bay, British Columbia decided to pay their respects to the casualties of war interned in the Suda Bay War Cemetery. *Vancouver* is currently deployed on Operation MOBILE, Canada's contribution to Operation Unified Protector; the United Nations authorized NATO led mission enforcing an arms embargo and no-fly zone in Libya.

When the Air Department arrived at the Suda Bay war cemetery we were all in awe of the great care that has been taken to keep the area of the memorial site in pristine condition. The views that the headstones have on the Mediterranean Sea are priceless. The area for the cemetery was given by the people of Crete out of respect to the Commonwealth for the burial of the 1527 allied personnel who lost their lives fighting for the island.

The Suda Bay war cemetery contains five Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) airmen which were embedded in various Royal Air Force Squadrons (RAF) serving overseas. It was quite an honour and privilege that with the "Royal" designation being returned to the Air Force and Navy that we are the first currently serving RCAF crew to visit this war memorial site since the amalgamation of the services in the late 1960's.

The Canadians that call the Suda Bay war cemetery their final resting place were aircrew aboard the Bristol Blenheim bomber which was a British light bomber that was used extensively in the early days of the Second World War. The Blenheim had a three person crew consisting of one pilot, navigator / bombardier, and one wireless air gunner. Of special note upon reading the inscriptions on the grave markers it was realized that one member was Warrant Officer 2nd Class L.E. Mathews, a 24 year pilot hailing from Trail, British Columbia. As our Squadron is also from British Columbia this hit close to

home and a 443 Squadron patch was placed at this group of markers to signify our visit.



Suda Bay War Cemetery

After being reminded of how young these fathers, sons and brothers were that lost their lives for their country, the members of the Air Department got together and had a moment of silence for the fallen. The poem "High Flight" by John Gillespie Magee, Jr. was read to honour the Canadian airmen interned in the cemetery.

At the end of the visit, we as an Air Department, members of the RCAF, and first and foremost Canadians were indeed very proud to have the opportunity to visit this site to honour our fallen and continue to serve in the Canadian Forces. May their sacrifices never be forgotten, Lest We Forget.



CELTIC CROSS

FAA air techs and Marine eng techs both had interesting museums on the base.

We then went to RAF Tangmere along the coast, now a museum airfield and quite a bit like your museum. No Sea Kings but familiar naval aircraft like the recently redundant Harrier, Phantom complete with deck hook, Sea Venom and the old Wessex helo like our horse. From the RAF side they had a Lightning and a Hunter, Spitfire and Hurricane and lots of models of past aircraft. Simulators were popular with kids and yours truly. I took up a lightning, actual cockpit and controls, ground an coast line projected on a screen. Great fun, not a carrier plane but I found a simulated carrier to do a low pass over, rocketed straight up and returned to Tangmere for a pretty good landing, approach at 150k. Even got the adrenaline going for an old fart.

A fun visit, so I told Swamp he could come again. Gives me an excuse to relive the past!!
(*Just keep writing to us - I love your stories. Kay*)

From **Eric Edgar:** Kay; Wonderful job, a collectors issue!! (*Eric, you always make my day. K.*)

John Thompson writes: I've been reading Jim Cope's postings (on 081 site) with great enjoyment, and was wondering if anyone else has any adrenaline trips they'd wish to share. I've recently read some of the "Salty Dips" scribed by some of my compadres who flew "Air Bonaventure" and was wondering if any of them have given thought to describing their greatest adrenaline rush. I'm sure we all had one or two incidents when heart popped into mouth and perhaps a cold chill ran down the spine. Usually I found the cold chill showed up after the fact, (later, when you analyzed what had happened).

J. Cribb writes:

I just finished reading the latest issue of the WARRIOR and as usual found it very interesting and informative.

I was very interested in Rolly's sports report but have some comments about the volleyball report. First off, I think that Ray Langlois should have been mentioned for all he did for the sport. All the time that I played, over 5 years, he was the backbone of the team and contributed very much to our success. He not only coached and played but managed the whole operation including our transportation.

As a side note, the year we won every league and tournament that we entered and went to and won the Armed Forces National in Ottawa. For this accomplishment we had our team picture and write up in the American Volleyball Association rules book. There should be a copy in the museum that I donated.

If it weren't for Ray, we would never have gone to Ottawa. The Air Force heard of our needing transportation and provided same. The whole team was given a total of \$100 for our expenses. If it was not for the Officer in Charge of the Gym (can't remember his name) arranging accommodation at his fathers house we would have had to pay all our own expenses.

Further to the preceding blurb, we played in the Canadian Open Championships and won one game against an Ottawa team and in one game against the eventual winners taking 8 or 10 points. **Jack Cribb P1EA4**

Ed Janusas wrote of his disappointment in not having read any of the articles he sent to us in WARRIOR.

There were some printed over the years. Here is another from Ed.

This concerns a pilot coming in for a landing in Shearwater and his wheels are up and the Tower radios him that his wheels are not down. He continues coming down and belly lands, but is ok health-wise. Investigation reveals that he did not hear the tower instructions. Why not, he was asked. He replied that the horn blowing in his ear was making too much noise to hear what they were saying. That is what the horn is for he was told - to tell you that your wheels were not downnnnnnnn!

Ron Beard writes:

At the last SAM Foundation AGM it was stated that we have to change our thinking as to our attitude toward the museum as a Naval Aviation Museum. For what reason I have yet to fathom.

If the idea is to garner members from the present base personnel, just think back to when you were a young naval aviator, as to how much interest or time you had for such a museum. What with young families, a new aircraft coming on line, I don't believe any thing we do would change these attitudes.

When the Wing Commander stood up and said they were still "Naval Aviators" and think of themselves in that light, I believe when the time comes there will be that support for the Museum.

After cruising the internet and visiting Air Force museums I see no effort on their part to recognize the fact that there was such a thing as Naval Aviation.

The Shearwater Museum was started as just what it is, a Naval Aviation Museum. If you remember, it was started by a couple of naval aviation persons and was nothing but a room in the basement of Warrior block. It was nothing more than a collection of documents and memorabilia.

Within a few years it expanded and needed more space, thus the acquisition of the old base gymnasium and the rest is also history.

Look at the content, and tell me what RCAF contributions do you see. Look at the finances and see where the funding comes from and then tell me whose museum it is. The thing to remember, I believe, is that a museum is to gather and preserve items of history and that history for the Shearwater Museum, in my mind is "Naval Aviation".
Retired Naval Airman, Ron Beard

Frank Dowdall writes: **LASTING FRIENDSHIPS**

In Sep 2011, Frona and I travelled to Vancouver (Cloverdale) to visit three old Navy friends (Lyal Anderson, Vaughn Raeside and Jack Cribb). We stayed with Bev Johnson, the widow of Ross Johnson another Shearwater electrician and were treated royally. The four of us (Lyal, Vaughn, Jack and myself) joined the RCN in 1948 and took Basic Training in Esquimalt. We were Electrician Mates, took our electrical training in Stadacona and found ourselves in Magnificent in 1949. Vaughn, Jack and I ended up at Shearwater with Vaughn and I arriving in Apr 1951. He went to 870 Sqn and I went to 871. Jack arrived in early 1951 with TAG being the first of many deployments in a long Naval Air career.

I lost contact with Lyal and Vaughn after they left the RCN while Jack and I stayed in touch throughout our years at Shearwater, after retirement and at several CNAG reunions. About 15 years ago I reconnected with Lyal and

Vaughn through Ross Johnson, visited with them and kept in touch by phone and email. I decided to add a visit to see the three of them to my 'bucket list'. We had a great reunion, rehashing many salty dips over a few 'tots' and some really fine food. We believe that it is rare for four people to have such a long and lasting friendship although we know that making good friends with lasting bonds is part of our military tradition and was especially true in Naval Air.

I am enclosing photos which I believe attest to our special friendship spanning more than 62 years. I knew I had the Maggie photo of M29 mess taken in Nov 1949 with all four of us in the photo but I had no recollection that we were standing side by side (L-R Lyal, Frank, Vaughn and Jack). When the photo was taken during our recent visit, it was sheer good fortune that we ended up in the same side by side position. It must be one of those 'déjà vu' events that we read and hear about.

On the way home, we stopped in Edmonton and visited with Don and Joan Strachan. Don was an electrician arriving in Shearwater in Feb 1957 to work on VT40. We have been friends all these years, keeping in touch and seeing each other at several CNAG reunions.

Frona and I are glad we were able to strike an item from our 'bucket list'. We plan to travel to Nova Scotia next summer and visit with some old friends and make another trip to the Shearwater Museum. We are hoping to be able to make it to the Sea King 50th anniversary in Aug 2013.

Kay -- Keep up the great work with the Warrior. It is always an interesting and memorable read!!





AN INTRODUCTION TO FLIGHT SIMULATION

The Shearwater Aviation Museum with its ongoing mandate to preserve our military aviation history is expanding its interactive capabilities. One of the ways we are doing this is with the use of a flight simulator. We have installed a flight simulator program on our computer for the use of the visiting public.

As part of this project we are forming a flight simulator group in Nova Scotia to bring together those already involved in this interesting hobby as well as those who like to fly as close to "As real as it gets". The province of New Brunswick has several active flight simulation groups, sharing the name Flight Simulation New Brunswick (FSNB). The museum has pursued a comfortable working relationship with FSNB, hoping to open a local chapter here at Shearwater. There are also similar flight simulator groups world wide.

The flight simulator program comes with a large variety of military and civilian aircraft and over 24,000 airports world wide to fly from and explore. The only other item you may want is a joystick to enhance the realism. Also included in the program is a complete tutorial on how to fly as well as the option to pick an aircraft, an airport and start flying. Once you are comfortable with the program there are websites dedicated to the program where you may download additional aircraft, airports and scenery.

Flight simulators have been around since 1980 on the Apple II and TRS-80. In 1984 a flight simulator was available on the Commodore 64, Atari SST and Mac. In 1982 Microsoft obtained the rights to the program and released it on the personal computer as Microsoft FS1. There have been 12 updates since then, ending with Flight Simulator X in 2006. There is an upcoming update called Microsoft Flight (release date TBA). To see a complete history of flight simulation and images of the graphics as they improved over the years, go to Wikipedia's history of Microsoft flight simulator (<http://bit.ly/flightsimhistory>).

Museum staff and volunteers will be bringing the museum's flight simulator to the Hal-Con science fiction convention in November, to help promote the museum as well as the hobby of flight simulation.

If you are interested in being involved in a flight simulation group, please contact the museum at 902-720-1083 or check the flight

sim website at <http://fsns.wordpress.com>. The website will be updated regularly about group events and with hints and tricks for flight sim enthusiasts of all ages and experience levels. The Shearwater Aviation Museum email is as follows:(office@shearwateraviationmuseum.ns.ca),

ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

from Eric Edgar

The annual golf tournament held for the first time at Granite Springs Golf Course on 7 Sep 11 was again a resounding success. This venue proved to be excellent and the club events team did an outstanding job in helping to organize the tournament and the Gourmet Awards Dinner. Mother Nature cooperated providing pleasant weather for the event.

The Major sponsors were; NSBI (Presenting sponsor), Fleetway Inc (Dinner sponsor) and Marks (Apparel sponsor) and IMP Aerospace (Registration sponsor). General Dynamics Canada and Lockheed Martin were also generous in sponsoring four teams. Serge Valade (SAMF Board of directors) donated a "Sydney Crosby" hockey jersey for the putting contest. The winning team, with a low gross score of 60, was one of the teams representing Lockheed Martin Canada.

The Foundation netted \$11,000 as per the agreement with the Atlantic Canada International Air Show and the Defence, Security and Aerospace Exhibition Atlantic and is most grateful for the support provided by Colin Stephenson and his staff.

The Tournament Chairman, Patricia Myatt, expressed thanks to all the SAMF volunteers who helped make the tournament a well run event and from SAMF: many thanks to Patricia for her leadership and dedication.

Winning Team 4B	Lockheed Martin Team Four
Jack Duplisea	Steve Marsden
Glen Wilson	Brett Kitchen (Canadian Defence Review)
Closest to the Pin #8	Ron MacGillivray
Longest Put #14	Rick Vacheresse
Closest to the Pin #16	Brett Kitchen
Closest to the Line #2	Doug Penken



The Sinking of the Bismarck, May 1941, amid a tragedy of errors. *By Mike Patterson*

Opening Salvos: Bismarck sinks HMS HOOD (biggest warship in world) and damages Prince of Wales.

Bismarck hit twice, reduces speed and leaves oil trail, visible from the air. British cruisers shadow retreating Bismarck using new radar.

German Error: Bismarck, on receiving enemy radar pulses assumes its position is known by British ships; but it is beyond range for return pulses to reach British. So for British, Bismarck has disappeared.

But, since he is 'seen' Bismarck Captain breaks radio silence and reports victory over Hood to Berlin.

British Luck: Allied shore radio stations report Bismarck position.

British Consternation: Germans have been listening to enemy radio and know British have lost radar contact with Bismarck, so why was her Captain making his position obvious.

British Error: RN Navigator plots Bismarck course as bearing northwest - instead she is returning to her home port of Brest, in France. Nine hours later, British note their error; by then Bismarck is hundreds of miles to the south.

British Luck: For 31 hours, Bismarck 'lost' then by stroke of luck, a Catalina Flying Boat spots her through a break in the clouds, just as she is about to make her escape.

British Attack: Aircraft Carrier Ark Royal from Gibraltar arrives and attacks with Swordfish torpedo aircraft. (First Fleet Air Arm aircraft I worked on in 1941.)

Bismarck's rudder hit, ship can only steam in a circle.

German Submarine: Captain of U556 reports he sees King George V and Ark Royal without destroyer protection and not zigzagging. Thus making perfect targets.

British Luck: U556 was returning from other operations and had shot all her torpedoes!

After two hours of bombardment, Bismarck finally went down with 1900 Germans but she inflicted such heavy damage on two British battleships that they were out of action for many months undergoing repairs in a US shipyard.

To sink the mighty Bismarck, it took 8 battleships, 2 aircraft carriers, 4 heavy and 7 light cruisers, 21 destroyers, 6 submarines and over 100 aircraft.

I remember in 1942, 43 & 44 coming and going from Scapa Flow, in the Orkney Islands north of Scotland always seeing a line of battleships lying at anchor. The KG5, as we called her, among them. There was a buzz in the Fleet some time in '41 that a sailor from KG5 had been seen by the Officer of the Watch, through his telescope I expect, ashore on a hillside chasing a sheep. When the Liberty Boat came alongside making the rounds for those going ashore from various ships, the sailors from other ships would call out 'Bah, Bah', until a signal order was sent out - 'Liberty men will cease to make unseemly noises when coming alongside the King George V.

All those giant ships saw no further action, but lay in port checkmating the German ships in port - until the Prince of Wales and the Repulse sailed from Singapore without air cover and were sunk by Japanese torpedo carrying aircraft.

The British did not think the Japanese had aircraft of sufficient range to attack from their bases in China. But six years before, I found out, that the British Airspeed Oxford company had sold the Japanese six Oxford Envoys along with full manufacturing rights. The Japanese copied that aircraft on a larger scale to make it a torpedo bomber.

**IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR
SAM FOUNDATION
MEMBERSHIP**

The Sea King and the Sea

"Hands to flying stations"
The pipe went through the ship
We manned our proper places
And the Sea King was rolled out

The flight deck was awash with water
And the roll and pitch was pretty great
But our Sea King stood very straight
And said "I'm prepped and ready"
So let us not be late

So she flashed up her engines
And the pilot checked them out
And the roar and scream was frightful
Because she wanted out

But on the deck we held her
Till she was all checked out
The rotor blades were spread
And they commenced to turn about

Then she became very nervous
And anxious to be away
So the signal was given
And the lashings were taken away

The order was given "release the trap"
And with awesome power and maximum torque
Our Sea King was away
To be in the air where she liked it best
And it is there that she would stay

Her missions were long and gruelling
And she flew from point to point
She climbed up
She let down
And she dipped her sonar
Listening for the sound

The sea was rough and heavy
But our Sea King just trudged on
And for three long hours
Never heard a "bong"

Then with fuel very low
And the Sea King running slow
A bong was heard as they went
To spot the place
And tell the fleet

Then back to the ship
She went back with pride
And hoped that God was on her side
The deck was rolling and pitching
And was not going to let her
Land with out bitching

But on she came
Up the port side
With the sea very high
And the wind very strong
We all wondered
Was she going to get on

The first time she tried
The deck just ducked under
And laughed to be winner
But our Sea King being tough as she was
Just slid over to line up again

Then in she came again
And got very close
But the deck rose so high
That with a crash and a bang
She was thrown up in the air again

Then you could see
By the look in her eye
This time I will land
Or know the reason why

So in she came again
With a determined look
The deck was heaving
Like a tinder hook
But steady she was
And the messenger was hooked

Then the deck became wild
With water and wind
The ship and the sea were
Trying to shake her again

But this time she stayed
And the gear held her still
The trap then engaged
And she was held fast

She looked down on the ship
with a smile on her face
I guess that means
That I won the race

So we washed her down
And put her away
And when there was no one
Around but me ,

I patted her nose and said
'Great stuff old girl'
And she said to me
'I shall every time - That has to be
Because I am your mistress
You see'

by Bud Ayer



Memories of a Backseat Naval Aviator

By Peter Bruner

Part 7

January 1961 to the end of March we engaged in numerous crew training exercises. In the first quarter of 1961 a total of 93.2 hrs was flown by our crew. On May 23

transferred to VS880 operational on board "Bonaventure". We started a series of training exercises with the US Navy off of Charleston SC and Norfolk. Conducted one exercise with USS Triton one of the first Atomic Subs. The next day we spent 4.7 hrs tracking an unidentified submerged object (USO) but were unable to identify it. The consensus of opinion was that a Russian sub was trying to gain information about the joint Canada/USA exercises.

The next evening we were conducting a night shadowing exercise with some USA Skyraiders. All the airborne aircraft were without any navigation lights as we were shadowing the fleet. I picked up a radar contact about 2 miles away and turned to intercept. We rolled out of our turn at approx one half mile and the contact suddenly closed to within 1/4 mile and closing at approx 300 knots dead ahead. I told my pilot Mike Langman to break right which he did without question. We turned right and the two front seat pilots observed a USA Skyraider at our level on a collision course. Obviously he did not see us as he carried on a straight and level flight and disappeared into the night. The next two days we flew over to the USS Essex carrier and conducted deck landings with a lunch in between. The Essex was larger than the Bonaventure but was not as comfortable as the BV to operate from.

July was spent still exercising with the USA and moved North to the Georges Bank". We were engaged in exercise "Riptide II" and "Exercise Tartan". July 28 we flew to Shearwater and spent August on Make and Mend.

In Sept it was back to sea on the BV where crew training was the order of the day.

October, we sailed North to "Ungava Bay" and conducted Exercise Trapline. Flying around icebergs and chasing our sub. Had one flight to Frobisher Bay to pick up the mail. Oct 12 - back to Shearwater.

Oct 27 - while airborne on a crew training mission we spotted the Russian fishing fleet South of Halifax, about 150 miles offshore. The next 4 days were spent on "Shipping Surveillance". The last day of Oct we were

diverted to an area to conduct "Magnet Anomaly Detection" (MAD). At the end of this flight my eyeballs were almost on my cheeks by the time we landed on the BV. Flight time was 5.0 hrs. and not one contact was achieved.

In Dec up to mid month a series of Exercise Slamex was completed and we all closed our ops for December 1961. Most of the personnel took leave into the New Year. 1961 was the year of my promotion in June to "Petty Officer First Class".

We were in Norfolk, Virginia and I proceeded to the Base Exchange and bought the proper rig for my new rank. It only required changing the brass buttons and the Canadian badges.

That evening, a Saturday night, my crew commander, Mike Langman and 4 squadron mates proceeded to a local gambling den to celebrate with a few wets. When it closed up for the evening we all proceeded to a newly opened pizza parlour. It was the first pizza any of us had ever tasted and we did it justice.

Arriving back at our ship about 4am we were dispatched to our bunks. The next morning was Church Parade and Mike Langman who was the squadron Executive Officer, excused us from Church Parade and was the only one to appear from our group. Ever since that time "Pizza" is not a favourite meal for yours truly as I get very nauseated whenever I think of it.

My wife and I celebrated our wedding on Dec 30, 1961. This year 2011 Gwynn and I celebrate our fiftieth wedding anniversary.

February 1962, back at VS880 and more crew training. Mid Feb my aircraft was dispatched on exercise Maple Spring to do a large area search SW of Halifax for Marlant. As we proceeded through our search area we spotted a large number of Russian Trawlers proceeding in line abreast to the South West. We spent over 1 hr photographing this fleet. The next day we were airborne at first light, we proceeded to the area of our last contact and regained the trawlers still fishing. Once again, we photographed the Russians and ended up with 2 hrs of photos. Our total flying time for both days was 8.5 hrs.

On March 6, 1962 I completed 2000 hrs of military flying. In June 1962 Si Green and yours truly were dispatched to the dept of transport at Uplands Airbase for training as "Air Traffic Controllers". All the other students were civilians with some air background. They were a good group of guys and we thoroughly enjoyed their company and shared many good times.

Si Green and I boarded with Mouse Harkins' mother in Hull Quebec. Daily we would drive to Uplands for classes and return at the end of the day to Hull. In those days, traffic

moved at a snails pace but driving back and forth at up two hrs per day and gave us a chance to review the days lessons.

The month of August we concentrated on getting our 25 hrs flying per quarter for our pay of \$30 monthly. We should go to the practice flight No. 1 at Rockcliff to achieve our flying either at night or on weekends. It was kind of interesting as the only aircraft were c-45 Expeditors and I learned to fly them when I was on VU33 Squadron at Pat Bay.

The first flight at Rockcliff was with Harry Hollywood, an Air force Wing Commander, Si Green and myself. We took off at night to do a Round Robin the first leg of which was to North Bay. It was quite black out as we were flying in an overcast condition at approx. 5000 ft. There had been some thunderstorm activity in the area but we were not too concerned. One half hr after takeoff we encountered rough air conditions and the aircraft was really bouncing around. All of a sudden we entered an area of heavy rainfall, some hail, lightning and turbulence. The aircraft started to ascend and my eyes were glued to the altimeter as it indicated a rapid ascent as it spun as rapidly through altitudes from 5000 ft up through 10k, 15k up to 18k ft with no control over the flight of the aircraft. It topped out a little over 18k ft then started a flat descent as rapid as we had climbed. Still no control of the aircraft as down we plummeted toward the earth.

This point in time is etched in my memory as I felt I should have put my head between my legs and kissed my butt goodbye. According to the altimeter we should be making contact with the earth momentarily. All of a sudden Hollywood who was flying, regained control of the aircraft and we started a slow ascent to regain some altitude. We regained radio contact and advised them of our status and that we were returning to Ottawa. It was estimated later that we recovered control of the aircraft approx 300 to 500 feet above ground level. On landing the aircraft it looked as though someone had taken a ball peen hammer to all the leading edges of it. We the aircrew retired to the first bar that was open and revived ourselves with the normal libations that were due.

We achieved our 25 hrs per quarter in August and it was not until December that we had to qualify again.

In September we completed our Air Traffic Controller course to the Department of Transport requirements and returned to Shearwater. We took up our duties in the control tower and began our two year tour of duty.

But that's another tale, to be continued...
Yours Aye, "Peaches"

**VS 880 at Yarmouth, NS
May 1954**

**Aircrew briefing for search for
Avenger #340 Lost at Sea.**

L-R Johnny Ratz, Peter Bruner,
Hank Henry, Whitey Williamson,
Cal Smith, Fred Townsend,
Bud MacLean, Abbie Byrne,
Ian Bouch, Si Green



TAG ON A STRINGBAG

by Les Sayer and Vernon Ball

Chapter headed 'Sink the Bismarck' - *an extract.*

The VICTORIOUS was going flat out as the TAGs emerged onto the wet, pitching flight deck and walked toward the rather pathetic looking range of Swordfish, plodding, first uphill then down, along the heaving deck.

Each Swordfish was armed with a live torpedo and on the warheads of many had been scrawled rude messages, many of which were being rapidly washed off by the intermittent avalanches of heavy spray churned up by the ship's speedy pursuit of the BISMARCK in rather unkind weather.

Getting airborne was no problem, there was plenty of wind to give us lift off the deck. Soon, in loose formation, a gaggle of antiquated biplanes was on a two-hour journey to attack the mightiest ship afloat.

....In the starboard firing step, I had secreted a strictly illegal tot of rum, to bring an inner warmth and a degree of comfort to the stark realization that here, over the North Atlantic, hundreds of miles from anything that could be called remotely friendly, were a handful of blokes doing what they had been trained to do.

Nestling a little more comfortably in my Sidcot flying suit, I wiggled my toes in my flying boots, checked the rear gun, hoped I was tuned into the right spot on the dial of the radio, and gazed through a small hole where I could see the red fin of the live torpedo slung underneath. I fervently hoped that I would soon see that disappear on its way to its mark.

The story of the BISMARCK has been told many times and in great detail but nobody ever asked me for my story. I had great faith in my pilot, a Dartmouth type, with great determination laced with an ability to assess critical situations and make the right decisions. Anyway, seated in the rear cockpit, there was nothing I could do about it.

Then, quite suddenly, there was this monster, steaming at high speed with all guns blazing and looking like the dying embers of a wood fire caught in a draught. Came a muffled voice down the voice pipe, which announced in a matter-of-fact tones, "Going in".

During the long, straight run necessary for the pilot to get his sights lined up, I stood up and unseated the rear gun, with the intention of getting off a few rounds if the opportunity arose. Closer and closer we came, anticipating the upward surge of the aircraft as she was relieved of the weight of the torpedo. A violent turn away from BISMARCK and frenzied evasive action threw me back in my seat, from whence, to my horror, I saw the fin of the torpedo still in place.

As confused thoughts tumbled through my mind, there came that same calm muffled voice, "I'm going round again. Not quite lined up."

After coming all this way and getting near enough to spit at BISMARCK, we were going round again? This was no practice run. Those pretty fireflies racing towards us were tracer bullets and what they hit they hurt.

As we left BISMARCK's immediate vicinity, to begin our turn for a second run in, I had an uninterrupted view of the ship still going flat out, and watch the other aircraft climbing away as they turned for home. Now, we were quite alone and going round again. At about 25 miles out and still at wave top height, we turned to face our target for the second time. This time, we had the dubious honour of having BISMARCK's undivided attention. With her whole massive armament free to concentrate on one frail, canvas covered, obsolete biplane, how could they fail to destroy us utterly? One torpedo, two light machine guns and three men against the might of the German Navy - what a hope.

Standing up, I looked over the Pilot's shoulder, everything was uncannily quiet - we had not yet been spotted, or perhaps they could not believe what they had spotted. Closer and closer, the battleship got bigger and bigger, and now my thoughts changed to wondering, "How can we miss?" The target was huge and the run-in perfect.

The upward surge, as the torpedo was dropped, but now we had been spotted, and the elation of an almost certain hit was wiped out by the desperate need to get away from BISMARCK's entire armament. We had proved, almost literally, a pain in their rear, and they definitely resented it! They hurled everything at us, including their main armament of 11-inch guns, which had so recently blown up our most powerful battleship and sorely damaged another. They were trying to knock our still low flying aircraft out of the sky, with the splashes from shells of these formidable guns. To avoid the fate intended for us, we had to watch the flashes of these guns and count the seconds before the shells threw up the almighty splashes - making sure that we weren't where they were!

One such splash was near enough to tear the fabric from beneath my seat, and permitted a howling gale to blow through the resultant hole. Thereafter, I complained to the Pilot, "It's bloody draughty back here!"

Clear at last, we set course for where we hoped our ship would be - the immense relief being somewhat marred by wondering if we had enough fuel to reach her. This was a time when there were few aids to navigation that had not been available to Nelson, and for one moving pinpoint to rendezvous with another in the vastness of the Atlantic was, in itself, no mean feat, the more so after the let-down inevitably felt by men who had passed through, to put it mildly, a frightening experience.

Mercifully, the VICTORIOUS broke all regulations and switched on her light beacon, - the rest was easy. All the aircraft made it, but with very little fuel to spare.

Going below, there were those same faces that saw us off some hours before, plainly thinking, 'bloody fool' or 'bloody hero', according to temperament. Eggs and bacon and a tot of rum and it was all over.

It was for his part in this action that Les was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal (DSM).

(What can I say except 'WOW'. Ed.)

Salty Dip from Joe Carver

AHEAD OR ASTERN ?

" Hey! this is no shit but did you hear what Graf Von"

The R.C.N. was blessed with a few officers possessing intelligence & wit. One – for this story – comes to mind-- Admiral Hugh Pullen. Throughout the navy he was referred to as 'Graf Von'. He had been tagged that appellation in 1936 while serving as gunnery officer in the original river class destroyer H.M.C.S. Skeena.

In 1949 or '50, Graf Von – as a Commodore Pullen – was Captain of H.M.C.S. Ontario in Esquimalt, B.C. The Ontario, a second world war, Colony Class cruiser, was ordered to sail 'around the Horn' to her new station, Halifax, N.S. In transit she was to join an element of the United States navy in the Caribbean for exercises & manoeuvres.

Statistics regarding speed, armament or personnel for any ship are found in special reference books available to any Captain or his Executive Officer of any navy.

Following all the proper protocols of saluting one another H.M.C.S. Ontario joined the U.S.N. Caribbean fleet & other men-of-war involved in the exercises. For some reason the United States Admiral in charge of the exercising ships did not consult his reference tools.

After the welcoming salutes & just before the exercises started the U.S. Admiral sent a message to Graf Von asking, "Can you make 30 knots?"

On Ontario's bridge, Graf Von indignantly turned to his yeoman & said, "Yeoman, make to flag ship, "Ahead or astern?"

Further communication between 'Graf Von' & the American Admiral consisted of briefly wishing farewell & good luck at the conclusion of the exercises. With that

H.M.C.S. Ontario left the Caribbean for Halifax.

Bill Murray writes:

I figured I'm 80 - but - son of a gun!
I'm really going on 81.
If I'm still with you at - 82
I just might even see - 83.

Who could ask more - than to reach - 84
or even arrive at - 85.
It might take a strong fix - to reach - 86
I would feel I'm in Heaven at - 87.

And feel just great - if I make - 88
And if I'm still fine at - 89,
Then God the Almighty - can take me at - 90.

Wearing two hats becomes a pleasurable pastime for some. *By Bill Murray*

Wearing one in the air and one at the Dental Chair was a satisfaction to me in that both flying and dentistry had three challenging and exhilarating moments at times. One of these times with regards to dentistry was an emergency call from the hospital one evening. We'll call this episode:

The Patient got hit - by a hockey stick.

George, a fellow pilot friend of mine was the victim. The first thing I saw was four exposed nerves waving at me - the bottom half of the upper four front teeth having been fractured off - Endodontics (Root-canal Therapy) was my specialty at that time - so George came to the right person - had his front teeth saved in short order by the preparation and completion of four root canals that evening.

George and I spent quite a bit of time in the air tail chasing each other - he was a hard pilot to follow. At times, after saving his front teeth, I think he would be easier on me then before.

In the name of confidentiality, I cannot divulge George's last name - but George knows it - and, if anyone should happen to guess it - well - that is simply coincidental.

(George Pumble? Kay.)

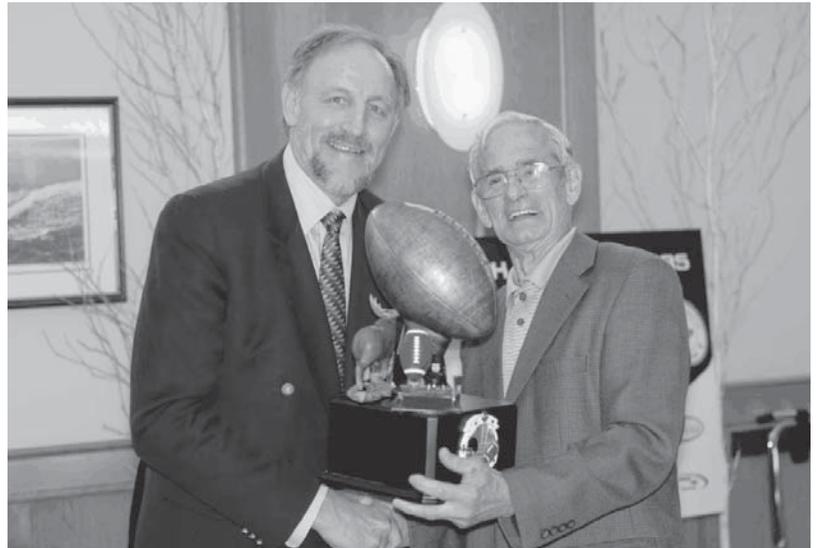


Shades of the Tri-Service Hockey League

Hfx Moosehead
Hockey Team
sporting appropriate
sweaters at a recent
'Navy' appreciation
night. **“GO
NAVY!”** Yea!!!!

Gord “Spook” MacLeod is presented with the Harvey “Moose” Mills Trophy by CFL All Star Tony Gabriel

At a recent CFB Halifax sports awards' breakfast, held at Stadacona C&PO's Mess, Shearwater Flyer football stalwart of the past, Gord Macleod was honored. He was presented the Harvey “Moose” Mills Trophy by Canadian Football League All Star and guest speaker Tony Gabriel. Both individuals were introduced by the function emcee, Shearwater's own Wally Buckoski.



The “Galloping Ghost” was given this one-time award for his lengthy involvement and unselfish dedication as a player, an assistant coach, and head coach. Gord first started with the football Flyers in 1953 and continued on through to the end of the 1967 football season. He then moved on in the Maritime football world to spend a few seasons as Assistant Coach with the Huskies of Saint Mary's University.

Gord was one of the most popular players ever to don a Shearwater Flyers' uniform. He excelled in performing his

role on the field, and followed up his outstanding playing career by becoming a most knowledgeable and successful coach.

In attendance at this awards breakfast were many ex-Shearwater Flyers and Stadacona Sailors football players. All were introduced and received the appropriate Bravo Zulus. However the function highlight was “Spook” being presented with the “Moose” Mills Trophy in recognition of his performance as a Shearwater Flyer.

By Rolly West

RMS Queen Elizabeth was wartime Victoria's best-kept 'secret'

BY T. W. PATERSON, *SPECIAL TO THE CITIZEN OCTOBER 7, 2011*

It was so huge that it could be seen from Port Angeles - but no one "knew," early in 1942, that the world's largest troopship was in the Esquimalt dry dock! For 30 years I've wanted to write this story but haven't gotten around to it for lack of photographs. A need just recently filled and graciously augmented by Chronicles reader Allan Scott whose grandfather, Allan Craig, was superintendent of the Esquimalt graving dock at the time.

So today's the big day - my "look back" at the wartime dry-docking of the Royal Mail Steamship Queen Elizabeth, then the largest passenger liner in the world, and an unanticipated draftee into wartime service as a troopship.

Built for the Cunard-White Star Line, at 84,000 tonnes she was even larger than her elder sister, RMS Queen Mary, and intended for passenger and mail service (hence the RMS) between Southampton and New York City. But war would delay her completion for six years and she would cut her teeth, not as a palatial liner, but as a stripped-down and grim grey troop carrier. Not until the return of peacetime would Elizabeth get to strut across the Atlantic in the traditional Cunard livery of black hull, white superstructure and massive red funnels banded with black.

So speedy were she and Mary that they could sail without naval escorts - there were no sluggish Atlantic convoys for these royal ladies.

Her remarkable career began Sept. 27, 1938, with her launching by royal namesake, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth (mother of the present Queen Elizabeth II). As this was at the height of the Munich crisis, His Majesty King George couldn't attend the great event, and HRH told the crowds of workers and guests attending the launch, "The King has asked me to assure you of the deep regret he feels at finding himself compelled at the last moment to cancel his journey to Clydebank..."

"This ceremony, to which many thousands have looked forward [to] so eagerly, must now take place in circumstances far different from those for which they had hoped. I have, however, a message for you from the King.

He bids the people of this country to be of good cheer, in spite of the dark clouds hanging over them, and, indeed, over the whole world."

Also present that historic day were Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret, Lord Aberconway, chairman of the Clydebank shipyard, John Brown & Co., and the Cunard Co. chairman, Sir Percy Bates, Bart.

Because of the immensity of the job of her outfitting, the Second World War found Elizabeth still tied to her builders' dock, a sitting duck for German bombers. Worse, she was tying up dockyard space and shipwrights, both vital to the war effort.

As she had to be moved out of immediate danger, it was decided to outfit her to the point that she could make it across the Atlantic to New York Harbour (the U. S. was neutral), there to join the berthed Queen Mary.

As the German U-boats that all but controlled the Atlantic would have made every effort to sink the world's largest ship, if only for the propaganda value, and because it was impossible to make such a voyage in complete secrecy, it was decided to launch what would become one of the great deceptions of the war. This would be the first of two in which Elizabeth would participate, the second being her "secret" visit to Esquimalt, two years later.

It was announced that she'd be moved to Southampton for dry-docking. To complete the ruse, her 500-man crew was asked to sign "coast-wise" articles, the Southampton dry-dock was informed of her impending arrival, she took on board a Southampton pilot and hotel rooms were booked in that city. Not even Capt. J. C. Townley knew of her real destination.



RMS Queen Elizabeth in her wartime finery.

Her only wartime "armaments" consisted of her battleship-grey paint and an anti-magnetic mine degaussing device that had consumed 30,000 feet of cable.

There was no time for work-up trials short of testing her steering gear and compasses. On Feb. 27, 1940, Cunard White Star Ltd., in a complete break with precedent, had to accept delivery from her shipbuilders "as is." It's a testimonial to the British workmanship of the day that she'd more than fulfill all hopes and expectations.

Immediately before sailing, her crew was informed that she'd be making an ocean voyage and the few that declined to serve were held incommunicado until she was well underway. Finally, early March 2, after being fuelled by naval vessels, a somber grey Queen Elizabeth ghosted down the Clyde and pointed her nose seaward.

She was on her own in the deadly Atlantic, without arms, without a naval escort, with only her secret departure and her speed, as yet unproven, to protect her.

As it happened, the voyage went without incident and it's recorded that much of the world was astonished by her turning up, publicly unannounced, in New York Harbour, five days later.

So began Queen Elizabeth's wartime career as a troopship: Five years, five months, 18 days, half a million miles! It's one of the most remarkable nautical careers of all time.

(Conclusion)

“There was approximately two feet of water under the ship’s keel and just inches to spare on each side. This very tight fit created a pressure wave off the bow, spilling water over the top like a miniature tsunami[!]” – Allan Scott, Youbou

Straight from her builders, unfinished, untried, and across the Atlantic Ocean in five days to the safety of New York Harbour—not bad for the world’s largest liner, *RMS Queen Elizabeth*. Not bad for the British Admiralty either, which had successfully misled the world as to her real destination.

That was in February 1940. Two years later, she'd turn up, 'secretly,' in the government graving dock at Esquimalt. Therein lies our tale...

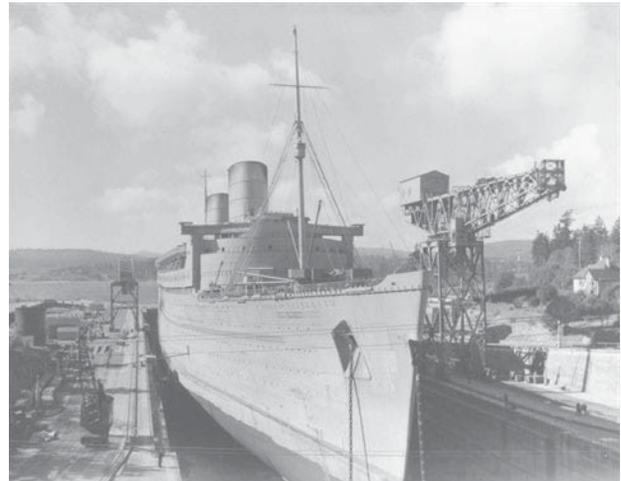
This being pre-Pearl Harbour, she was dispatched from New York to Singapore (one of the few world ports with dry-docking facilities big enough to accommodate her) for completion, then on to Sydney for conversion to a troopship. Speedy enough, as was her sister, *Queen Mary*, to carry thousands of servicemen at a time without a naval escort, *Elizabeth's* interior was fitted out with multiple and enormous kitchen facilities, sleeping accommodation (nothing like that which future paying passengers would enjoy) and a hospital. On April 9, 1941, she cleared Sydney with 5600 Australian and New Zealand troops, bound for Suez, then, with *Mary*, she carried troops and reinforcements to and from the Middle East.

This was demanding work. But the growing necessity increasing her passenger accommodations presented another challenge: Japan had entered the war. Hence the decision, again determined by the need of facilities large enough to handle her, to dry-dock her in Esquimalt.

She arrived on February 25, 1942. At 233 feet above the waterline—that's 20-stories high, taller than any building in downtown Victoria!—she could be seen from Port Angeles.

To put this in personal context, I remember viewing the *Sedco-135* as it was being built at Victoria Machinery Depot in the 1970s from atop Mount Douglas in Saanich. The oil rig overshadowed everything along Victoria's waterfront and was visible from almost any angle for miles and miles. It would have been even more so for *Queen Elizabeth* in 1942. All of which makes the fact that its presence in the provincial capital a 'top secret' almost laughable.

As one historian put it, “Thousands of Victorians had seen the grey silhouette of the massive passenger liner cruising, ghost-like, in Juan de Fuca Strait and come to anchor in the broad expanse of Royal Roads.” Some secret.



Hundreds then converged on Skinner's (Constance) Cove to watch as her 1031-foot bulk was eased into the 1150-foot dry-dock. It took two tries. Youbou's Allan Scott knows the story as his grandfather, Allan Craig, was the graving dock superintendent: “On the first attempt...she came in a bit too fast, knocking over several chocks in the process. The ship had to be pulled back [to try] again the next day at high tide.

“There was approximately two feet of water under the ship’s keel and just inches to spare on each side. This very tight fit created a pressure wave off the bow, spilling water over the top like a miniature tsunami[!]”

“In one of the photos you will see a gangway entering the ship. The dockyard personnel had to cut a hole in the ship’s side so personnel could enter without utilizing the crane bucket all the time.”

The father of his friend, Allan Brown, Jr., now in his '80s, was the docking master and assistant superintendent of

Yarrows Shipyard. His had been the tricky job of easing *Elizabeth* into the dry-dock.

Around the clock, for 12 days and nights, thousands of shipyard workers, including high school students drafted for the purpose, and military personnel enlarged her troop carrying capacity to 15,000 passengers. Twelve days and nights that she sat, helpless, unable even to use her speed to outrun any kind of attack, had the enemy had the means to strike her in Esquimalt.

For the duration of the war and almost 40 voyages, *Queen Elizabeth* delivered her troops wherever needed, virtually without incident—other than the time, off the Irish coast, a U-boat lined her up in its sights. Almost incredibly, for all her gargantuan size, all four torpedoes missed. Considering the number of troops she usually carried, her loss would have been the worst in maritime history.

By the time of her eventual release from military service in March 1946, she'd transported more than 800,000 service personnel, sailed just under 500,000 miles and visited every continent but Antarctica.

Finally 'returned' to the trans-Atlantic passenger service for which she was intended, *Elizabeth* was retired in 1969. Today, *Queen Mary* is a spectacular tourist attraction in San Diego. But *Elizabeth*, after a brief and ill-starred attempt to do the same in Port Everglades, Florida, was sold to a Hong Kong billionaire for conversion to a university for the World Campus Afloat program, as the *Seawise University*.

Alas, near completion of a 5 million-pound conversion, she caught fire on Jan. 9, 1972 and became a total loss. It's fortunate that thousands of great photos were taken of this great lady, from her building to her wartime trooping days to her peacetime return to glory as a passenger liner. In particular, those photos taken of her 'secret' visit to the Esquimalt graving dock early in 1942. Thanks again, Allan Scott.

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CNAG Atlantic Memorial Reunion

by Minnie Rogers

The Canadian Naval Air Group Atlantic chapter is still alive and thriving. On Sunday 2 Oct 2011 a mini reunion was held at 'Home Base' 12 Wing (HMCS) shearwater in the

Aviation Museum. About 55 members and guests gathered at 1000 hrs to enjoy tea, coffee, muffins and conversation.

At 1030 "Buck" Rogers welcomed everyone and Minnie conducted a short Memorial Service. The Honour Roll of 74 deceased members since our Reunion in 2010 was read. Carrying on in Naval tradition, the 'Up Spirits' crew of buck, Dave Warner and Gerry Young, issued tots of rum and more stories were told.



Gerry Young, Buck Rogers and Dave Warner

Brunch of fish chowder, chilli, salad, rolls and sweets was enjoyed by all. During this time, Ron Beard presented a DVD highlighting the history of the three Aircraft Carriers. These are for sale as a fund raiser for the Foundation. Call Kay.

After a regular business meeting and to conclude the afternoon - great music by Jeff Collins (Rocky Collins son) from the 'Oldies and Goodies' era brought back fond memories and got some dancers on the floor.

A great day was enjoyed. Wish you could have joined us.

SHEARWATER

I have a story to tell
Of a place I know so well
Of hangars and air planes
And many proud men

She stands proud and strong
To protect us from wrong
She improved through the years
In airplanes and men

From Seafires to Fireflys
To Furies and more
Then Avengers and Banshees
Boy could they roar

We had helos too who watched
And when the time came
Off they would go
To fire and floods and more of the same

Then came the Tracker
That venerable old beast
Who toiled on and on
To keep us all free

She flew and she flew
Through the wind and the rain
And always brought the crew
Home safely again

She was a beauty
And as tough as nails
With never a whimper
She completed her tasks

And then like an old soldier
She just faded away
To the grave of airplanes
And there she will stay
God bless you old girl

Then came the SEA KING
And she proved her name well
For never did a helicopter
Prove herself so well

She became a mistress
To many a man
As she toiled and she toiled
For so many years

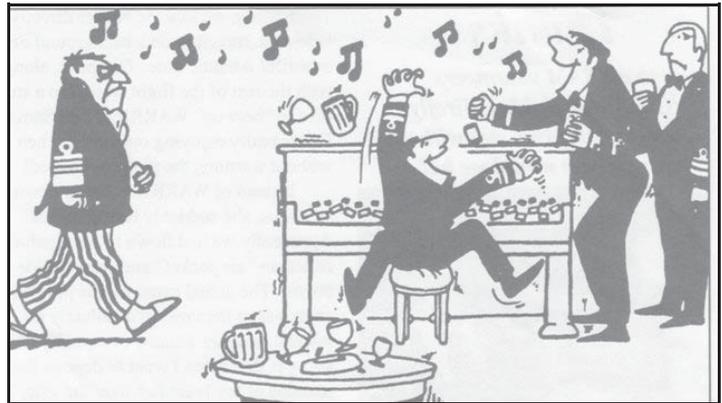
She did so many things
And did them so well
That she did them at all
Made me proud as hell

So onward we go

And we are state of the art
With fine young people
Who will do their part

And Shearwater is there
As the Base for you all
To live and share
And to those who have passed
And to those still to come

Be brave and be bold
For the job that you do
Is for all to behold
And pros that you are
The legends will be told
by **Bud Ayer**

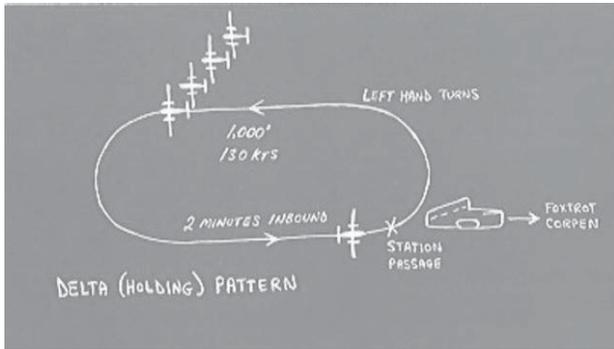


HEART OF MY HEART

"Heart of my heart", I love that melody
"Heart of my heart" brings back a memory.
When we were kids on the corner of the street
We were rough and ready guys
But oh, how we could harmonize.

"Heart of my heart", meant friends were dearer then
Too bad we had to part.
I know a tear would glisten, If once more I could listen
To the gang that sang "Heart of my heart".

**SUPPORT YOUR SAM FOUNDATION
RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP**



IN THE DELTA

BELLEVILLE, Jean-Guy (John)

BOWSER, Edna Mae

BRUNLESS, William (Bill) George

BURGHAM, Allen Russell

DAVIS, Harold 'Hal'

EAGLE, Ralph

FASEVICH, Helen

GOWEN, Brian Shaun

HAMILTON, Ivor

HOWIE, Rev. William (Bill) Lovell

HUNTER, H. James (Big Jim)

IRELAND, Thomas

MORRES, Eileen

MURPHY, Vincent

NEWELL, 'Rusty'

OSGOOD, Arthur Herbert "Ozzie"

PARKS, William 'Bill'

PURCHASE, Donald

RAPITTA, Theodore 'Ted'

ROL, Fred

SAMS, Alexander "Sandy"

WALTON, Patricia

ODE TO SUPPORT TROOPS OFT FORGOT

Through the history of world aviation
Some names have come to the fore.
Great deeds of the past in our memories will last
As they're joined by more and more.

When man first started to labour
In his quest to conquer the sky,
He was designer, mechanic and pilot,
And he built a machine that could fly.

But somehow the order got twisted,
And then in the public eye
The only man who was ever known
Was the man who knew how to fly.

The pilot was everyone's hero,
He was brave, he was bold, he was grand,
As he stood by his battered old bi-plane
With goggles and helmet in hand.

To be sure, those pilots all earned it.
To fly then they had to have guts,
As they blazed their names in the hall of fame
On fabric wings with wire struts.

But for every one of those heroes,
There were thousands of little renown.
Ah, they were the men who worked on the planes
But kept their feet on the ground.

We all know the name of Lindbergh,
And we've read of his flight to fame.
But think, if you can, of his maintenance man
Can you remember his name?

And think of those wartime heroes,
Bagresk, Klette, and Scott.
Can you tell me the names of their crew chiefs?
A thousand to one you cannot!

Now pilots are highly trained people,
And wings are not easily won.
But without the help of our ground support,
Our pilots would march with a gun.

So now when you see those mighty war birds
Soaring and roaring through boundless air,
Those men who stand with tools in hand
Are the men who keep them there.

Author unknown.



Adm Barry Keeler and Eve Adams, Parliamentary Secretary to the Honourable Steven Blaney, Minister of Veterans Affairs

The Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation

The Commendation is presented to individuals who have contributed to the care and well-being of Veterans and to the remembrance of their contributions, sacrifices and achievements.

Eve Adams, Parliamentary Secretary to the Honourable Steven Blaney, Minister of Veterans Affairs, presented the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation during a ceremony in Halifax.

"It is an honour to be here today to pay tribute to these exceptional individuals who have contributed so much in service to our Veterans," said Ms. Adams. "Our Government is proud to recognize these Canadians who volunteer their time and efforts to give back to our Veterans."

Rear Admiral (Ret'd) Barry Keeler, Halifax, NS

Adm. Keeler retired from the Canadian Forces in 1996, after a 36-year career.

He is a member of the Last Post Fund, the Royal Canadian Navy Benevolent Fund, the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation and the Naval Officers Association of Canada.

His contributions to the Royal Canadian Navy Benevolent Fund have greatly assisted the well-being of countless Navy Veterans and their families.

As a director of the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation, Adm. Keeler's initiatives have contributed to the preservation of Canada's Naval Aviation Heritage.

Within the Last Post Fund, Adm. Keeler serves as the Nova Scotia Branch President, a member of the Governing Council, the Honorary Treasurer, and an

advisor within the Executive Team.

His leadership in the area of financial management has enabled the Last Post Fund to reduce administrative costs, thereby allowing the substantial savings to be allocated to the greater needs of Veterans.

Adm. Keeler's time and energy have a truly positive impact on the lives of Veterans.

FORGOTTEN HEROES

I wonder how many readers can name the only Canadian Naval recipient of the Victoria Cross in the Second World War. Not many, I bet.

The lone recipient of the VC was Lt (P) Robert Hampton Gray VC, DSC, RCNVR, a Canadian Naval Pilot flying with the Royal Navy.

A total of 936 Canadian Naval Aircrew served with the Royal Naval Air Service in the First World War and 260 with the royal Naval Fleet Air Arm in the Second World War.

In 1947, the RCN formed its own Air Branch which consisted of 10 Squadrons and a carrier, either loaned from the RN (WARRIOR, MAGNIFICENT) or owned by the RCN (BONAVENTURE). BONAVENTURE was arguably the most proficient anti-submarine carrier in NATO when Canadian Naval Air was shut down in July 1970 as a result of the fight for turf between the Services.

Between 1947 and 1970, 106 RCN Air and Ground Crew lost their lives in flying operations. Three of them were my classmates. One other, Petty Officer First Class Doug Mander, has a Kentville connection - he was the father of Kentville's Police Chief Mark Mander.

It would be shameful if the sacrifice of these men was forgotten.

May they rest in peace.

Cdr (P) James W. Stegen, RCN (Ret'd) - Kentville, NS

SAMF 50 / 50 DRAW



16 Nov 11

Carol Shadbolt is seen here presenting Col John Cody (Ret'd) with the winning cheque for \$3080.

Congratulations Col Cody and thank you for your support to our Fund Raising endeavour.

For those who still have tickets you can use them for this next draw or you may call us toll free

1-888-497-7779 and give us your cc number and we will fill out tickets for you.

For those that already used their tickets - don't worry more will be sent to you.

The idea of the 50/50 draw was for YOU to purchase the tickets - not go out and sell them. However, if you want to sell them - go ahead. We can use all the help we can get.

You may be our next winner.



TILE MANIA

Now that Christmas is nearly upon us, perhaps it would be a good time to promulgate (love that word) once again, the various kinds of tiles one can buy and display on the 'Wall of Honour' in the SAM's beautiful and welcoming atrium.

As you know, the purpose of the "Wall of Honour" is to commemorate the lives of all those who contributed to the growth of Shearwater, just by being there over the years. The three formats are:

The FULL TILE – which can utilize 1 inch or ¾ inch letters, depending upon the length of the text.

The HALF TILE which gives one the choice of the top or bottom half. (Both with ¾ inch letters)

The BUDDY TILE or CREW TILE is our 3rd design where each name will fill one quarter of the tile. The type of aircraft and the Squadron may be shown in the centre of this tile, space permitting.

For non-crew folks, other related information could be included in center of tile.

(See centre pages of WARRIOR for cost of tile etc.

Ken Millar - Wall Tile Coordinator)

Check out the following tiles. Although they are fictitious and a trifle dumb, the management takes no responsibility if the general consensus finds they have no redeeming social value.)

Now, for those looking for something a little more unusual, could we suggest;

THE TEXTILEwhich features a Longhorn Steer belt buckle as the center piece of the tile.

THE TACTILE... For any of you touchy feely folks, we have sprayed the tile with an invisible rubberized varnish.

THE TURNTILE... (for ½ tiles only) Features sandblasting the texts of the top and bottom halves as though they were both tops, so that every year the tile can be rotated 180 degrees and give both contributors a turn at being the "top dude"

And lastly, for all of you getting a headache from perusing this rant, we proudly present;

THE TILE N'ALL.....Which features a years supply of 81 mg headache pills and a promise, that if you purchase a tile, we will not include any of these inane ideas on it.

THE BISMARCK “FIASCO”

Terry Goddard

The 23 May was an ordinary day in harbour at Gibraltar - “dull”. Gib unlike most ports had few bars, and fewer whorehouses - if any. The causeway to La Linea was only accessible through a guardhouse - British on one side - Spanish on the other. Recent book tales of frantic recalls et all the night Ark sailed are rubbish. Access to the dockyard was through a gate locked at 2230hrs, few, if any Officers or Men missed this curfew.

On board the “Ark Royal” - other than Command for whom I can't speak; there was a Mediterranean insular attitude - the invasion of Crete - a disaster - Bobby Bradshaw's - “DSC” exploits from Halfar Malta - seemed he sank a ship a night - generally providing 10 Group with the ship's name! When would we do another run up the “Med” doing a “Ramrod” and against airfields in Sardinia - just to make sure that they knew we were there!? (An aside - After one such excursion having taken more than normal flak. But deciding to give the return a chance - we had to ditch - get out a good MAYDAY position and was picked up 9 ½ hrs later by “H69” - HMS Foxhound. I slept through an “ITI” bombing attack!)The war in the Atlantic - despite the terrible merchant ship losses was not a page one item in our thoughts. In deed, no idea about the sad state of affairs in the UK and the war itself.

Thus, at about 0230 hrs 24 May, when woken by the ominous and urgent thumping of the screws at flank speed - thoughts were not about “Bismarck” and the North Atlantic, but a return trip up the Med. Then later, when on deck and being confronted by the grey and troubled Atlantic we greeted each other with smug smiles. Placing the right hand on the left breast we were in the know! Scharnhorst and Gneisenau had left Brest. Ho Hum - another chase and they would scurry back to harbour. No word from Command as to what we were really doing. I missed Capt Holland. His words and actions made it quite clear that “Ark”: under his command was a single entity whose unified purpose was to exploit the spatial potential of his aircraft. I thought he was just great (my collateral duty was the seaplane tender which he liked to use - my first command! With Maund's arrival, this became a Ship's Officer duty. I don't believe I ever spoke with Capt Maund.

Morning of 24 May was dreadful. “Hood” our pride and joy had been sunk by Bismarck. A bolt out of the blue - like “Custer” we wondered where the hell had Bismarck come from and how the hell did Hood get sunk. Unbelievable - shattering to morale.

Then the buzz was that we were off to provide cover for a 20,000 Troop Convoy (WSSB). Repulse and Victorious having been withdrawn to join in the hunt for the “Bismarck”. But now there was a dramatic change in

mission - apparently Admiralty had decided to take a risk and leave the 20,000 Troop convoy unprotected! Unknown to us “Ark's” aircraft had become their last chance to get the “Bismarck”. A **violent** course change - off to the northward at maximum speed. Flight operations at this time were two plane anti-submarine patrols - sea - wind and visibility had become most unpleasant. Goofers had a hayday with go rounds and ugly landings. Certainly one was aware that - better not go in the drink as destroyers had left to refuel. No plane guard - did not see U556! We also remember a catapult launch - ditching - all three crew members bobbing and waving in the water as they passed down the port side. Then a sickening thump thump as the fail safe depth charges exploded - a horrid sight as they slumped still and silent. I don't recall any momentous feelings of now or never, that we were the last hope, nor do I recall any do or die heroic briefings. The sinking of Hood continued to be a gloomy topic. I think most of us thought that like Schornhorst and Gneisenau the Bismarck would successfully scurry back to port.



On the 25th we heard about the Swordfish from Victorious attacking the Bismarck. We understood some aircraft had got lost navigationaly not by Bismarck's anti aircraft fire. The buzz went round that Victorious' Beacon was not working and that the Force Admiral had ordered Victorious' Captain Bovell to turn off the searchlights he had turned on the clouds to home his aircraft. Capt Bovell bless his heart then signaled the flagship using his brightest 20" signal projector!! A touch of “Nelson”! (The allusion being to Horatio Nelson holding his telescope to his glass eye so that he could deny seeing his Admirals signal to break off action.)

May I digress here. Background synopsis generally refer to the Swordfish as a typical product of the Naval Air Service being starved for funds in that it was low in the RAF's priority list and Admirals being instinctively committed to the future of the dreadnought could not accept money from the Naval Budget being used for Naval

Aircraft. The first Sea Lord in justifying the need for Naval Aircraft stated "Aircraft were second only in importance to Naval Gunnery". In the result, all writers without exception refer to the Swordfish as a slow obsolete open cockpit inadequate range aircraft. I suggest that this was not the view of those of us who flew in the Swordfish. Our experiences in Norway - Dunkirk and the Mediterranean built up a great sense of trust in the Swordfish. It had shown that it was a best for taking punishment - I don't recall hearing about any ditching due to engine failure (credit shared by groundcrew and engine).

Its flying abilities were better than the TBM - Devastators - Dauntlesses and Kates. It could, by personal experience, out-manoeuvre an ME109 on the deck. It could carry a heavier bomb load than a Wellington.

I don't think any other aircraft could have operated as successfully as did the Swordfish - during the Bismark flight operations - rise and fall of the round down - no less than 56 feet - 60 knot winds with green ugly water over the bow.

In other words we did not feel that it was obsolete. Indeed, I think we felt our survival chances in a Swordfish were as good if not better than in anything else!

Morning of 26th was confused chaos - weather was bloody! Indeed, it gave one pause for worrying thoughts. At first light some Swordfish were sent out on a Protective Patrol to see if Scharnhorst and Gneisenau were nearby! At about 0830 my squadron 818 was ranged to carry out a search for Bismarck. A pandemonium of motion - a frantic slip - slide - push - hold to range position. Shear bloody guts - brute strength and determination by deck and aircraft crews. The tension became very taut, for reasons not known. Scharnhorst and Gneisenau had not induced the degree of self introspection which target "Bismarck" now did.

Briefing took place in the Ops Room - I don't remember a briefing Room! The briefing was brief. No momentous oration - courses for search - weather - winds - carrier datum and MLA. No info of other forces - I don't remember any pictures of Bismarck other than Janes Fighting Ships. At this time, I suggest most of us were more worried about take-off and landing, than the Bismarck. No plane guard - waiting for take-off was quite grim - scary! The tenseness was relieved by the dogged grins on soaked wind blown faces of deck crews. They were magnificent. Really in harms way - but exuding nothing a thumbs up attitude. There is something

intangible in the British other ranks - Bull Dogfish stoicism and attitude which compels their officers to behave as officers should behave. So you put on a brave face - let them know that you will do your best to not let them down.

History, as was the case here, clearly shows that the British Sailors and Soldiers, without credit, win battles and wars despite the oft time foibles of their officers. The wait on deck seemed interminable - green water gushing down the deck - roaring gusty wet wind - rough violent pitching and rolling - anxiety all round. We lurch into wind, finally its our turn. Lumber slowly up a hill, airborne at island, and oh yes! There's some guy holding up a blackboard with a revised datum! Fat chance plot will be changed! Once airborne thoughts of toppling or flying into the ocean were displaced by need for other thoughts. Agree it is best to get above the muck to get on our way. At about 5000 ft find a window between top of muck and bottom of towering cumulus. Agree to stay there - as always get beacon fine tuned. Thoughts now hesitantly switched to Bismarck. No breaks in the muck below us. After about 15 minutes agreed we should get below it. A hairy descent - sweaty - broke through at about 600 ft - watching altimeter had been quite an experience!. Visibility remained lousy. Air unstable - bumpy with showers - miserable! Really unpleasant - then without warning or expectation we were in the clear - no cloud - calmer seas - good visibility - sweating and dry mouth ease up! Better start looking.

I don't recall any feeling of the urgency to get Bismarck now! In the past, we had looked for a never found Scharnhorst and Gneisenau. Disappointing but seemingly not critical - as long as they were boxed up in Brest, what harm? Under the balm of the nice weather, desire, intestinal fortitude to find Bismarck rapidly increased. Completed outbound and step aside legs without incident. About 15 minutes on return leg, picked up RAF sighting report - really excited - where was it - anywhere near. Lettered position used by RAF not on chart. Nothing from Ark to tell us where. Heated discussion as to whether we should ask. No other transmissions heard. Decided to stay quiet. A maelstrom of thoughts cascaded through our conversations shouted down the voice pipe - remember - angry disappointment that we would not get an opportunity to avenge the Hood. Happy! If guilty thoughts that, hell it would not be us attacking the Bismarck. Let the RAF and Home Fleet wherever they are, do the job. Ho Then we were back in the bloody weather - course and beacon agree - ached it again! Ark still taking green water. As usual, lets us mill around for a time before turning into wind! Finally about 1500 hrs, its our turn. Didn't see any pangs. Let's not be the first! No plane guard gives pause for thought as does rock and roll of plunging round - down. Obviously made it. Debriefing was brief. Really there was little interest in our adventures.

Intense activity getting 820 Son ready for a strike. Can't comment on 820's take-off other than to note - ironically -

that Stewart Moores position in Admiralty prior to joining 820, involved ship and aircraft recognition. Had something to eat. One of the axiomatic things one should do when one has the chance is sleep. I slept for about an hour and a half. I don't remember feeling any jealousy that I was not on the strike. We were not aware that due to plotting errors etc, Home Fleet had screwed up and steered in the wrong direction and was now unable to intercept Bismarck, unless Ark's Swordfish slowed the Bismarck down. Rumors that 820 had attacked the Sheffield spread throughout the ship. Surely not!



HMS Sheffield

The strike returned to worse conditions than at take-off. Three of them pranced. Fortunately stayed on the deck. No plane guard and Renown didn't even pretend to be one ploughing around up ahead on port bow.

Then we heard the details of 820's attack on the Sheffield. At least Sheffield knew what she was doing! She recognized the aircraft as Swordfish and by exemplary seamanship avoided the two torpedoes which were on target and running! Only two. For perhaps with divine intervention, but more probably by improper setting of the duplex pistols all of the others had exploded soon after entry. Initial disbelief and dark humor was soon replaced with cynical anger. Christ - Command didn't even know where its cruiser escort was - where or what the Home Fleet was doing - where or what Vain was doing with his destroyers - was Prinz Eugen with the Bismarck - where she was - was not known - but at least it seemed that Bismarck was somewhere ahead of Sheffield.

Things were very confused. No direction had been received from the commander in Chief nor were any given later on except as will be described "To order the Swordfish strike aircraft to abort." The weather continued to get worse, looking at least 60 feet - green water over the bows - made thoughts of just flying, very scary. Indeed, surely it was not possible. Alternately please and disappointed. Very mixed emotions. After much gossip and mutterings, word came down that 818 Squadron all aircraft plus three others were to go on a strike. This time, the torpedoes would be armed with contact pistols. Didn't understand then and don't now - why in heavy seas duplex explode on the waves and contact wouldn't. Seemed bass ackwards. Anyway -

briefing was tense - no squadron tactical briefing - we had done it before - we would play it by ear and do it again. Position of Bismarck about 15 miles ahead of Sheffield. No course and speed. General instruction was find Sheffield and she would point the way to Bismark. Still no information as to where Prinz Eugen - Home Fleet and Vian were. Feelings were taut - not adversarial - but questioning, certainly we considered the weather cause for deep concern - fear maybe? However, I don't recall any greater sense of awe that it was the Bismarck as opposed to an airfield RamRod - a run at Strasburg etc. Sure dry mouth - lack of interest in talking - I wouldn't describe it as a determined resolve, rather a numb sense of it has got to be done.

Nobody must see that you have some very disturbing introspective feelings, particularly the Flight Deck and Aircraft Ground Crew - again working as they were - on a slippery deck - braced against rock and roll - wind and rain and green water! As soon as we started engines, the Swordfish wanted to take off. It is to their credit that there was not a disaster on deck. Their demeanor and drill was perfect. Every man knew his task and cockily did it. Indeed, sitting in the Range was a scary do - and bloody miserable in the driving rain, notwithstanding written articles of lumbering Swordfish taking off through green water. We were airborne by the island. Well over the swirling green stuff - would you believe it - the situation must have been so "fubar" in Command that there was no last minute notice board being waved at us. As one "Wag" later joked, they didn't know where the Sheffield nor Home Fleet were - maybe they didn't know where they were! After usual delays, airborne ab out 2115 hrs. No sign of Tim Coode nor anybody else - did a quick circuit of Ark just below cloud at about 600 ft - joined by two of our flight - no sign of number two our wing man. Set course for Sheffield - visibility about 1/2 mile - tune beacon - check course. Then very strange, the three crews were laughing at each other - sort of can't believe this is happening - but laughing. Continued on at about 500ft. Spread the other two out to scouting position. About on eta Sheffield popped up out of the muck about 45 minutes after take off. Brought the other two in and buzzed the Sheffield. They seemed to be forgiving. Blokes waving etc. Sheffield altered course and ceased zig zagging. So of we went - still the three of us - the 3rd sub flight - my aircraft, as it always seemed to be - then and in other theaters Malta, Indian Ocean etc was "K" for King. Agreed we had to get height so up we went into the swirling wet muck - awful. We broke at about 5000 ft in between irregular layers. Other two rejoined. So still three of us. Rather strained and dry mouthed in close formation. No grins - we were stressed. According to information, Bismarck should be about 15 mile ahead of Sheffield. Odd gaps in cloud gave fleeting glimpses of sea - no Bismarck. Should we have stayed below clouds at 500 ft - Christ - nothing to do but go back to Sheffield. Will we find her - worst of all we were really scared that we would not find the Bismarck. More a matter of we didn't

want to be considered cowards rather than any thoughts that it was all up to us. Found Sheffield sitting in the clear - she set course again. So did we. Back into the murk again - up to about 5000 ft. Feelings very mixed but ardently hoping we would find the bloody Bismarck. Just past ETA - despair set in - and certainly questioning gestures from the other two. Feeling very guilty and unsure. But then thunderous - crackling roars as though a number of express trains in a tunnel had roared by! Bismarck had opened fire at us with its main 15" armament - well she found us - or as Admiral "Luttens" decreed "He" the Bismarck - too good to be a "She" had found us. But thank heavens we had found HER. Without delay, and not as oft time reported, manoeuvring for a position for twenty minutes - what nonsense - we dove down. Bits of ice breaking off with a static crack heightened the tension as we lost height - altimeter spinning - seemed we would never break clear - certainly a half crown - sixpence experience - but we did - again at about 500 ft. Jesus, there was Bismarck on the starboard beam - guns belching - flames - smoke and tracer - looked toweringly awesome. Whether mesmerized by Bismarck or not, I don't know, but as far as I can recall we were on our own - didn't see any other aircraft. Quite a bit of spray and funnel smoke - turned - down to sea level - I mean just above the heavy seas - and went in - feeling angry and excited. Reports state that the intensity and accuracy of the Bismarck's fire compelled us to turn away before dropping torpedoes. Rubbish - why give them any more opportunities - we went straight in - rather like a moth to a flame. Just prior to drop, a skid jink to the left. The Bismarck was enormous - drop in a trough and up to 400 ft and away - still all alone. Turned to look at Bismarck and lo and behold there was an explosion and smoke on Bismarck's port bow. Excitedly in plain language reported "one hit port bow" - asked to confirm and did so. Went up to six thousand in the clear. Set course for "Ark" confirmed it with beacon. Up ahead spotted another Swordfish - it was Geoffrey Fausett flying with an enormous and painful bunion on his neck - contentedly smoking a big cigar. Didn't agree with his course so continued on our course alone. Sighted Ark about 2200 hrs - getting dark. Joined the gaggle of aircraft circling around - getting darker and the weather had not improved. Elation of attack evaporated - again dry mouthed. Ark still still fiddling around. Finally turns into wind - it is dark - about 2220. Got the affirmative and came aboard. A sweaty event. I was quite certain that the hit I reported was a "K" for King hit and I so reported at debriefing. Got criticized by a sniveling "looker" that I should not have claimed the hit - but I reaffirmed my conviction that it was a "K" for King hit. Subsequently in the varying accounts of the action, hits are credited to at least five other aircraft - no mention that I have found for "K" for King - annoying! Debriefing was tense - Command having received Tim Coode. CO 818 Sqn report of "No Hits" seemingly were reluctant to credit any other report. However, Sheffield reports that Bismarck was steering north west and erratic led to some second thoughts. It

was initially accepted that Bismarck had been hit on the port side - then a hit on the starboard quarter and later a hit on the port quarter. I believe that it is now concluded that there were four hits!

Of one thing I am clear - although the debriefing was disorganized and it took a lot of repetitive statements to convince Command that yes, there had been hits - that it was "Tony Beale" who went in alone on the starboard side who put the torpedo into the rudders. For a brief period - in the confusion, there was a strong buzz that we were going to launch a third strike. Then about an hour later non, it would be a dawn strike! I do believe we were "rather relieved"! Morning briefing quite different - calm and organized - weather still lousy - but better than it had been. Everybody very cocky. All the Swordfish had shown how they could take punishment and fly. Three had pranged and one had too many hits to repair. About 0920 hrs third strike took off - weather much improved - Bismarck was in the clear. Cruised around her and Home Fleet at about 2000 ft. Only ack ack encountered came from King George V whose gunners had mistaken the Swordfish - wheels and all, for German aircraft. Friendly fire? Their shooting was way off! CO asked permission to attack - not given. The Bismarck was now an ugly burning hulk - still being pounded mercilessly by the Home Fleet - battle flag still flying. Very mixed feelings - controversial and illogical. Whilst wanting to go in and drop our torpedoes - a great sense of sadness watching the gallant Bismarck crew trying to fight whilst being pounded to hell by ships guns and torpedoes. I note Rodney fired six for one hit. We were four for fourteen! Without doubt we were exuberant that the Fleet Air Arm had done its stuff and very cynical that CinC would have Rodney - Norfolk and Dorsetshire fire torpedoes and deny us the opportunity to use ours! There was a lot of black - angry humour that no way the Fleet Air Arm was going to be allowed to "sink the Bismarck" (Tried to find the many cartoons to this effect, but regret, I couldn't.)

After Dorsetshire's attack, it was clearly over. We ditched our torpedoes and returned to the ARK. Whilst landing on, a German Heinkel attempted to bomb the Ark, to no avail. Sheffield had returned and she and Renown put up a pretty good defence. Returned to Gib and happy greetings. The Bismarck fiasco was over. Fortunately we had left before the sad scene of those gallant German sailors being abandoned in the angry seas, some cling to ships sides!

It is a pity that accounts of Arks aircraft actions are so varied and scarce. Why doesn't Admiralty do some research and get an agreed standardized version. For example, the many accounts of Midway are all similar.

For those who depended on those who served:

I am warmed by the messages you share with me filled with memories of military life. For you, you have never really left your job, your life, your ties to the military family.

For dependents, we, too, have memories and ties that remain with us long into adulthood. As children, DND was home and acronyms were our world. The MPs would patrol the PMQs, while we played and walked to the CANEX.

I can't walk by a white building with green trim and not get warm and fuzzy inside and I miss the Commissionaire who gave us the go ahead every day. I get upset when I hear people who know nothing about the Military, say things like, "he's in the army....the army guys....the soldiers in Halifax!" I miss being around people that knew deeply the meaning of serving your country and I miss not having everyone on your street watch out for you. I miss moving to a new place and not knowing the people or the familiarity of the base church, school, rec centre and movie theatre. I miss being surrounded by uniforms that made me feel protected and made me feel part of something unique and special. I miss my mother organizing events for the wives at the Mess and my dad coming home from all over the world with goodies in his flight bag. I miss building forts out of the huge boxes from the last family that moved onto the street and I miss getting a 25 cent ice cream from the canteen in the hangar.

School was getting your supplies from the back cupboard in your classroom. It was knowing everyone in the class because they were in your class 2 years ago at a different base or you at least knew you would see them again. It was never good bye for good. You were never the "new" kid and you were treated as one of the big Canadian family of dependents.

Laina Andrews. Principal of "Coburg West" high school, Port Hope

Laina Andrews is my Daughter, a High School Principal, who wrote this to me the other day. She was thinking of Nov 11th ceremonies at her school which prompted it. Her reference to "Soldiers" and "Army" stems from a pet peeve of mine; I have chastised many media outlets and "civvies" for referring to Sailors and Airmen as "Soldiers". I tell them it is an insult to Soldiers and us to use that term so generically. Terry Lynch



THE LAST WORD

Well here we are with another year nearly finished. I must take this time to thank all those that have helped me throughout the year with WARRIOR and other admin tasks. When I am really not sure of an article, photo, cover etc, I run it by Patti Collacutt Gemmell who always gives me a true take on the subject. If I want a particular photo that I can't find, lo and behold Ron Beard comes through for me. The proofreaders, Ken Brown and Bill Gillespie both are there when asked. I am extremely particular about what I want on the covers of the magazine and Jamie Archibald seems to read my mind and sets them up exactly as I want them. Christine Dunphy, the Museum Archivist has been helpful when I needed copies of articles added to my USB which saves me time. We would be lost without Rose and Dave Slaunwhite of Rodew Web Services who maintain our website in such a positive manner. A special thanks to Margaret Ferguson and Carol Shadbolt who help us with our mail outs etc and now with our 50/50 draw tickets. Mike McFadden comes through each and every time he is asked to make mailing labels for me. I don't take the time to learn these things. Many thanks to you all. I could not do the job without you.

In addition, a special thanks to all of you out there who let me know what you think of the WARRIOR especially those who send me articles. (I could use more.)

For me the best day of my life was when I began working at Shearwater - what a great ride. I love every day I come to work. Many changes have occurred during those years and, to me, mostly all likeable. I couldn't have asked for a better place to work or people to work with. (Well maybe I would have exchanged one or two I was working with.) Over 35+ years that's not too bad.

The 'In the Delta' lists get longer with each edition of WARRIOR. We will remember those who are on those lists.

A friend recently told me that I was really a 'bossy' person. I didn't think I was, but he assured me it was true. So for those I was 'bossy' with, you have my profound apology. (However, it's a little late to change now, so look out. Ha)

Christmas, is just around the corner. You know I wish you and yours good health and happiness during this season.

For the New Year, again, the best to you.

For the Museum, I hope it continues to flourish. BUT, to make this happen, they still need you and your donations to ensure your heritage is kept in tact. They need another building guys. Let's make it happen again. Please dig deep. More on this later.

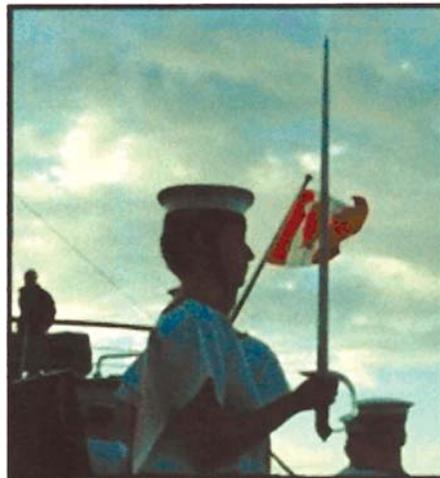
Kay Collacutt - SAMF Scy/WARRIOR Editor

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