

# WARRIOR

SUMMER 2013

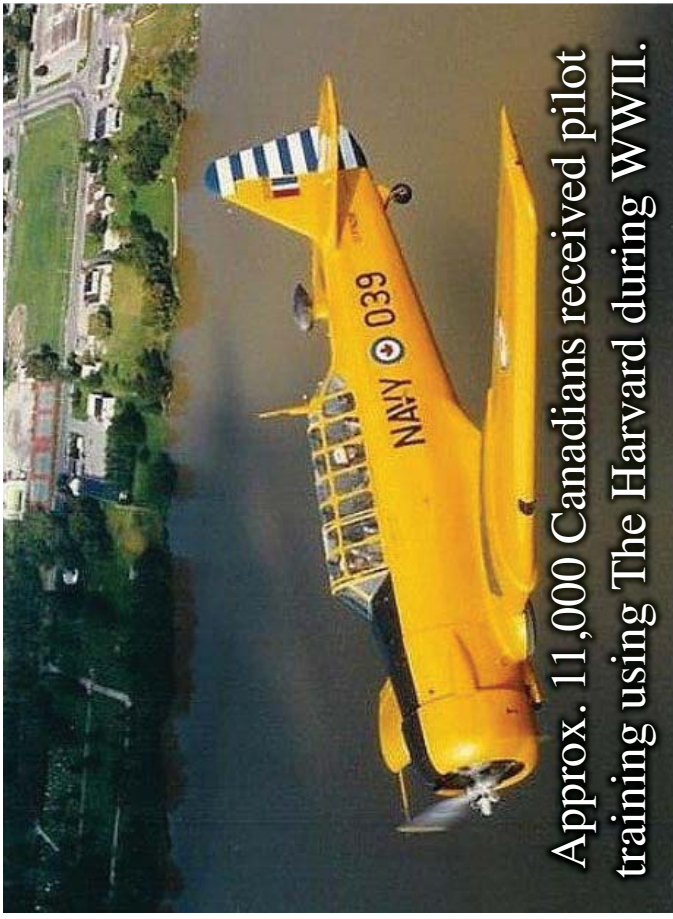


**ROYAL ESCORT**  
**STRANRAERS** FROM NO 5 (BR) SQN BASED AT  
**RCAF STN DARTMOUTH ESCORT HM KING GEORGE VI &**  
**QUEEN ELIZABETH ON THEIR DEPARTURE FROM CANADA**  
**15 JUNE 1939**

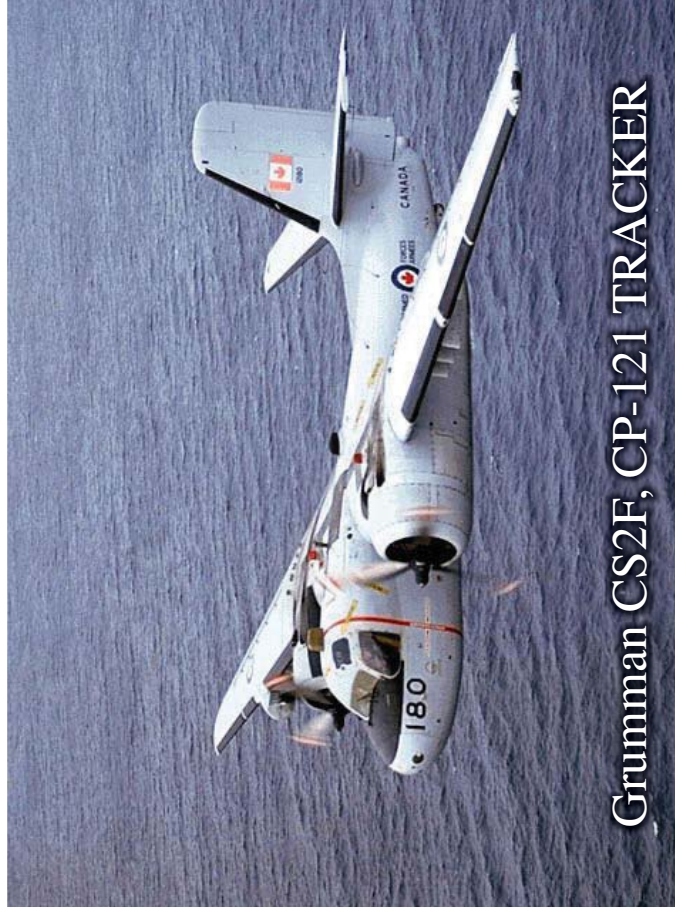




Sea King



Approx. 11,000 Canadians received pilot training using The Harvard during WWII.



Grumman CS2F, CP-121 TRACKER



H045



***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*

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**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:

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**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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Photo Coordinator: Ron Beard

#### **THE COVER**

***The cover is a Geoff Bennett painting based on a photograph of three Stranraer flying boats escorting the liner, Empress of Britain, departing Halifax harbour. King George VI and Queen Elizabeth were aboard the liner during their Royal Tour of Canada in May 1939. The Stranraers from No. 5 Squadron at RCAF Station Dartmouth were tasked to escort the liner from Halifax to Charlottetown.***

***Photos are provided by several sources: DND, SAM Archives, 12 Wing Imaging, SAMF website and those sent in with an individual's submission.***

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**Stranraer**  
**Canada's First Wartime Sortie**  
*Ernie Cable - SAM Historian*

Canada's first operational sortie of the Second World War was flown by a Supermarine Stranraer from RCAF Station Dartmouth on the very day that Canada declared war, early morning on 10 September 1939.

The Stranraer, a follow-on development of the Supermarine Southampton and Scapa family of biplane flying boats, was the last biplane flying boat designed by R.J. Mitchell who was later better known as the designer of the famous Spitfire. In 1935, Supermarine built a total of 17 Stranraers for the Royal Air Force; 15 of which saw service with Coastal Command at the outbreak of the war. But, because of their obsolescence they were withdrawn from front line service in 1940.

As early as 1931 the RCAF had completed a review of its requirements to meet its commitments to the defence of Canada. The primary mandate was coastal defence, which included maritime reconnaissance, anti-submarine warfare, cooperation with the army's coastal artillery and the defence of shipping moving up and down the east and west coasts of Canada. Unfortunately, the depression in the economy put all new acquisitions on hold. It wasn't until 1936 that the RCAF was allowed to place an order with Canadian Vickers of Montreal for five Stranraer flying boats to be built under license from Supermarine. (Note 1) The RCAF selected the Stranraer because there was confidence in continuing the custom of flying British aircraft; it met the Air Force's requirements for coastal defence and being built in Canada provided a boost for our nation's fledgling aircraft industry. Following the successful test flight of the Canadian prototype, RCAF # 907, on 21 October 1938, a total of forty Stranraers were ordered from Canadian Vickers. (Serial numbers 900 - 906 were not assigned to Stranraers).

The first Stranraers were assigned to the RCAF's No. 5 Squadron stationed at Dartmouth. My Father-in-law, Sergeant Art Robinson, (Note 2) a wireless operator on No. 5 Squadron, was periodically sent to Vickers in Montreal to install the High Frequency radios in the Stranraers as they came off the Vickers production line; the 1082 receiver and the 1083 transmitter were supplied by the British to the RCAF. After ground testing the radios were first used operationally on the delivery flights from Montreal to Dartmouth. Sergeant Robinson accumulated many hours in various aircraft, but in his view there was nothing like the Stranraer biplane flying boat. "The wires bracing the struts between the upper and lower

wing would sing in the slipstream and the aircraft yaw side to side was particularly pronounced in the tail of the aircraft. You could hear the bilge water sloshing in the hull while in the air."

"On the water the Stranraer's high freeboard and tall twin tails made it especially prone to being carried by the wind. As the wireless operator, one of my jobs was to throw drogues, shaped like wind socks, over the side of the aircraft to help the pilot steer the aircraft on the water. I would open the mid-upper Lewis machine-gun hatch just behind the wing and throw out a drogue on the left or right side on the pilot's signal. The drogue, tethered to the aircraft by a line, caused the aircraft to turn. Pulling them out of the water was a real struggle and near impossible if the aircraft was taxiing at any speed. As the pilot neared the mooring buoy the flight engineer would open the nose Lewis gun hatch and secure the bow of the aircraft to the buoy just like a boat."

"The highlight of my Stranraer flying was when we were one of three crews selected to escort King George VI and Queen Elizabeth on their visit to Canada in May 1939. Our task was to escort their ship the *Empress of Britain* on its trip from Halifax to Charlottetown. (A painting of the three Stranraers over the *Empress of Britain* departing Halifax harbour is in the Shearwater Aviation Museum.) Our flight to Charlottetown was uneventful and we landed in Charlottetown harbour. The tide was out and we had to use the drogues to steer the aircraft. With one drogue out the wind whipped the aircraft around on top of the drogue line and the drogue wound up on the opposite side of the aircraft and we got stuck in the mud. After much manoeuvring and cursing we managed to free ourselves and found a safe anchorage. I was left on board to look after the aircraft while the rest of the crew went ashore to attend the ceremonies in Charlottetown. On our last day in Charlottetown the King and Queen requested to see the crew of one of the flying boats; we had been living in our uniforms for four days and our buttons and shoes needed polishing. Minutes later they were on the dock. The King was gallant and the Queen was radiant; but our lack of spit and polish didn't seem to bother them."

Throughout 1939 the political situation in Europe was deteriorating and war with Germany proved inevitable. Despite the RCAF's concerted preparations, only the Dartmouth seaplane base was considered to be ready for war in September 1939 and its long-time resident, No.5 Squadron, was the only RCAF squadron deemed fully operational.

Squadron Leader (S/L) Len "Birch" Birchall (Note 3) had only recently arrived at RCAF Station



Dartmouth "I was captain of Stranraer # 907 and had been out on patrol on 9 September 1939. We returned (to the Dartmouth seaplane station at Eastern Passage), refueled and turned over to another crew who did some night flying. Early morning 10 September, we were out again to our aircraft. All seemed well so we started up, did our taxi and engine tests, came back to our mooring (in Eastern Passage), topped our tanks and signaled we were on standby. We had food on board and so prepared a meal. A dingy came out from shore with the appropriate cards for our coding machine (for encrypting radio messages) and also sealed Top Secret orders, which we locked up in our dispatch case. Everything seemed to be back to normal.

Suddenly all hell broke loose! People started running to the dock and the masthead (signal) light on the pier was blinking like crazy. All aircraft acknowledged by aldis lamp and then came the message "War Declared". We started engines, cast off from the mooring and taxied to warm the engines. A message detailed us to go to a specific lighthouse up the northeast coast, open our sealed orders and carry them out."

Flight Lieutenant (F/L) Price and crew of five in Stranraer # 908 was the first aircraft to take off from Eastern Passage. RCAF Station Dartmouth and No.5 Squadron had the distinction of launching Canada's first operational wartime mission on 10 September 1939. Because of the strategic importance of Halifax's harbour, F/L Price in Stranraer # 908 was tasked to conduct a parallel track search off the Halifax approaches.

Birchall and crew took off minutes later and went up the coast as directed.

"Our orders were to do a long-range patrol out over a shipping lane into Halifax, identify all shipping, record time, position, course and speed. We were to remain on patrol as long as fuel permitted. We mounted our Lewis (machine) guns fore and aft, checked all our depth charge circuits and set out for the lighthouse as ordered.

Our patrols were supposed to be flown about 2,000 to 3,000 feet (300 to 700 meters) above the water but usually we were down much lower due to fog, low cloud and in the winter because of snow squalls. The Stranraer had no deicing equipment whatsoever and so we had to be extremely careful to avoid icing conditions at all costs. We carried out our patrol and returned to Dartmouth with a bare minimum of fuel. After we picked up a mooring, a fresh crew came aboard to refuel etc. and go on standby. We were taken ashore at once, debriefed, fed, watered and off to bed for rest. Our post flight reports were sent by secure landline to Eastern Air Command Headquarters in Halifax where they were coordinated with the Navy. (In F/L Price's post flight report the crew reported sighting five friendly vessels but no enemy activity.) Based on all the Navy plots etc. we

would be briefed on friendly shipping prior to takeoff on our next patrol.

So started the war for us at No. 5 Squadron, the first RCAF squadron to fly a wartime mission in the Second World War's Battle of the Atlantic".

When the first HX (Halifax - United Kingdom) convoy put to sea on 16 September 1939, a pattern for the future was established. No. 5 Squadron provided flying boats to search for submarines off Halifax harbour prior to the convoy's departure and anti-submarine escort by day up to the limit of the Stranraer's operational radius, approximately 250 miles (415 km) seaward.

Flying patrols of five hours and thirty minutes each between dawn and dusk, the Stranraers accompanied all departing and incoming convoys. No. 5 Squadron Stranraers would typically takeoff from Dartmouth at 0530 hours, rendezvous with a convoy approaching or departing Halifax to provide anti-submarine protection, then land on Sable Island's Wallace Lake at noon to refuel. By late afternoon the Stranraers would takeoff from Sable Island, rejoin the convoy or conduct independent anti-submarine operations and occasionally land back at RCAF Station Dartmouth as late as midnight. Towards the end of October No. 5 Squadron also began daily harbour-entrance patrols. In these early operations the Stranraers proved to be sturdy and dependable, if somewhat out of date.

The Stranraers on No. 5 Squadron were replaced by the longer range, more capable Consolidated PBV-1 Catalina flying boats in 1941. The Dartmouth Stranraers were subsequently transferred to the west coast (Note 4) where they provided yeoman service until gradually relieved by PBV-1 Catalina and PBV-1A Canso patrol aircraft. The Stranraers were retired from the RCAF in 1945.

Until recently the sole surviving example of a Stranraer is RCAF # 920, which was purchased by the Royal Air Force and placed on display in their museum at Hendon in southwest London. In the summer of 2010, Stranraer # 915 was donated to the Shearwater Aviation Museum. The museum has started the lengthy process of restoring Stranraer # 915, which when completed will be only the second restored Stranraer in the world.

## Endnotes

1. Canadian Vickers had a proven history of manufacturing aircraft for the RCAF, including flying boats.
2. Art Robinson was a commercial radio operator before he joined the RCAF in 1938 as a telecommunications technician. His first duty was to establish the joint RCAF/RCN HF/DF station in Gaspé in 1939. Later, as a wireless operator, he served on No 5 and 11 Sqns at Dartmouth and 113 Sqn at



*Yarmouth. Art retired from the RCAF as Squadron Leader in 1966. 3. Birchall, after the war, was dubbed the "Savior of Ceylon" by Winston Churchill for sighting the Japanese fleet and preventing the island from falling into Japanese hands. See previous SAMF newsletters for serialized Birchall story. 4. Stranraers served at RCAF Stations Ucluelet, Alliford Bay, Prince Rupert, Coal Harbour and Bella Bella in British Columbia.*

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#### **Stranraer Returns to Shearwater** *Ernie Cable, SAM Historian*

In the summer of 2009, the Shearwater Aviation Museum received a welcome phone call from Captain Bill Thompson in Pender Harbour B.C., located approximately 90 km north of Vancouver. Captain Thompson is a retired Master Mariner and an aviation enthusiast who founded of the Canadian Museum of Flight in Langley B.C. Mr. Thompson personally salvaged the wreckage of former RCAF Stranraer 915 and searched in vain for a local museum that was willing to restore and preserve the Stranraer biplane flying boat as a static exhibit. Knowing that the first Stranraers flew from RCAF Station Dartmouth, Captain Thompson finally contacted the Shearwater Aviation Museum to determine if the museum was interested in preserving this rare Canadian maritime aviation artifact.

Canadian Vickers in Montreal built RCAF Stranraers under license from the Supermarine Aircraft Company in England. The first five Stranraers (serial nos. 907 to 911) to come off the production line served at RCAF Station Dartmouth with No. 5 Bomber Reconnaissance Squadron (BR). Subsequent Stranraers were allocated to both the east and west coasts with Stranraer 912 being the first RCAF Stranraer to be ferried from the Vickers factory in Montreal directly to the west coast in July 1939. Stranraer 912 served with No. 4 (BR) at RCAF Station Vancouver, more familiarly known as Jericho Beach. Shortly thereafter, in Sep 1939, Stranraer 915 was ferried from Vickers to Jericho Beach where it joined Stranraer 912 on No. 4 (BR). Being the first two aircraft on No. 4 (BR), Stranraers 912 and 915 were assigned squadron identification letters FY-A and FY-B respectively. In November 1939, No. 5 (BR), began re-equipping with the more capable PBY-5 Catalina flying boats and all the Dartmouth Stranraers were eventually ferried to the west coast.

In May 1940, Stranraer 915 accompanied No. 4 (BR) to its war station at RCAF Station Ucluelet on the southwest coast of Vancouver Island. Stranraer 915 supported the squadron's war task of conducting seaward reconnaissance of the strategically important Barkley Sound area. In December 1941, 915 joined Stranraers 936 and 942 on the newly formed No. 9 (BR) at Bella Bella, B.C., located half way between Vancouver

and Prince Rupert. In August 1942, Stranraer 915 was tasked to proceed to Calvert Island to rescue the two-man crew of a U.S. Navy OS2U-1 Kingfisher floatplane, which had ditched near the island. The crew escaped injury and was flown back to Bella Bella.

Shortly after the Second World War on 7 February 1945, Stranraer 915 was struck off RCAF strength after having accumulated a total flying time of 1,821 hours 20 minutes. It was one of 20 former RCAF Stranraers that the Canadian government War Assets sold to the Siple Aviation Company in Montreal. The company intended to use the aircraft commercially in Canada, the Caribbean and South America.

On 17 September 1946, Siple Aviation sold Stranraer 915 to Queen Charlotte Airlines of Vancouver where, according to company custom of naming its aircraft, 915 was named "Nooka Queen". Interestingly, it was not until this date that the Canadian government officially issued Stranraer 915 its civilian Certificate of Registration (No. 6589) and 915 was assigned civil registration letters CF-BYJ. This aircraft was one of five Stranraers operated by Queen Charlotte Airlines to pioneer scheduled air service along the B.C. coast. The other four Stranraers were CF-BYI (RCAF 907 - the Canadian prototype), CF-BYL (RCAF 909), CF-BYM (RCAF 949) and CF-BXO (RCAF 920). In April 1949, CF-BYJ and CF-BXO had their 920 horsepower Bristol Pegasus X engines replaced by 1,000 horsepower Wright GR-1820-205A Cyclone engines to increase performance (maximum speed 165 mph) and maximum take off weight. These two re-engined aircraft were known as "Super Stranraers".

On Christmas Eve 24 December 1949, Queen Charlotte Airlines Captain Bill Peters landed CF-BYJ near a logging camp at Belize Inlet B.C. in a slightly nose down attitude causing the nose to dig in and the aircraft to flip over. The nose section broke off and sank while the remainder of the aircraft stayed intact, even the wing struts and wire bracing were still rigged. As part of the accident investigation the Department of Transport raised the aircraft from the bottom of the inlet, minus the nose, to remove the bodies of two passengers who were killed. The aircraft was then allowed to sink to the bottom of the inlet again.

In the spring of 1950, CF-BYJ was dragged up onto the beach to allow Queen Charlotte Airlines to salvage the new Wright Cyclone engines for installation in another Stranraer. Thirty-three years later, in July 1983, Captain Thompson salvaged the wreckage from the beach and used his marine towing company, Totem Towing, to barge the decrepit Stranraer to the Canadian Museum of Flight in Langley B.C. Fortunately for Shearwater, Captain Thompson never formally donated



CF-BYJ to the Langley museum because he was concerned that the museum may be more interested in selling the Stranraer for scrap than preserving it as an exhibit of Canadian aviation history. Consequently, several years later he moved the wreckage back to his home at Pender Harbour.



As recounted elsewhere in the Warrior, the Stranraer cemented the 1918 precedent of anti-submarine and convoy escort duties in Shearwater's history and, in deed, in the history of maritime military aviation in Canada. Consequently, the Shearwater Aviation Museum readily accepted Captain Thompson's offer in 2009 to take formal custody of CF-BYJ and restore the Stranraer to exhibit condition. Captain Thompson was utterly delighted to find a museum that had the willingness and capability to preserve the Stranraer that he dutifully husbanded for 28 years. Stranraer 915 (CF-BYJ) arrived at the Shearwater museum in 2010 where it will likely be restored as one of RCAF Station Dartmouth's Stranraers in the mantle No. 5 (BR) Squadron.

Interestingly, Stranraer RCAF 920 (CF-BXO) is the only restored Stranraer in the world and is on display at the RAF Museum in Hendon, England. Stranraer 920's Canadian heritage is preserved in the colour scheme and markings of RCAF Dartmouth's No. 5 (BR) Squadron. When Stranraer 915, which is one of Stranraer 920's (CF-BXO) stable mates in both the RCAF and Queen Charlotte Airlines, is restored it will be only the second Stranraer in the world to be preserved and on display.

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#### **From the Editor:**

**Hello everyone! I hope this edition finds you well and enjoying the summer. We are trying to probe your mind so that you will think about your time in Naval Air and at Shearwater or on the ships. Who knows, perhaps you might even remember a story or two for us.**

**This WARRIOR edition is dedicated to those retired Naval Air personnel, who, for the past many years, have been the backbone of the SAM Foundation – and still are.**

**It was decided that throughout this edition we would fill some pages with photos and names, if we have them, to remind you of who and what used to be. (Although, I suspect you would never forget.)**

***We hope you enjoy this issue.***

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**THE SAM FOUNDATION**

**CHARITY GOLF**

**TOURNAMENT**

**IN CONJUNCTION**

**WITH THE**

**DEFSEC ATLANTIC EXHIBITION**

**WILL BE HELD**

**4 SEPTEMBER 2013**

**AT THE**

**GRANITE SPRINGS GOLF CLUB**

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## President's Report

### John Knudsen

With the great buzz created by the Sea King 50<sup>th</sup> perhaps it is time to look back on where we were, where we are at and where we have to go. My own first experience with the museum was in 1977/78, the Base Commander, Col. Ashley,

came through the Avionics Bldg. and he asked me what I was going to do with outdated equipment, I answered send it to return store sir, he replied "you should transfer it to the museum. Next time I became aware of the museum was in 1990, the Base Commander, Col Bowen, held one of his head of departments meeting in the museum, which at the time was located in the old wet canteen in Warrior Block. I still did not have much interest or free time for the museum. Sometime after I retired, I realized that our common history was important to me and I joined SAMF and began volunteering at SAM. I am sure many others are willing to support our history of the past and build on it.

If you think of anyone who needs a little encouragement and gentle arm twisting to join and support SAMF, please twist before it is too late. The SAM facilities are impressive but more space is required both for exhibits and restoration. We need all the support we can get.

The Dinner/Auction, the first of the big fund raising events took place in the 12 Wing WO & Sgt's mess 15June. I was not able to attend due to a small medical problem, but I have heard nothing but positive comments after the highly successful event:

92 attended

\$8500+ raised

Kitchen staff outdid themselves - very fast service - meal hot. Set up of food excellent - very stylish.

As usual Robert and his Bar Staff did a remarkable job ensuring everything went well for us.

Financial donations for the D/A were great.

A few members bring several guests every year – Harold Northrup is one of those members. Patti Adam (Jim Adam's daughter) brought in donations totalling \$11K over the past 3 years, and, in addition, bringing a table of guests to each event. You are an inspiration to the rest of us, Patti.

Thanks to Bruce Nelson for use of his electronics equipment.

Special thanks to Eric Edgar for being our MC over the years and as always, doing a superb job.

Special thanks to Dennis Shaw for saying Grace.

For Patti Gemmell - D/A Chair and her committee of Barb Hicks, Don Evans, Susan Farrell, Kay Collacutt, a huge cheer and our thanks. Through hard work and determination, the committee pulled it off again. Well done.

The next big fund raiser is the golf tournament which is being put together by Chuck Coffen and Don Evans.

Hope you have a most enjoyable Summer with time to enjoy nature and the company of family and friends.

John

P.S. For interest - The following folks made financial donations and/or gave articles for the auction. Thank you all.

Adam, Patti  
Ambassatours  
Atlantic Superstore  
Canadian Tire Cole Hbr  
CatNRose Jewellry  
Chiefs & Petty Officers Assoc.  
Coffee, Tea and Sea  
Coffen, Charles  
Cole Harbour Place  
Collacutt, Glenn  
Conrad, Scott  
Curves  
Doyle, J  
Edgar, Eric  
Farrell, Susan  
Hicks, Susan  
Hicks, Barbara  
Hillcrest Volkswagen  
Jamer, Dick  
Jamieson's Irish House & Grill  
Kent, Becky  
Knudsen, John  
Lambie, Jim  
Lebans, Mike  
MacLeod, gordon  
McFadden, Michael  
McPhee Ford  
Metro Fund Raising Society  
NS Art Gallery  
O'Reagans Automobiles  
Pharmasave Eastern Passage  
Reesor, Frank  
Smith, Ed  
Staley, Peter  
Stevenson, Jav  
Stoffer, Peter  
Teasdale, Anne  
Technololgy Venture Corporation  
Trenholm, Helga  
Valade, Serge  
Walton, Owen  
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## FROM THE CURATOR'S DESK

*By Christine Hines*

The year is passing by quickly and it is almost time to welcome the hundreds of community members back to Shearwater to celebrate Sea King 50. The events are shaping up to be wonderful, and a unique opportunity to meet Sea King community members, listen to some stories (I call it Professional Development!) and learn more about this marvelous, resourceful group of aviation professionals! We have it on good authority that we may be welcoming a CH124 airframe in the museum for a short visit during the celebrations: very exciting opportunity for us to have a Sea King in the museum on display. Why don't you drop by to see the exhibit? Looking forward to seeing you here in a few weeks time!

While Sea King 50<sup>th</sup> preparations have occupied most of our attention this spring, the progress on the restoration projects has been wonderful. Tracker 1501 is largely completed, with only a few finishing touches left, and one wing left to install, the team has largely completed their work. The "new" TBM has had the canopy glass replaced, and a start on the paint job. It's our hope to have the aircraft in the maintenance bay looking tiddly by the time Sea King 50 delegates arrive. Work on the Firefly continues, and our lingering repairs to the fuel distribution system seem to be coming to a close. We look forward to hearing the roar of that V-12 again soon!

As I close this short article, I must offer thanks to a variety of people: firstly, I'd like to recognize a very special group who makes a point of always supporting the museum, and providing wonderful PR for the SAM: the 081 Trade East Coast Committee. The 081 Trade East Coast Committee has long expressed their support in a variety of ways, and this year, they have financially supported the acquisition of a portable PA system for the SAM. We are grateful to the 081

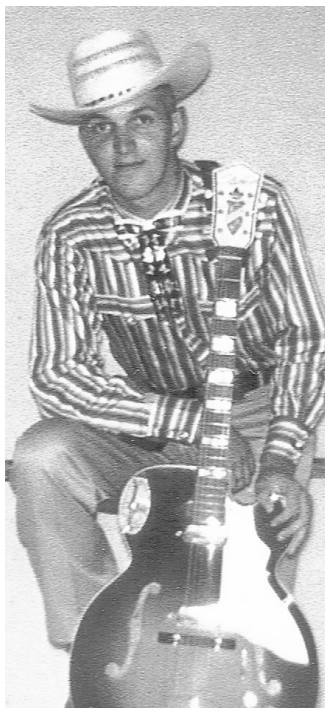
Trade Group for this support and for their wonderful, sincere promotion of the museum and our work.

Additionally, I would like to thank the departing members of 12 Wing's senior leadership, who, as Board of Trustee members for the SAM, have provided unwavering support for the museum through trying times. I am personally grateful to outgoing Wing Commander Ian Lightbody, LCol Claude Desgagne, Maj Kyle Rosenlund, and SAM Director LCol Don Waldo, for all of the support and kindness the SAM staff received during your tenure. Your work on SAM's behalf is appreciated and we wish you every success in your next postings.

With very best regards and sincere thanks to our SAM Foundation, Volunteer corps, and Sea King community members everywhere.  
*Christine*

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## BOB FRALIC - NOVA SCOTIA'S SINGING COWBOY



The Board of Directors of the Nova Scotia Country Music Hall of Fame has announced the 2013 inductees to their Hall of Fame. Bob Fralic will join four other inductees to the Hall on 14 Sep 13 at the Glengarry Western Hotel in Truro, NS. They will join Hank Snow, Wilf Carter, Anne Murray, Rita MacNeil, Carroll Baker, Joyce Seamone, Jim and Don Haggart, Jo-Ann Newman, Ned Landry, Don Messer and others.

Bob has literally sang around the world. He was a Naval Air Technician/Crewman on Canadian Naval Aircraft (Avengers, Trackers, Sea Kings and the last Dakota out of Shearwater). The Dakota was Sgt Gene Autrys aircraft in WWII.

This flight made Bob a pen pal of Gene's and further intros to the Los Angeles Museum made him a personal friend of another singing cowboy Monte Hale.



Bob's Military service (33 years) took him to many shows over the years as well as to Children's Orphanages, Seniors Homes and Hospitals. Some other highlights - concert at sea for the aircraft carrier AMERICA (10,000 personnel), a concert for the Norwegian Sea King Squadron and their families and numerous NATO concerts in Europe and the United States as well as many more.

*From your Naval Air family, Bravo Zulu, Bob.*

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## BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC COMMEMORATIONS AND UNVEILING OF THE 'INTERNATIONAL SAILOR' STATUE



**Rolfe Monteith**

A youthful 89, Rolfe Monteith, has many memories of his time in the Canadian Navy - including many convoys he was involved in as part of the Battle of the Atlantic.

In Derry at the weekend as part of the Battle of the Atlantic commemorations, and the unveiling of the 'International Sailor' statue, Rolfe felt that being here to see the statue unveiled was "extremely important".

"I am originally from Ontario, Canada, which is right in the middle of the country, yet despite not being from the coast I always wanted to be in the Navy. From as young as eight, it was my ambition, and I went to join up aged just 16. However, at that time the recruiting officer sent me back to finish my last year at school, advising me that I would be better joining with an education, so I joined a year later, in 1940."

When asked if he had any reservations about joining amidst a world war, Rolfe was emphatic in his response. "No, not at all, and I left home aged just 17 to travel to the naval college in Britain. At that time, there were nationalities from all over the Commonwealth in training alongside me - from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India - but with the war going on in much of Europe we were joined by those from the occupied countries too, including France, Norway, Belgium and Poland. So the training had a very international feel to it."

But it would be almost three years before Rolfe actually went to war. "I was trained to be an engineer and when I finally went to sea it was as part of the convoys going from Britain to Iceland, and in later years, down to Gibraltar.

"These would have been taking troops and supplies to where they were needed."

And yet, despite the German U-boats claiming many casualties, Rolfe said he never felt a sense of fear. "It was what I was trained to do, and I just did it. It's only retrospectively that I look back and see that it was a

dangerous time. However, I sailed mostly on destroyers or cruisers. It's when you speak to the veterans who sailed on the smaller corvettes that you sense how rough a time they had.

"The corvettes were much smaller and the living conditions would have been appalling, with water seeping onto the deck continually. And those sailing on them would have been there for years at a time. You can imagine their elation when they would have come into ports like Derry. To see green fields, eat proper food and sleep on a decent bed, they are all things that the veterans speak of."

Rolfe himself had little sense of the danger he was facing on a daily basis. "I was a mid-ship worker and would have known little about the details of our convoys. But the bottom line is that U-boat attacks were a very real prospect. In fact, just two weeks after I had disembarked from HMS Hardy, it was attacked and ultimately run aground. Forty two men lost their lives that day and the incident got nothing more than one paragraph in the national newspapers."

Having returned home, aged 21, with a British bride in tow, Rolfe remained in the Canadian Army for 25 years following the end of World War Two. He eventually moved back to Britain with his wife Peggy in 1970, but she sadly passed away three years later. He took up engineering work within the strong British industry but it is now, some 40 years later that he is determined to see the Battle of the Atlantic get the recognition he believes it deserves.

"So many people are aware of the Battle of Britain, and its significance in the war, but very few would say the same about the Battle of the Atlantic. Yet, it was the longest-running campaign of the war, and without it there is no doubt that we would have struggled against the Germans."

And that is why Rolfe made the trip over to Derry last weekend to see the unveiling of the 'International Sailor'.

"We've visited the statue in Canada, and I've always loved it and when I heard five years ago that there was talk of getting an identical one made for Derry I always said I would be here for its unveiling.

"It's a beautiful piece of work, and it's positioned so that it's looking back towards Nova Scotia, and the other statue. Although I believe the one in Derry has a more weathered look about him, which is apt, given that he has spent years at sea in battle."

Now, Rolfe hopes to fulfil an ambition, and persuade the BBC to produce a documentary about the Battle of the Atlantic.

"I lost four school friends and a cousin during the war, and I have marched on every Armistice Day for almost thirty years. Now, I think they, and countless other seafarers should be recognised with a programme about their fight on the high seas so that people today understand the significance of the war at sea."

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## A NAVAL AIR MAINTAINER'S RECOLLECTIONS

*from Frank Dowdall*

Hello Kay

I am going to attempt to answer your plea for some input from an aircraft maintainer. I served as a maintainer on VF871, VF870 and VX10. I also served as a maintainer at Shearwater Aircraft Maintenance Department (AMD) in the Battery Shop, Z2 Hangar, Electrical Workshop and the Instrument Repair Shop.

In January 1951 I was a Leading Seaman Electricians Mate (LSLM) at Newport Corners Radio Station when a call came from 'on high' for volunteers to be trained as aircraft electricians to help fill a shortage. I was one of 13 LM's to answer the call. We attended the Electrical Aircraft Servicing Course. We spent 5 weeks at the Electrical School in Stadacona and on 2 Apr 1951 were drafted for airfield training to Shearwater (SNAM which became NAMS). We were all LS or senior AB's, jolly jack tars of at least three years and didn't take kindly to being treated like the rest of the Ordinary Seamen taking their basic aircraft training such as wearing #3 uniform to class and marching from class to lunch on the Base. We survived and on 2 May 1951, I was drafted to 30th CAG 871 Squadron to work on the SeaFury, an aircraft that presented some challenges to an electrician. It was during my early days on 30th CAG that I met and learned so much from such talented electricians as Jake Leonard, Don Drinkwater, and Sid Snelling, to name a few.

The oil pressure indication system included the 'banjo' unit (named because of its shape) which was fitted behind the instrument panel. One had to go head first into the cockpit, close your eyes and visualize the unit to remove a couple of nuts and bolts, disconnect, remove and then replace. It was a challenge and I carried out the procedure many times, sitting on the tarmac in Shearwater in hot and cold weather; Rivers in the freezing cold and on the Magnificent in hot weather in the calm Caribbean and on a rolling deck on the Atlantic. It could be a frustrating experience and I am sure there are still a few electricians who remember it well. I had a couple of close calls with that big 5-bladed prop which taught me to pay close attention when working on the aircraft while the engine was running, especially in the dark.

How many of you remember those days when everyone waited the weekly 'beat up' of the Base by those daredevil SeaFury pilots. We stood on the roof of Z2 or #1 Hangar and looked down on the aircraft as they whizzed by. Just think, many of those young daredevils became very senior officers in the RCN/CF. Bravo Zulu to all of them!

On 30 Jan 1957, I was drafted to VF870 Squadron to work on F2H3 Banshees. The Banshee kept electricians busy. There was always lots of work on the autopilot (P3 made by Bendix). The main amplifier was full of vacuum tubes and hard landings played havoc with the tube filaments. The amplifier was accessed by removing a panel on the bottom of the aircraft. It had many cannon connectors and was a real

pain. Somehow, repairing the P3 became one of my main assignments.

A heart throbbing experience occurred for me after I had worked all day in the cockpit of aircraft 126313. I don't recall what the problem was but I had to have the ejection seat removed to carry out the work. The next day, 31 May 1957, the aircraft was being flown by Lt Derek Prout (RCN) in a flypast. The flypast of four aircraft was to show appreciation by the pilots for the diligence and hard work of the maintainers and the flypasts flying time was to push the month's total flying hours over 300 for the first time with the Banshees. We were all out on the Tower hill watching when Lt Prout came in low and fast and then began a slow pullup. We watched in horror as the starboard tip tank released over the Clarence Park area. Then the starboard wing separated, the aircraft rolled to starboard and crashed into McNab Island killing Lt Prout. My first reaction was 'what did I do to that aircraft?'. Of course, the aircraft logs were impounded and I waited on pins and needles until an investigation determined that there was a problem with fatigue failure (cracks) in the wing lock fittings, a problem we had apparently inherited from the USN.

I was also there on 27 Aug 1957 when Banshee 126306 piloted by Lt Ed Trzcinski (USN) was in a collision with an Avenger flown by Sub Lt Freeman (RCNR) of VC921 killing both pilots. PO Ross Steene and I were running towards the scene of the accident when the ammunition shells from the Banshee started exploding. We both dove into a shallow ditch alongside the tarmac. I found the watch of one of the pilots and it was still working (No, I didn't keep it!).

One day while working on a P3 amplifier in the belly of the aircraft, I noticed a small black box which I had never seen before. I brought it to the attention of the AEO, Lt Peter Wiwcharuck, and he advised me to keep the discovery to myself. Seems, it was believed, that some pilots found it very exhilarating to really push the Banshee to its limits and thereby overstressing the aircraft. The black box was a recording accelerometer which was being read by the AEO after suspected flights.

An interesting experience on the Banshee was paralleling generators, a procedure which required the electrician to be in contact with the cockpit via intercom while working under the aircraft with the engines running up to 100%. The fact that the aircraft was known to have jumped the chocks on a couple of occasions made one pay attention during the procedure. It was a bit nerve wracking doing this on the bouncing deck of the Bonaventure. Another tricky maintenance procedure at sea was carrying out an undercarriage retraction test, especially in rough weather. How many times did we see the log entry 'Retraction test to be carried out in the air'? This could cause a bit of heart thumping for both the pilot and the maintainer. I don't recall that we ever had an accident resulting from an inflight retraction test. I always got a queasy feeling in the pit of my stomach when working in the cockpit of the Banshee and the nose of the aircraft was extending over the edge of the flight

deck and we were bouncing up and down. The Banshee was a good aircraft to work on. It was an interesting period in my career and I enjoyed the experience.

On 20 Aug 1959 I was drafted to VX10 where I worked on Banshees, Trackers, Sea Kings and the Dakota. I spent 5 years at VX10 spending lots of hours on test flights and liking the 'flying pay'. Some interesting projects I worked on included the PB20 autopilot (Tracker), rock and roll box (Tracker) and MK44 Torpedo (Tracker). On some aircraft, engagement of the Barometric Altitude Mode of the PB20 caused the aircraft to oscillate in pitch with the oscillations increasing in intensity as the autopilot remained engaged. I installed a string and weight (makeshift inclinometer) in the passageway between the front and rear seats. We flew trying to create the malfunction and then I recorded information about the rate and amount of pitch while crouching in the passageway and hanging on for dear life. On one occasion the aircraft started to oscillate, the pilot ('Stretch' Arnold, I believe) kept the PB20 engaged until I was convinced the wings were going to fall off the aircraft. It was a scary ride! The problem was rectified when a small spring in the Altitude Controller was replaced with one of a different design.

Carrying out accurate MAD compensation on the Tracker required very precise rolls, pitches and yaws, a very difficult task. CPO Earl Slack and PO Lloyd Simpson (electricians) submitted a suggestion award which resulted in the development of an automatic MAD Compensator. A modified Navigation Lights Control Box from the Banshee was used as a prototype and it allowed the pilot to do precise movements. I made a lot of flights in Trackers doing MAD Comps making sure that the unit caused 10 degree, etc movements of the aircraft when the unit was selected to 10 degrees, etc.

The project was very successful and a black box was developed to carry out automatic MAD Compensation on the Tracker. I believe, the Argus, carry torpedos under the mainplanes. On 19 Jun 1962 we deployed to Patuxent River, Maryland where about two weeks were spent installing instrumentation to measure for stress, etc during catapult launches and arrested landings. I did six trips and this was, indeed, an eye-opener for this young maintainer. On my first launch, there was some confusion in the cockpit as only one pilot had attended the pre-flight briefing. The original plan was to be catapulted, make a circuit and land but at the briefing it was decided to catapult and land immediately. Apparently, this info was not shared up front. As one pilot tried to reduce revs and land, the other was trying to increase revs and go around. The aircraft fitter watching and listening on the ground was convinced that both engines cut out for a second as the dance for the controls was carried out in the cockpit. Once again, this young maintainer's heart was pit-a-patting.

While I was on VX10, the Sea King was introduced into the RCN. I spent from 27 Jun to 23 Sep 1963 in Key West on electrical systems courses. Between Christmas 1963 and

New Years I was onboard Assiniboine assisting Sikorsky contractors with the final installation of the haul down system, a system that has been copied by several of the world's navies.

On 6 Jan 1964 I went to Stadacona, completed the Trade Group 4 course and on 10 Jul 1964 was drafted back to Shearwater Aircraft Maintenance Depot (AMD). My last job as a technician was in the Instrument Repair Shop. On 15 Apr 1966 I was promoted to Commissioned Officer (a naval rank which no longer exists) and on 29 Jun was drafted to AMD as the Avionics Electrical Officer. I also served as VS880 Aircraft Maintenance Officer, Staff Officer Avionics Instrument/Electrical at MARCOM/MAG, finishing my career in uniform as a Computer Programmer at MARCOM. I missed the 'hands on' maintenance but I did enjoy the rest of my naval career. I still maintain to this day that 'there was no life like it'.

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*Whalley, Lowe and Bruner*

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***Remember  
the  
50/50 Draw***



## 1871 – THE YEAR OF AMERICAS FIRST KOREAN “WAR”

*May 21, 2012 · by TIW Editor · in Wars You Never Knew About - Sent to us from Bob Findlay.*

America's first military action in Korea took place long before 1950. In fact, the United States fought a brief naval campaign against the Korean Joseon Dynasty 79 years before the U.N. mission to defeat the communist north.

On June 1, 1871, a fleet of five U.S. warships, 500 sailors and more than 100 marines arrived at Ganghwa Island, just off the Korean mainland. Their mission was to establish diplomatic and trade relations with the then isolationist nation as well as to find any trace of the missing U.S. merchant ship the SS General Sherman.

The Sherman had gone missing in Korean waters five years earlier while carrying a load of trade goods. After a series of misunderstandings with locals, the crew of the armed merchant vessel found themselves in a standoff with Korean authorities. After tensions reached the breaking point, the Sherman ended up firing its guns directly into a Korean settlement. Soon afterwards, the locals retaliated by attacking the side-wheel steamer with fire ships. The Sherman caught fire and sank; the survivors were assaulted and killed by angry villagers.

Five years later, the Koreans were suspicious of this new fleet of vessels flying the Stars and Stripes. After initial contact with locals, the American naval vessels Colorado, Alaska, Palos, Monocacy, and Benicia steamed into the mouth of the Han River, an act the Koreans felt violated their sovereignty. In response, the fort on Ganghwa unleashed a 15-minute cannonade on the American ships, which resulted in some minor damage.

Playing it safe, the Americans withdrew, but remained in Korean waters. The U.S. commander, Rear Admiral John Rodgers, gave the Koreans 10 days to apologize for the incident. After receiving no such satisfaction, Rodgers ordered a retaliatory assault on the island's defenders.

On June 10, a shore party of marines and sailors under the cover of the fleet's guns attacked and seized a series of fortifications on Ganghwa Island, brushing aside the local defenders who were equipped with little more than antique matchlock muskets. Some of the local forces even hurled rocks at the American troops. The battle climaxed with a 15-minute assault on the island's heavily fortified citadel. The U.S. lost three men in brief the battle, including the lieutenant who led the shore party. Ten more were injured in the clash. Korean losses were higher: 243 were killed and 20 were captured.

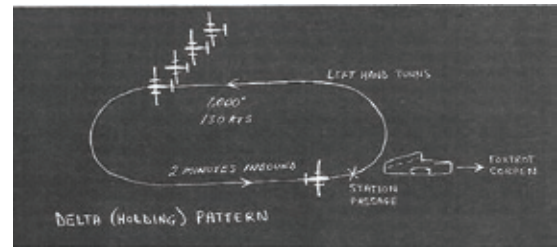
The Americans remained in the area until July 3, hoping to return the prisoners in exchange for the chance to open trade and diplomatic relations. The Koreans refused all contact.

Rodgers withdrew his fleet to China – their mission was a failure. It would be another five years before the Americans opened formal diplomatic relations with Korea.

Despite the setback, America claimed victory in the brief campaign. A total of 15 Medals of Honor were bestowed upon members of the shore party – the first time such honours were given for a battle on foreign soil. The next time Americans would see action on the Korean peninsula would be 69 years later.

That war would last three years and cost the Americans nearly 37,000 lives.

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### *In the Delta*

**AMYOTTE, James**

**BONE, Richard “Dickie”**

**BROWN, Glenn**

**BROWNLOW, Danny**

**CALDWELL, Glen**

**CONNER, Stan**

**COOPER, William John**

**DAYTON, Frank**

**EDDY, Allan**

**ENGLISH, Ken**

**FOTHERINGHAM, J Brant (Pop)**

**GAGNON, Millie**

**HAGUE, Robert**

**HANSEN, Jack**

**MacARTHUR, William “Billy here”**

**MacCORMACK, John**

**MAGILL, James**

**MARGETTS, Vic**

**MORITZ, Stella**

**ROWELL, Sheldon**

**SANDY, Fred**

**SMITH, Ernie**

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## WW II Trivia

*You might enjoy this from Col D. G. Swinford, USMC, Ret and history buff. You would really have to dig deep to get this kind of ringside seat to history:*

1. The first German serviceman killed in WW II was killed by the Japanese (China, 1937), the first American serviceman killed was killed by the Russians (Finland 1940); highest ranking American killed was Lt Gen Lesley McNair, killed by the US Army Air Corps. So much for allies.

2. The youngest US serviceman was 12 year old Calvin Graham, USN. He was wounded and given a Dishonorable Discharge for lying about his age. His benefits were later restored by act of Congress.

3. At the time of Pearl Harbor, the top US Navy command was called CINCUS (pronounced 'sink us'), the shoulder patch of the US Army's 45th Infantry division was the Swastika, and Hitler's private train was named 'Amerika.' All three were soon changed for PR purposes.

4. More US servicemen died in the Air Corps than the Marine Corps. While completing the required 30 missions, your chance of being killed was 71%.

5. Generally speaking, there was no such thing as an average fighter pilot. You were either an ace or a target. For instance, Japanese Ace Hiroyoshi Nishizawa shot down over 80 planes. He died while a passenger on a cargo plane.

6. It was a common practice on fighter planes to load every 5th round with a tracer round to aid in aiming. This was a mistake. Tracers had different ballistics so (at long range) if your tracers were hitting the target 80% of your rounds were missing. Worse yet tracers instantly told your enemy he was under fire and from which direction. Worst of all was the practice of loading a string of tracers at the end of the belt to tell you that you were out of ammo. This was definitely not something you wanted to tell the enemy. Units that stopped using tracers saw their success rate nearly double and their loss rate go down.

7. When allied armies reached the Rhine, the first thing men did was pee in it. This was pretty universal from the lowest private to Winston Churchill (who made a big show of it) and Gen. Patton (who had himself photographed in the act).

8. German Me-264 bombers were capable of bombing New York City, but they decided it wasn't worth the effort.

9. German submarine U-120 was sunk by a malfunctioning toilet.

10. Among the first 'Germans' captured at Normandy were several Koreans. They had been forced to fight for the Japanese Army until they were captured by the Russians and forced to fight for the Russian Army until they were captured by the Germans and forced to fight for the German Army until they were captured by the US Army.

AND LAST....

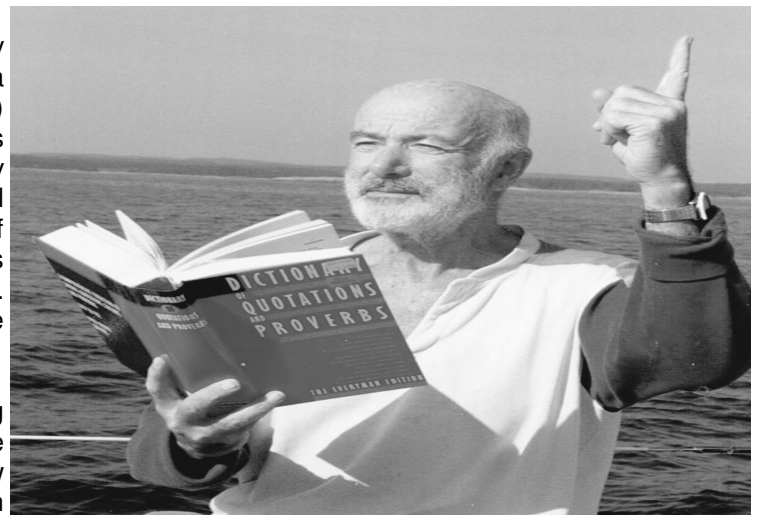
11. Following a massive naval bombardment, 35,000 United States and Canadian troops stormed ashore at Kiska, in the Aleutian Islands. 21 troops were killed in the assault on the island.

It could have been worse if there had been any Japanese on the island.

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**LCdr Rod Bays**



**Bill Farrell**

## **Comments to and from the Editor:**

### **Queen Elizabeth the II Diamond Jubilee Recipients**

In our last issue of WARRIOR the Ottawa CNAG Group submitted several recipients names for this Award. A few days after WARRIOR was published, we received telephone calls telling us there were others who also received, this Award but at earlier dates. Some of these people are Sherry Richardson, John Eden and James Stegen. I'm certain there are more recipients out there and we congratulate each and every one of you.

### **081 Trade East Coast Committee: Attention SAMF President (in part)**

Over the past seven years, the 081 Trade, officially formed in 1952 and recognized over time as Observers Mates (OM), Naval aircrewman (NA), Radio Navigator (RN), Observer (JBS) and Airborne Electronic Sensor Operators (AESOPs) have held four trade gatherings at Shearwater culminating with the 60<sup>th</sup> Trade Jubilee, in September 2012. Trade members, past and present, from across Canada attend our 'Gatherings', to renew friendships, re-connect with old squadron and ship mates and to enjoy the camaraderie of the 081 trade and the event.

Use of the Shearwater Aviation Museum and its facilities has always been an integral part of our events. The Museum brings us together in a familiar space where we all feel comfortable and at home.

Following our 60<sup>th</sup> Jubilee event in 2012 and through another initiative, our committee has realized an excess of funds. We had stated that in such an event, any excess funds would go to support a Museum initiative. With that in mind, on behalf of the 081 Trade we wish to donate the amount of Five Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$550.00) to the Foundation to support a Museum acquisition which may better aid the Foundation and Museum when hosting the num events it does each year. In reviewing options, we consider that a portable public address system may be appropriate in this case, and respectfully request that the foundation consider, favourably, using our donation to support that initiative.

Our Trade members are regular visitors to the Shearwater Aviation Museum; we enjoy our visits and the opportunity to reflect upon our personal and collective Naval Aviation History.

Respectfully  
Jon Main  
081 East Coast Committee

**Michael Pinfold** writes: I always look forward to receiving the WARRIOR. It seems to get better with every issue. I'm hoping that we'll be able to travel to the east coast later this year and if we get there, we will inevitably make a stop at the Museum. Wishing SAMF and all of its hard working volunteers the very best..

From **Bob Bissell**: First of all, received the latest WARRIOR and of course had to stop every thing and read it from cover to cover.

Was just thinking that where I live now there is a distinct similarity in the museum situation. In Portsmouth we have the historic warships HMS Victory, HMS Warrior and a maritime museum. On this side of the harbour we have the Submarine museum, HMS Alliance, you will remember from the 4th sub squadron in slackers, and the EXPLOSION museum which tracks the history of naval gunfire support at the old naval armament depot. We also have Royal Naval Hospital Haslar, but that is reduced to just a historic walk and HMS Dadleus, the old HQ of the Fleet Air Arm, but that has not yet been developed into a historic museum.

Anyway, what I am getting to is that this year they have incorporated a ferry, like the old blue boat from Sherawater to Stad, which enables visitors to Portsmouth/Gosport to visit all the major naval museums. Its 2 pds extra or I think 14pds altogether, reduced for kids and 1 pds off for concessions ie us OAP's to do everything. The sub and the boat ride are real hits for the kids and there is a good schedule explaining what sort of time should be allowed for each exhibit. Another museum that is being thought of is the history of diving in the navy. Unfortunately we don't have anything locally yet on flying. HMS Sultan has a good collection of old naval aircraft, which they use some of for teaching FAA fitters and riggers, but they only open their doors once a year for us locals to view.

The similarity I suggest, is your museum and HMCS Sackville and the Maritime museum across the harbour. You have good parking facilities and a boat ride across would really attract families. Perhaps the FDU might develop their own museum enroute. So just a thought if you could put a complete naval museum package together which enables visitors to Shearwater to be able to see the Halifax exhibits as well at a combined price that includes a harbour boat ride, it might be a very attractive package for families. It certainly has worked here and it also helps that we get foreign visitors from across the channel on the ferries.

Kay, the Warrior arrived, many thanks.  
I also want to congratulate you on your much deserved award of the Jubilee medal, BRAVO ZULU.  
The aviator with Frank Zaleski is Bob Brown, ex fishead and helo pilot with HS 50'.

**Dave Tate**

Greetings Gentlemen.  
Last autumn Conair Aviation donated a Firecat to the



Langley Aviation museum. In the RCN this airplane flew with VU32 with the tail number 1539. To complete a dossier on this machine's history, the museum would like to know if by chance this aircraft had ever landed on the carrier. Would you kindly check your log books to see if any of you had ever taken this airplane to the deck. With thanks and best wishes to you all, **George Plawski**

**From the Editor:** A few issues ago, I mentioned that the main Eastern Passage Highway was being torn up around the Hangar across the road - 4 Bldg?

As well, so was the grounds on the far side of the hangar, and I wondered, at the time, if they came across any old buried aircraft there. In particular, I had mentioned this to Col Orr while chatting I wondered if the crews may have inadvertently exposed some of the hulks. Col Orr had always thought that old Furies had been ploughed into the infield.

The following comments were received.

**From Ted Gibbon:**

You'll probably get more informed responses than mine but here is some info that may be helpful: On 20 June 1963 I was tasked to fly Lt Bill Hayter, VU-32's AEO along with a couple of senior techs one of whom was PO Janusis to McEwan field in New Brunswick not far from Moncton & Sceduc where all the surplus Furies were parked. McEwan field was a dirt pasture. Lt Hayter, with the advice of his senior techs was to select a fury for transfer to the National Air Museum in Ottawa. I believe it was sent to Ottawa later that summer. I don't know what eventually happened to the rest of them but I doubt they came back to Shearwater for burial. I also doubt McEwan field still exists. Incidentally Bill was a Venture classmate of mine and the only one to become an AE.

Bill was an absolutely terrified co-pilot, the field was very short and surrounded by tress and it was hot as hell with very little wind. We landed successfully but broke a brake hydraulic line which Janusis fixed with some gun tape. Bill was somewhat reluctant to sign off on the "fix" and was probably thinking about finding alternate travel opportunities back to Shearwater. On departure we barely cleared the trees with Bill making deep grip marks in the combing and when I turned towards Shearwater I notice a huge cloud of red dust I had stirred up drifting towards a string of clotheslines where all the white sheets from a nearby Motel had just been hung out to dry. I guess they featured pink sheets for a time after that. Knowing New Brunswick they probably still do.

Cheers, Ted

**Mike McCall** writes: Hi Kay:

I was around Shearwater at the time the Furies were replaced by Banshees and have never heard of them being buried. Why wouldn't they do what they did with the Banshees; put a crew of guys with cutting torches on them and cut them up for scrap?

I think I remember what happened to two of them, though.

I flew in an RCAF C-130 around '59 or '60 (I'm not dead sure of the date) in which another passenger was a Sea Fury headed for a technical ortecnological institute in Calgary. And I know at least one was sold to an RCAF pilot who flew it as a private airplane at air shows. He was killed when he crashed it.

I think all of us old lags would be interested in hearing what happened to most of them, and hope you'll post the stories – or the theories.

**From Bill Gillespie:**

To the best of my knowledge I never heard or saw any Sea Furies being buried along the Eastern Passage Rd., as it was known then. The Hgr. was called Z-1 then. But hen again, I was in PEI the first part of 1956, at sea the latter part & in Egypt the first 2.5 months of 1957.

I believe all Sea Furies that were not sold or given away were destroyed & sold for scrap up at Scouduc NB.

The myths live on.

**From the Editor:** Is there anyone else out there who may have knowledge about aircraft being buried there? Or news on what happened to the old Furies? We'd love to hear from you.

**Remember to order your**

**50/50 Tickets.**

**Hope you win!**



**TOP ROW: L TO R: RON KAY; WAYNE FAIRBAIRN, RON BEARD, R. O'GRADY; BILL MORAN**

**MIDDLE ROW: L TO R: EUGENE ROGERS, GROUP ON DECK - ANY NAMES?; DECK SCRAPERS**

**LAST PHOTO: BASH MACLAUGHLIN**

**(The group in yellow on the deck:**

**Back Row L to R ? Rochon, RA Tech, George Robbins, AF Tech, NK, NK, Mick Stephenson**

**Front Row L to R NK; Dick Fryer, AF Tech; Jake Cox, AF Tech)**

## The World of Search and Rescue

Kay wants another story and what Kay wants, Kay gets.  
(Not always... K)

### MY FIRST SAR MISSIONS

by Joe Paquette

I remembered flying a Search and Rescue mission in TRACKERs and a quick look in my log book confirmed that on April 14, I crewed up as a co-pilot with Dave Crampton (who was in VU-32 at the time) to fly a 3.3 hour search. I don't remember the details but I do remember forlornly looking out the bubble window hoping to see something and yet knowing how hopeless it was in the churning ocean below.

I remember even less about two days of flying SAR on July 27 and 28, 1967 with A.J.Field as my co-pilot.



**Top - Joe Paquette**

**Bottom - Jerry Leger and John Berger**

My next SAR entry was in my SEA KING days when Arch Archambault and I were launched at night from HMCS ATHABASKAN to look for a sailing vessel in distress. We launched in fog and hoped the ship was

going to head our way because the trip was going to be a "one-way" one if they didn't close the distance.

A radar target and then a light through the fog in the general area of the distress call had us excited about a successful and quick resolution as we entered an auto-hover in the area of the light. To our surprise, and that of the crew of a very large and seaworthy sailboat, this was not our search object and the light was located only halfway up a mast that towered over us and was bearing down on us.

We could see the crew of the vessel tumbling out onto the deck to maneuver away from what must have seemed a large vessel bearing down on them. I in turn was twiddling knobs on the auto hover contraption trying to get us out of the path of the sailing vessel. As we passed each other and the immediate danger receded we counted our blessings, departed the hover and continued our search with no other contacts and apparently no further distress signals.

### NEXT, CHOICES

These short exposures must have had some effect on me because I remember a few years later standing in front of my mirror shaving on the ATHA B and musing that before I left the military I wanted to do something real rather than this constant training to catch submarines and further, that a Search and Rescue job would be great. (I had done my 31 years and was flying commercial SAR when the Middle East blew up and the "training" became real)

I had enjoyed my SEAKING time but after Staff College there didn't seem to be any new positions for me in SHEARWATER. I had had two detachments and been the Air Officer for a year and while an XO position was offered, there were a number of more senior "Majors" already in situ. The next choice was French language training but being lost in Ottawa without a "sponsor" (I had been in air force positions, including NDHQ, for a number of years) was not the best way to ensure an interesting sequel, career wise.

The next (probably final) offer was as Helicopter Flight Commander with 413 Transport and Rescue Squadron in Summerside. Here I was with 23 years in and only one tour on helicopters (and that from steel decks and airports) and being asked to accept probably the most challenging helicopter role there was as a Flight Commander with no SAR experience ... and I was so excited that I almost wet myself.

### 413 SQUADRON

In a story like this there has to be a bursting of the bubble, a letdown ... but there wasn't ... even if we had an unexplained engine failure on my Familiarization flight.

It was an interesting time for this SAR Squadron as none of the senior officers had any .. zip ... nada ... experience in the SAR role. The CO, Denny Hopping, was an army pilot with little IFR and no SAR time. The 2IC, Al Tarka, was a HERCULES navigator; the Operations Officer, Bill Clair, was an ARGUS pilot; and, the BUFFALO Flight Commander, Jim Ritzel, was straight off CF-100 CANUCKs. Well at least the Helicopter Flight Commander had his three SAR missions.

The Operational Training was done at the unit level in those days so I proceeded directly to Summerside to begin my conversion into a SAR, LABRADOR pilot. We started flying on July 22, '82 and I flew my first SAR mission as a co-pilot on 23 September.



Within another week I would be deployed on a major search north of Shefferville in the George River area. On the way there via Goose Bay we "coast crept" in the fog along the west coast of Newfoundland looking for fuel by landing in small communities asking if they had any. Eventually, after destroying a lumber yard in Port Saunders (wrong place) we located a fuel depot in Port Au Choix and landed at an intersection in town and had the school kids help us roll barrels of JP-4 down the hill from the depot to the helicopter.

Filing an IFR Flight Plan was accomplished by listing the route as " From 8000 feet over Port Au Choix direct to Goose Bay". We accepted our clearance while sitting in the office at the fuel depot, boarded the LAB, shooed the kids away, stopped traffic and departed.

During the next week we would fly around with a body in the back of the helicopter, (no place to put him), pick up

some caribou meat and alchool from some US hunters who had more than they needed, scud run back and forth to Schefferville (our base) because flight in icing was not permitted, leave a broken LAB on an esker and eventually find the missing casualty right beside the crash site where he had expired a week previous before we even got on scene.

The LABRADOR helicopters we were flying were in fact the very short range VERTOL VOYAGEURS with which the army had been equipped. Their two hour endurance was increased with internal fuel bladders and eventually external sponsons. Their centre line hoist (think hoisting through the sonar well) was replaced with a door mounted one and we eventually got radar. Without radar, over water transits and searches were hit and miss affairs.

With the radar we had to get serious about night boat hoisting and, lucky for the flight, their new Flight Commander was had lots of boat, night IFR and radar time. In addition we also had a US Coast Guard Exchange Officer, Hugh O'Doherty, who was familiar with the USCG procedures for night boat approaches. Together (both of us were co-pilots) we designed and test flew a procedure to use an "on top" and radar to put the helicopter in position near the vessel at night to convert to a hover over the boat. In fact, since hand flying from this position was almost too much for one pilot to handle (no auto pilot or hover assist in the LABRADOR) we actually came up with a system where the co-pilot handled the collective, remained on the dials and was responsible for altitude only. The pilot remained focused on the vessel approach and closure rate and called out the Radar Altitude he wanted. Once alongside and stable, the pilot took back full control of the collective.

We were to use this technique for the remainder of my two tours on the LABRADOR without incident.

This was really the thing that made SAR exciting, you handled so many situations where the rules just didn't apply and we were required, and encouraged, to make up your own. This was not without some risks in behavior but we could always count on the Search and Rescue Technicians and the Flight Engineers to let us know if things were getting out of hand. Regardless of rank structure, a SAR crew flew as a consensus unit.

If the Flight Engineer or the SAR Techs were not happy they were encouraged to speak up and as a Flt Cdr and later CO I sought their opinions on how the flight crews were doing. On the other side of the coin, while we encouraged innovation and initiative I insisted that the crews should always have a "back door out" and that I





was Flight Engineer, Load Master, Jump Master and Flight Attendant.

I can't say enough about all of my SAR crewmates because everyone was dedicated to the role and you never knew what you were going to be required to face TOGETHER when those pagers went off.

### CONCLUSION

I asked to get out of "constant training" and traded it for five years with a "pager" and while it took me a long time after I left SAR, military and civilian, to stop the heart rate jumping at that sound, it was the most rewarding eight years of my life and included three years as a SAR desk at NDHQ.

\*\*\*\*\*

Remember these ?

would not accept my aircrew being responsible for hurting one of the SAR Techs.

The make-up of a SAR crew, helicopter or fixed wing, was unique but there was no doubt that the RESCUE in Search and Rescue was the job of this unique band of brothers. They came from every trade in the Canadian Forces with one aim in mind, pass the incredibly tough selection and training and earn the Scarlet Beret. Fit, resourceful, brave, smart and incredibly fun to be around. They para jumped, scuba dived, administered First Aid while providing for the survival of a casualty, mountain climbed and rode and or drove every type of off road and some on road vehicles. They developed, invented and maintained almost everything they used and they were experts a paperwork. If they needed it, they knew how to get it. You led SAR Techs from behind, following to see what they were going to do ... and they did amazing things.

The Flight Engineer in a SAR crew should have been a separate trade of its own because his operational duties so far exceeded the FE trade in any other role. In addition to his "engineer" duties, he was the hoist operator who was responsible for the safety of the SAR Techs as they deployed and for getting them and the casualty safely aback aboard. He was responsible for placing the helicopter in a safe and suitable hoisting position using voice "conning", probably while he was ensuring the safety of the hoistee. When the mission was complete he then had to return to his "engineer" duties and take care of the helicopter. In the Buffalo he



*Pat Ryan*



*Top Row: L - R Eddy Myers,*

*F. Lucas,*

*Doc Schellinck*

*Bottom Row: L - R*

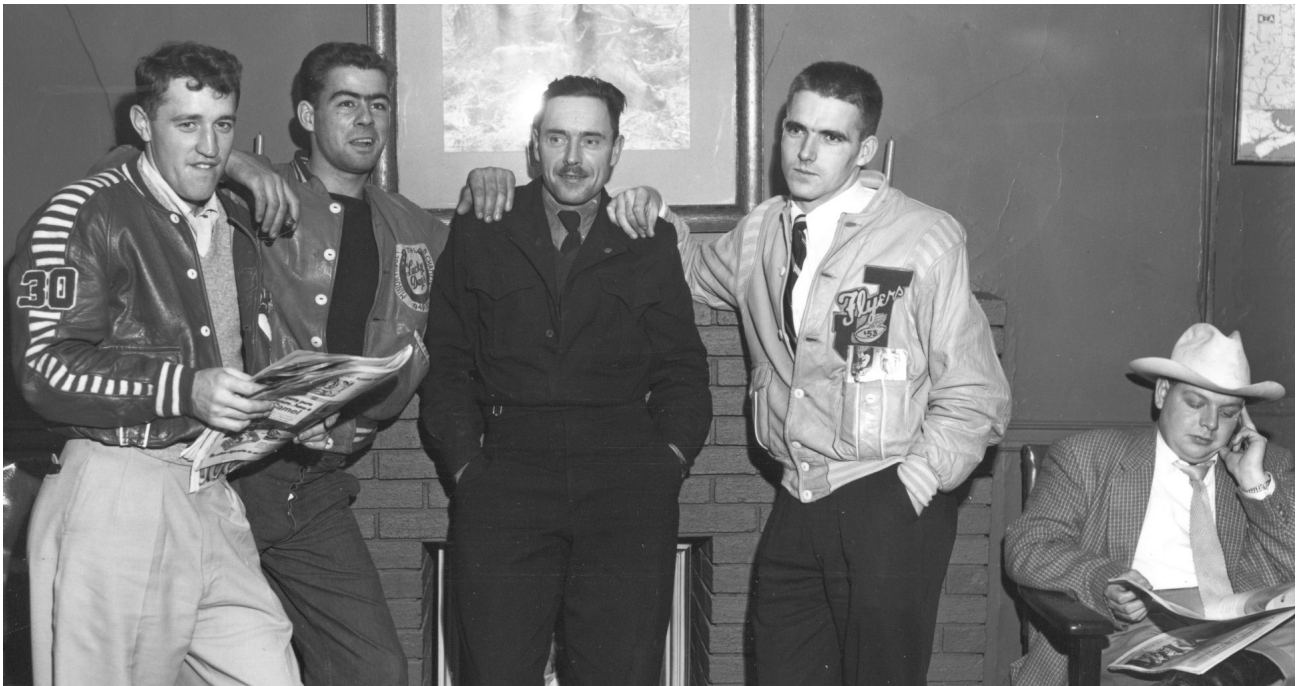
*?,*

*Eugene 'Buck' Rogers,*

*Bill Gillespie*

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***Shearwater Flyers Football players socialize: L-R Bill Gillespie, Gill Shepard, their DND designated driver, Bill Elliot, Bob Darling.***



***1952 Shearwater flyers hockey Team Members at CNAG reunion:  
In Front: Bill Knatchbell and George Saleski  
In Rear: Fred Snooks, Al Brown, Les Shatford, Dolug Scotland, Kerry Briard and Jack Cribb***



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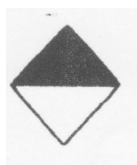
**Guidelines for designing your “Wall of Honour” Tile.**

The tile used is made from high quality marble which is 12 inches square. The tile can be sand blasted in various ways to suit your wishes. All lettering will be in upper case and the tile will be mounted in the diamond orientation as opposed to a square orientation. All Text will run horizontally across the tile.

The options are:

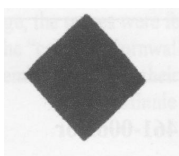
- Option A:** One half tile 12" X 12" x 17" and triangular in shape with up to 5 rows of 3/4" letters for a maximum of 60 letters and spaces. The longest row can accommodate up to 20 letters and spaces. The remaining 4 rows will decrease in length as the border/edge of the tile dictates. It should be 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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- Option D:** The “Buddy” Tile - sold only as a full tile. This tile is divided into 4 quarters - each 6" X 6". Each quarter can accommodate up to 6 rows of 1/2" letters for a maximum of 48 letters and spaces. The two centre rows can accommodate up to 12 letters and spaces with the remaining rows decreasing as the tile edge dictates.

**Option A**



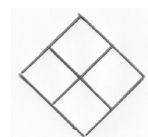
**\$300**

**Option B & C**



**\$600**

**Option D**



**\$600**

**Wall Tiles may be purchased through monthly installments.**

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

Continued next page



The colour of the tile will be 'Belmont Rose'. If the submission requires any alteration, the subscriber will be contacted by phone or email by the coordinator for further discussion.  
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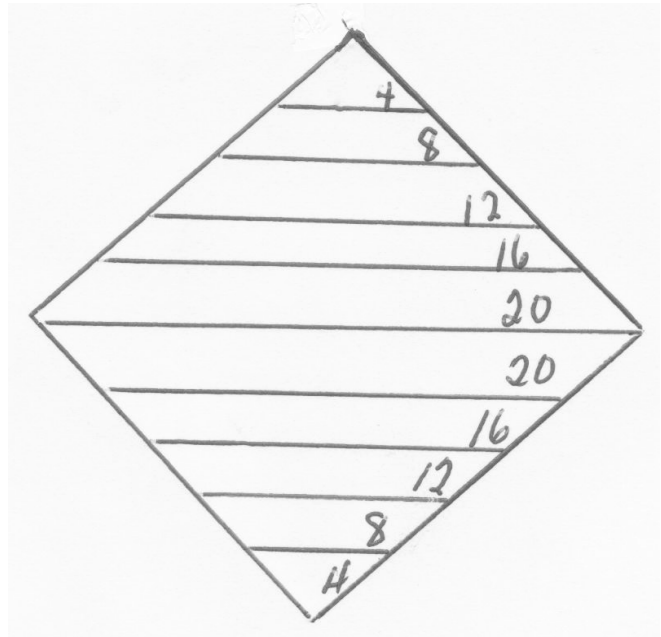
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**Income Tax Benefits:** A bequest made by your Will confers an important advantage to your estate when the bequest is made to a Charitable organization such as the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation. Your lawyer or financial advisor can advise you on such advantages and the implications or limitations of such bequests.

**Request of Life Insurance:** The gift of a Life Insurance Policy can be an effective way of offering a benefit to the Foundation on your death. You may either give an existing policy which you may no longer need, or a new policy obtained specifically for the purpose of making a donation to the Foundation. In both cases, the Income Tax benefits of such gifts can be very important to the foundation and to you. Consult with your Insurance Agent re the specifics of such benefits.

**Or BY MEANS OF A SIMPLE CODICIL TO YOUR CURRENT WILL.** (The following is a simple Codicil which can be added to your present Will.)

---

**"Codicil to the Last Will and Testament of \_\_\_\_\_"**

Which Last Will and Testament is dated this \_\_\_\_ Day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_. I hereby add to that said Will as follows:

I give, devise and bequeath to the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

to be paid out of my general estate.

Signed and dated this \_\_\_\_ Day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_

In the City of \_\_\_\_\_ Province of \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Witness: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Testator

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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---

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**Don O'Leary, Senior Avionics Instructor at the Aviation Institute of the Nova Scotia Community College, presents Bill Gillespie, Chairperson for the Awards Committee for CNAG - Atlantic, a Certificate from the College in appreciation of the Continued Support that CNAG - Atlantic has provided to the Aviation Programs. To-date, CNAG - Atlantic has provided over \$3,000.00 in support of Deserving Students.**



**Don O'Leary, Senior Avionics Instructor, (a former Avionics Technician at Shearwater) presents the CNAG - Atlantic, Deserving Student Award to Samatha Viney at the Aviation Institute of the Nova Scotia Community College. CNAG - Atlantic presents the Plaque along with a cash award to the most Deserving Student as picked by the Aviation Institute Staff. Samatha left immediately for a position in Winnipeg; consequently, missed the formal Awards Presentation Night.**





# 2013 SAMF DINNER AUCTION

Top Row L-R Peter & Susan Staley, Alma & Chuck Coffen, Marie Peacocke & Dennis Shaw, Robert Trenholm  
 Mid. Row L-R Gerry Marshall & Guest, Eric Edgar, June Gillespie & Rolly and Catharine West  
 Bot. Row L-R Helen Trenholm, Shirley & Steve MacDonald, Carol Shadbolt, Rachel Merrick, Karen McHarg



## MY GRANDFATHER

*by Cpl Rob Stoodley*

My grandfather, George W. Blake, has had a huge impact on my life. From the time I was a little boy I can remember him spreading my wings of interest in aviation, by telling me the type of each aircraft that flew over my house on its approach to Toronto's Pearson International Airport. As I grew older he began to tell me stories and showing me pictures of his experiences as an aircraft mechanic with 443 Fighter Squadron during WWII. He told me stories of how he had already been in England for a month and an half before the rest of the Squadron arrived at Digby Airfield on 14 February 1944, landing in France on 12 June 1944 and onto the war end in Uetersen, Germany, just north of Hamburg. He also recorded his experiences in a journal; from which I have taken the following story.

It was the end of June 1945. The war in Europe had been over for over a month and my grandfather and his buddy got a day off. They decided to go check out a captured German SS camp about 15 miles down the road. They got a lift from a guy in a British Army truck that was going to the camp to drop off some supplies and would give them a return ride later in the day. In one of the buildings on the camp they found a four person German built Opel military car, all decked out in green and brown camouflage. Ignoring the "do not touch enemy equipment," warnings they had been told over the previous 18 months they looked it over and figured that they could get it running if they got it back to their lines. Their British Army friend with the truck at first said "there is no way I'm going to tow a captured German car behind my truck," but he soon relented and he towed it back to their camp and they hid it in some bushes. He called "you guys are nuts," as he drove away.

After a few days of working on the car, "acquiring" a new battery and some gas from supply, they were able to get the car running. The following day my grandfather and three other Canadians jumped in the car, with .45 calibre revolvers on their hips, and started out for a day of scouting. They went north through Hamburg and continued on the road from Hamburg to Keil. After a few miles, they were stopped by some British Army guards, who were the last Allied check point on the road before the surrendered German lines. They asked many questions; "Where are you going? Where did you get the car?" My grandfather and his friends said they had a Spitfire crash about 10 miles north that they had to retrieve the radios and some other secret equipment from the aircraft before it was captured and there were no other trucks available so they were in the German car. Somehow they were let through the lines.

Once on the German side of the lines they came across

a little town and were surrounded by thousands of German Army guys who only a month ago had been shooting at them. My grandfather and their friends asked for the Burgomaster, or Mayor of the area. They met with him and were asked into his house for lunch. They accepted and had a good meal. One of the Canadians spoke French and another, Bill Bocker, spoke Russian and they tried to communicate as best they could. Just after lunch Bill Bocker said that they had to leave, Now! He had heard the Burgomaster talking in the kitchen and was getting suspicious of their visit.

After thanking them for lunch they headed out of town only to come across another small town about 7 miles down the same road. There were even more German Army guys in this town and a big German officer came out of a building and wanted to know where the rest of their Company was. They said they were the advance party and that the remainder of the Company would be there soon. The Canadians asked where the Germans had piled their weapons. They were promptly taken to a dance hall which was wall to wall piled with weapons and guns of every size. The Canadians took about 10 revolvers and a couple of smaller guns and told the German officer they had to take these back to the Canadian officers to show that the weapons were stored in that building.

They were soon on the road again and came across a small store and went in to have a look. There was not too much in the store until they saw a case of bottles in the back corner. They asked what these were and were told it was Cherry Brandy. They asked how much for all ten bottles and the store clerk pushed the bottles into their hands and wanted them to leave.

When they came back to the front lines there was a different shift on duty and it did not look good for them; they were coming from the German sector, in a German car. They used the same old story of the downed Spitfire and then sealed their passage with a bottle of Cherry Brandy for each of the three guards. They hid the car back in the bushes when they got back to camp and divided the guns and Cherry Brandy equally. My grandfather's take was a matching pair of pearl handled Lugers, a couple other revolvers, a 32 calibre Mauser and an officer's Cavalier rifle with a beautiful case for the barrel. He later sold all these guns in England for the sum of \$500 Canadian dollars.

This was the last time they drove the car. Before they really got in trouble, they gave it away to some Army types and they took it out of their sight.

It was not a big surprise to much of my family that I followed my grandfather's military footsteps and joined the Army Reserves with the Queen's Own Rifles of



Canada when I was still in high school. It was amazing to hear that my grandfather went into Bernières-sur-Mer, France on the 12<sup>th</sup> of June 1944, where my reserve unit heard in my grandfathers voice, had come fullest when I decided to wear the blue uniform of the Air Force as an AES Op; however, when I called to tell him I was posted to 443 Squadron there was a long pause on the other end of the phone, followed by..... "That's my old Squadron." When I got the patches for my uniform, I ordered an extra 443 Squadron patch and mailed it to him.

landed, just six days before, on D-Day. I thought that the similarities in our military careers, and the pride I

I lost my grandfather just before Christmas this past year; he died on 18 December 2012. When I went to his apartment after his memorial and saw his empty chair where he used to sit and tell me all the stories my heart sank and a lump grew in my throat, but then I saw the 443 Squadron patch propped up on his side table where he could look at it everyday. Through my tears I smiled; I knew he was proud of me and proud the fact that 67 years later there was a Blake descendant once again in 443 Squadron.

\*\*\*\*\*

***Remember...***



***Recognize anyone?***

## ***A salute to back-seaters***

Our little branch had many names,  
I'll try to name a few.  
For years we're called OBSERVERS MATES,  
all that changed, as did the name.

As time rolled on, as fate looked on,  
our mission's still the same.  
As years went by, we drilled the sky,  
and played the sub-hunt game.

As OM's we fly, and duly ply,  
electronic expertise.  
Through many stints, we chase "ELINTS's,"  
They're trawlers in disguise.

These ships are manned by Russian spies,  
tap our communiques.  
to catch them at it, and foil their plot;  
it's why we flog the skies.

We try to capture them on film. We're sure that they're  
annoyed.  
Take pot-shots with a Very's gun, from quarterdeck deployed.  
More fun to chase them in the dark, and give them quite a  
fright,  
and do a radar homing true, and "zap" them with searchlight.

We wonder why who do not fly, can change our name at will.  
Names rearranged, our goal unchanged, NAVAL  
AIRCROWMAN's our new pill.  
We have no voice, we have no choice, that pill is hard to  
swallow.  
Keep changing names, they play their games. Their  
reasoning's hard to follow.

They decide call us "RAD NAV's" now.  
Acronym for RADIO NAVIGATOR,  
Again they'll change it; when or how?  
But I'm sure they'll do it later.

Confirm our fears, and in few years. It's RAD NAV to  
Observers.  
It gets old hat, and after that, AIRBORNE ELECTRONIC  
SENSOR OPERATORS.  
The times they change, they rearrange, and jobs accumulate.  
To name a few: Search and Rescue, plus others tempting  
fate.

Then against our wishes, were chasing fishes,  
those that are caught "illegal."  
We've had our fill, yet chase oil spill,  
which lubricates a seagull.

Must not forget those ATCs, way up there in the tower.  
Telling aircraft where to go, controlling gives them power.  
A diverse bunch is what we are, of that there is no doubt.  
At GCA we talk them down, and hope they don't wipe-out.

But mainly airborne stuff we do, we manipulate black-boxes.  
There's MAD and SONAR, RADAR too, the stuff we learn on  
courses.  
In early days we earned our pays, communicating with a  
Morse-key.

The frequency I do believe, was fifty-seven-oh-three.

Then came a choice, they gave us voice, up in the FM band.  
But still you see, notebook on knee, we still record by hand.  
Two sexy ladies flew with us, they're JULIE; JEZEBEL.  
They flew with us from off our ship, our "out-to-sea hotel."

The birds in which we flew? I list with no remorse.  
Avenger, Tracker, Argus, Sea King, Horse, and others? But of  
course.  
Different boxes, different years, we believe we were the best.  
So did others, our NATO brothers. We excelled at every  
quest.

Though it sounds silly, our "war" was "chilly;"  
no angry fired shots.  
We flew with pride, yet some men died,  
and have no funeral plots.

Their resting place? It shows no trace,  
I state with true emotion.  
We still flew brave, above their grave;  
the cruel Atlantic Ocean.

Aurora? It still plies the skies with electronic sensors.  
For what it's worth, and heading North, is the modified bird  
Arcturus  
It's latest task if you should ask - patrolling Canada's tundra.  
For what it's worth, patrols the North, North's silence's rent  
asunder.

Despite the buts, it still takes guts; still a case of do or die.  
These newer, swift, and powerful birds, are what the AESOPS  
fly.  
It's AESOPS now that take the load, and keep the game on  
track.  
While old boys think of many chums, who never made it back.

John Thompson

\*\*\*\*\*



***Chuck O'Neill and Jim Cope***

***And... do you remember these people?***



***Johnny Pike, Moose Mills, Danny McCowell***



***Adm Harry Porter***



***Jim MacIntosh, Gary White, Brian Hotsenpillar, Al Hawthorne, Bob Williamson, Bill Gourlay, Dick Quirt, Hank Bannister, and Bob Hogg.***

## IF YA GOTTA GO, YA GOTTA GO

By Ken Wright (in part - a few vignettes)

### ***A combat aircraft is not the best place to answer nature's call.***

Eating and excreting are mankind's two most basic biological functions and yet the vast majority of military historians, when writing about the people who fought the battles and used the war machines, seem to neglect or forget this very simple fact of life as most military books lack even the briefest inclusion of information on the subject. Granted it's not a topic that needs to be covered in great detail, but some little snippets of information would be helpful to gain a greater appreciation of what life was like during war.

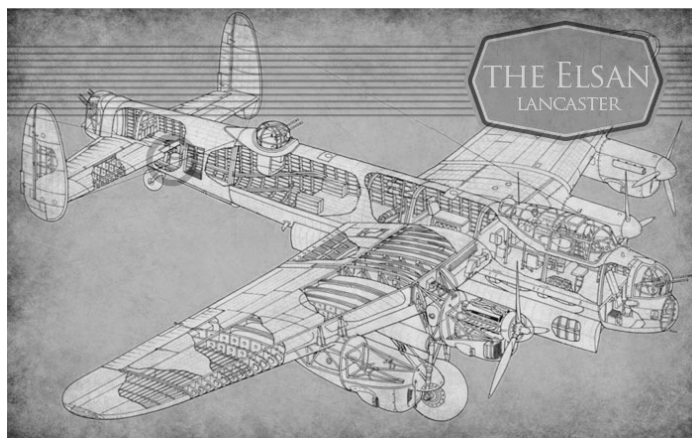
Leaving aside the obvious fact that soldiers and sailors can discharge their bodily waste anywhere, on land or in the sea if necessary, what options did the bomber aircrew and fighter pilots have? With the advances in aviation technology, the Second World War fighter or bomber could stay in the air longer, and travel much greater distances, than could the primitive air machines of the First World War. This, by necessity, required aircraft designers to incorporate some basic method of waste disposal for those who flew these new machines. Concentration on life and death tasks are well-nigh impossible when the need to p--- dominates and the minus 60° F cold at 26,000 feet intensifies a man's pain for not relieving himself. The cold affecting the bladder at high altitude is murder.

This aircraft is, in essence, a metal container for more than 2,000 gallons of pure petrol, plus another 150 gallons of oil; miles of pipeline containing highly inflammable hydraulic oil for controls and flaps, gun turrets, etc. In the bomb bay, there might be between 8 to 10 tons of lethal high explosive and/or pyrotechnic stores, 14,000 rounds of ammunition in extended alloy tracks which guide the belted ammunition to the gunner's turrets. There are oxygen lines, electrical wiring, intercommunication cables and a host of other fittings.

Inside this "flying bomb" were seven crew members wearing layers of clothing designed to keep out the cold. These men took off night after night, sometimes for a six to seven hour stint, in unpressurized aircraft to face enemy flak, night fighters, hostile weather conditions and accidents. Almost all Avro Lancaster bombers were equipped with three Frazer-Nash (FN) hydraulically operated turrets using .303 calibre machine guns. The mid-upper turret saw only limited use during the early months of the aircraft's introduction to operational service. The nose turret was rarely used and manned by the bomb aimer, if required. The mid-upper gunner spent the trip suspended on a canvas sling seat that

could be disconnected when getting in or out of the turret. His lower body was in the draughty fuselage and his head in the Plexiglass dome. It was a lonely position, removed from the proximity of other crew, but the worst position was that of the tail gunner which, during nightly "ops," was the coldest, loneliest place in the sky. Whilst other crew members enjoyed some comfort, having others nearby in the forward section of the aircraft, the poor rear gunner, better known as "Arse End Charlie," was completely removed from his fellow crew members and any heating system. Squeezed into a cramped metal and Perspex cupola, the rear gunner had so little leg space that some had to place their flying boots into the turret before climbing in themselves.

From takeoff to landing, at times for as long as ten hours, the tail gunner was constantly rotating the turret, scanning the surrounding blackness, quarter by quarter, for the grey shadow that could instantly become an attacking enemy night fighter. The rear gunner stowed his parachute in the fuselage behind his turret. Any relaxation of vigilance could mean death for everyone on board. Even answering the call of nature or "being caught short" could mean disaster for the crew as his position was the prime target for attacking enemy night fighters. Even if he needed desperately to p--- or s---, it was impossible for him to leave his post on an operation.



The Lancaster, for some reason, was not equipped with a relief tube like many other aircraft, only an "Elsan" chemical toilet a few feet forward from the rear gunner's turret. It was exposed, unreliable, uncomfortable and dangerous in rough weather or if the skipper had to take sudden evasive action. At 10,000 feet and above, anyone using the Elsan had to use a portable oxygen bottle for breathing as well, due to the lack of pressurization. The crew would have to have had bottomless steel bladders to be able to maintain the constant vigilance necessary for each raid and not use the Elsan or some other container brought on board by a crew member. The Elsan was hated by the aircrew

because they had to use it, and the ground crew because they had to empty it.

With regards to the use of the Elsan toilet, there are two stories that are reputed to be true. One is about some members of the RAF conducting biological warfare by jettisoning used Elsan toilets with their normal bomb payload on German targets. The other is about one Lancaster crew who took one of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force ladies on an operation. This was strictly against regulations of course but more than likely happened a few times.

On Tuesday, 13 March 1945, the Avro Lancasters of 153 Squadron were some of the aircraft detailed to participate in an attack on two Benzol plants in Germany – one at Herne, the other on the Ruhr at Gelsenkirchen. For the predominantly Canadian crew of Flying Officer Robert "Bob" Purves, in Lancaster NG500, their number would be increased by one, for their captain's girlfriend, Leading Aircraftwoman (LACW) Iris Price would be joining them on the raid.

Many years later, Iris recalled the events of that night: "We took off for Germany via France and Belgium. There were a lot of searchlights and some flak on the way in. At this stage I was feeling sick. We arrived over the target and the bombs were dropped and we turned for home. Mission accomplished, I calmed down a bit. Then it happened. I desperately needed to relieve myself."

Iris, using her portable oxygen bottle did what had to be done into a bag which was disposed of down the flare chute. However, in the process of partly undressing, and then struggling to get fully clothed again, Iris lost her oxygen supply. Starved of oxygen, hypoxia set in and Iris collapsed onto the floor of the Lancaster.

Fortunately, her predicament was noticed by the crew and Iris was brought to. Feeling decidedly "sick and cold," Iris enjoyed little about the journey home. After the aircraft landed at 23:10 one of Iris' friends, Doris, recalls seeing Iris "helped off the plane, semi-conscious." Although not confirmed, there was a rumour that the crew only discovered her on their return leg over the English Channel. All efforts to revive her failed, and as they couldn't find a pulse and thinking she was dead, the crew contemplated throwing her overboard when, fortunately, one of them finally found the elusive pulse.

American bomber crews suffered the same problems as their British cousins with similar methods of disposal.

The Short Stirling was the first four-engined British heavy bomber of the Second World War. The Stirling was designed and built by Short Brothers to an Air Ministry specification from 1936, and entered service in

1941. The Stirling had a relatively brief operational career as a bomber, being relegated to second line duties from 1943 onwards when other four-engined RAF bombers, specifically the Handley Page Halifax and Avro Lancaster, took over its role. The Stirling was limited only by the size of its wing which was determined by the width of the hangar doors at the time the specification was written. Pilots like Murray Peden were convinced that, if this aircraft has a larger wing, it would have been one of the most outstanding bomber aircraft of the war. – Wikipedia/Ed

He had just let down his flying suit, battledress trousers and long johns, when a prolonged burst of machine-gun fire from the mid-upper turret froze all his internal piping solid. Clutching the half-mast clothing inventory to his posterior, he raced for the cockpit like some strangely stunted and alien creature, almost jerking his navigator's head off as he flashed past and ran full-tilt against his taut intercom cord. Hurling himself into his cold metal seat, with yards of clothing trailing behind him, he seized the controls and put the Stirling through all sorts of wonderful evolutions until a moment came when he dared pause to plug in his own intercom.

"What the hell's the matter, Tag?" He shouted urgently, addressing himself to his mid-upper gunner. "What're you shooting at?"

"Aw, it's okay, skipper," Tag replied with carefully affected calm – he had been treacherously briefed and timed by the rear gunner, who had seen Mackett perched on the Elsan – "Don't get your shirt in a knot. I was feeling sleepy and just fired a burst to keep myself awake."

At this point, the reader might like a change of aircraft, so we change from bombers to fighters. How did the fighter pilot cope with the call of nature?

Apart from taking some form of container to p--- into, the pilot would use the aircraft's relief tube in the cockpit. Its location varied with the aircraft but this method of relief was fine if the pilot only needed to urinate as a fighter was not usually in the air that long. However, the situation changed when fighters using long range drop fuel tanks began escorting bombers on long distance operations, then the problem of defecation was solved by simply changing ones clothes and flight suit at the earliest possible opportunity. Just as the rear gunner of a Lancaster bomber had to do in the same situation.

de Havilland Mosquito DH.98. "In the Mossie, the relief tube was a flexible hose connected to a pipe under the pilot's seat on the right (navigator on the left). The top was funnel shaped with about half or three quarters of an inch diameter hose which could accommodate any young man with a good stream capacity. The hose was



in turn connected to a container also under the pilot's seat. There was naturally no place to defecate so one would either hang on or if the worst came to the worst, change one's clothing immediately after landing back at base." – Robert Kirkpatrick, pilot

P-47 Thunderbolt. "We were coming out of Germany and I had to relieve myself. I unbuttoned my flight suit and pants and reached under the seat for the relief tube. Just then someone called in enemy aircraft at 9 o'clock and coming in fast. I immediately broke hard left into them. We all went round and round but had to break away as we were low on fuel. In the excitement of the moment, I had forgotten about relieving myself. I joined the others and flew home. When I parked the aircraft, the crew chief, as usual, jumped up on the wing to help me out of the harness and inquire about the status of the plane. He got next to the cockpit then suddenly stepped back. I wondered why he wasn't taking the harness straps off and putting them behind the seat as he usually did. I looked down to hit the quick release on my parachute and saw the problem. I had a hell of a time trying to explain what happened. That damn crew chief went round with a smile on his face for a week." – LeRoy Glover, pilot



North American P-51 Mustang. "A day in mid-winter 1944-45 with a bright and clear sky over Europe at 28,000 feet. Below us lie solid snow white stratiform clouds. Three hours has brought my fighter squadron escorting heavy bombers on a mission, deep into enemy German territory. The air temperature outside of the canopied cockpit of the Mustang fighter is at least -40 degrees Fahrenheit at this altitude. Body comfort in the cockpit depends on having at least two layers of clothes under the flying suit and heavy boots with leather gloves under the gauntlets.

My bladder has been sending urgent messages for the last half-hour to evacuate the remnants of last night's over indulgence in English beer. Responding reluctantly

to the 'Maximum Tolerance Pressure' I prepare. I sweep the sky visually, move the other members of the flight into a loose formation and trim the plane for straight and level flight.

The second part of the drill is to loosen the restricting crash straps and impatiently locate the funnel shaped relief tube clipped under the bucket seat, then hopefully place it between my thighs. Finally, I probe through two zippers and long underwear for the organ of my discontent. The offending organ's head retracts in terror and revulsion when it feels the cold glove. Precious moments are lost warming the rejected hand and enticing the reluctant digit to pour forth its voluminous donation into the receptive relief tube.

Oh no! The exterior exhaust end of the relief tube is iced up. There I sit, half finished, holding a container of steaming urine in my hand. My dilemma is abruptly terminated by an urgent radio call from my wing man: 'Red Leader, Bandits' seven o'clock high, coming in on your tail. Break left!'

Disregarding everything, I grab the throttle and control stick and snap into a defensive Lufberry turn. The unconfined liquid splashed onto the windshield and canopy, freezing instantly. Tearing the gloves off my hands with my teeth, I frantically scratched at the yellow coating of ice restricting my visibility. At the same time, I kept my aircraft trembling on the edge of a high speed stall. My unrestricted visibility returned after the longest and busiest five minutes of my life, to reveal an empty sky. The lonely flight back to base, plus landing, proved uneventful.

My crew chief waited faithfully as I taxied back to the revetment area. After I parked and opened the canopy, this imperturbable mechanic stood on the wing and leaned into the cockpit to help me unbuckle all the straps. He sniffed the air like a bird dog and casually remarked: 'It smells like you wus awful scared cap'n.' " – Larry Dissette, pilot

Obviously, modesty is one of the early casualties of military life and when nature calls, and requires exposing one's private parts to do what must be done in front of other people, that is trying under any circumstances. To all those who flew during the Second World War, this was just one more hazard amongst the many they had to contend with and, for that reason alone, the subject should be mentioned more often.

[C]Ken Wright 2012.

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## REMEMBERING HARVEY MILLS

*This is an article written by the late Pat Connolly, sports writer for the Halifax Herald. I thought for those who did not have access to this newspaper, and who knew the Moose, the article certainly spells out his wonderful character. Rolly West*



It would be inappropriate to write about Harvey Mills in terms other than what he was; a big, good-natured guy without any hidden agendas. The kind of person who brightened your day just by showing up, because he had this way of making people feel good about themselves. He was from Moose Jaw (the only city named after a Prime Minister), and that wasn't intended as disrespect for the man in office. It was simply a good line over a few pops. Moose spoke ill of no one.

Harvey spent the majority of his early years in the Naval Air Arm of the military, but he never aspired to be an admiral, nor have the presidencies of the universities that he served in his civilian life. I'm not sure he even wanted to be coach of the great Shearwater team that won the Canadian championship in 1957 because it might have meant compromising his true nature of being just one of the boys. He lived without pretensions and that made it easy for the players under his command who genuinely liked him to convert their affection into respect for his position and ideals.

I remember the 1957 event as the first football game ever televised live in Atlantic Canada with all the attendant deficiencies of a new medium groping for identity. It was a terrifying experience for those who were involved, the day saved only by play-by-play broadcaster Keith Barry, the single one among us who knew anything about the game and producer Bill Harper who, if he knew fear, kept his anxieties under wraps. It is important to remember that, in 1957, there were no such things in television as tapes and replays and absolutely no margin for error. We all flew by the seats of our pants, and that included coach Mills of the Flyers, because there were also no game films and the carrier pigeons were late arriving with information on the Fort William Redskins. A measure of how long ago it was is that there is no longer any such place as Fort William, now modernly meshed into a city called Thunder Bay.

The Flyers went into the championship game at Wanderers Grounds 12-0 on the season, but had to pull out all the stops to win over the unknown and underrated Redskins. It took all the motivational skills the Moose could muster in that calming way of his, the soothing balance in a gang of highly spirited athletes. He was the coach by

appointment if not by choice and the boss because the players wanted him to be.

Harvey loved that team to his last breath on the operating table at Victoria General Hospital and his proudest moment was watching the Flyers inducted into the Nova Scotia Sport Heritage Hall of Fame in 1987. His eyes sparkled as he relived the turning point of the '57 game, when running back Bruce Walker barreled in for a touchdown in the dying seconds of the last quarter and the Flyers trailing by a point, turning what looked like certain defeat into a glorious chapter in Nova Scotia sports history. Shearwater Flyers 27 Fort William 21.

Walker, a key element in what was one of the great backfields of our time with fullback Bob Hayes, Bruce Thomas, Buck Taylor, and quarterback Don Lilley, who recalled "after the Hall of Fame reunion, we all decided to order special rings commemorating the '57 team. We were all waiting on the delivery and Harvey could hardly wait to get that ring on his finger. I still can't bring myself to believe he's gone because we were all so close."

Harvey was close to all his friends, drawn to him by that special feeling you get when you know somebody really cares about you. He was folksy in his distinctive prairie way, quietly upbeat without even the trace of a negative ion in a disarming personality. The only thing that superseded football and his pals was his family, his wife Joyce, and their children, Nancy, Jayne and Ron. Several years ago, a thoughtful son the committed convert to Nova Scotia, moved temporarily back to Moose Jaw to share time with his ailing parents, because he felt that he owed them that. A lot of us miss the Moose, everybody's kind of guy.

*Pat Connolly*

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### **NOTICE**

#### **THE SAM FOUNDATION**

#### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**WILL BE HELD, IN THE MUSEUM,**

**ON FRIDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2013**

**AT 0930.**

## SHEARWATER'S MARITIME AVIATION HERITAGE

With the paying off of the aircraft carrier, HMCS Bonaventure, on 3 July 1970, the last vestiges of the Royal Canadian Navy's (RCN) Air Arm did not fade into history. Quite to the contrary, the Shearwater Aviation Museum has superbly preserved this segment of our nation's proud naval heritage. The museum recollects Bonaventure's carrier predecessors, HM Ships Puncher and Nabob, which provided Canadians the experience that was necessary for the RCN to commission their own follow-on aircraft carriers, HMC Ships Warrior, Magnificent and lastly Bonaventure. The evolution of Canadian Naval Aviation from the early Seafire aircraft through to the Banshee fighters and anti-submarine Trackers is also displayed. Although Bonaventure no longer comes along side the Shearwater or Dockyard jetties to remind us that Canada had a naval air component, you can view exhibits displaying this 22-year portion of the RCN's history at our Shearwater Aviation Museum. In fact, the museum tells the entire history of what was the RCN's only naval air station, HMCS Shearwater.

Shearwater is the birthplace of Canada's maritime military aviation and the home of a heritage that must be preserved. The museum portrays the history of Shearwater from its founding in 1918 when the United States Navy Flying Corps under the leadership of Lieutenant Richard E. Byrd (USN) provided aircrew and aircraft for the seaplane station built by the Canadian government south of Dartmouth; the base was built to counter German submarines operating off the coast of Nova Scotia during the First World War. Lieutenant Byrd later became better known as Admiral Byrd for his polar exploits. In the 1990s, the 12 Wing Headquarters was named the Admiral Richard E. Byrd building to honour his being the station's first Commanding Officer in 1918 and his renowned Arctic exploits which followed. The founding of the base marked the beginning of air reconnaissance in anti-submarine warfare in Canada and portended the base's primary role of supporting maritime air operations throughout its 95-year history.



Stranraer

In the 1920s and 30s, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) operated flying boats and float planes from the Dartmouth seaplane station where most flights were in support of other government departments, aiding in the development of eastern Canada. These flights included photographing new sections of the interior, transporting officials to inaccessible regions, blazing new air routes, carrying treaty money to First Nation reserves, conducting forest fire patrols, assisting the RCMP in the pursuit of rum runners, and flying sick and injured traders, trappers, farmers and aboriginals to places where medical attention was available.

During the Second World War, RCAF Station Dartmouth played a vital role in the Battle of the Atlantic. As the major air base in eastern Canada it was home to numerous long-range Bomber-Reconnaissance squadrons, which conducted anti-submarine patrols and escorted merchant convoys sailing between Halifax and England. Similarly, the RCAF's No.1 (Fighter) Squadron flew Hawker Hurricanes from Dartmouth to protect Halifax's strategic harbour from air attack. When the threat of German air strikes to North America diminished, the squadron was transferred to England where it was the only Canadian squadron to fight in the epic Battle of Britain. No. 1 Squadron was later renumbered to 401 Squadron and became the RCAF's highest scoring fighter squadron in Second World War. Also during this era, RCAF Station Dartmouth provided a home for HMS Seaborn, a Royal Navy lodger unit that provided maintenance and shelter for British Fleet Air Arm aircraft while disembarked from their parent Escort Aircraft Carriers and Merchant Aircraft Carriers in Halifax harbour.

In December 1948, the RCAF turned the station over to the RCN. Royal Canadian Naval Air Station Dartmouth was commissioned HMCS Shearwater and became home to Canada's naval air squadrons when not embarked in the aircraft carriers HMC Ships Warrior, Magnificent, and Bonaventure, which the Navy operated in succession from 1946 to 1970. The RCN also pioneered the deployment of large helicopters on small destroyers, a concept that was adopted by many navies of the world including those of the United States, Australia and Japan. With integration of Canada's armed forces in 1968, HMCS Shearwater became Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Shearwater. Today, 12 Wing Shearwater is home to Canada's Sea King helicopter squadrons which have played a salient role in the Navy's peacemaking operations around the world including the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, Somalia, Haiti, Adriatic Sea and the Indian Ocean providing both a Canadian and UN/NATO presence. These are but a few of the examples of our military maritime aviation heritage that are preserved at Shearwater Aviation Museum.

The Shearwater Aviation Museum, located at 12 Wing Shearwater just a few kilometers south of Dartmouth, is a non-profit, permanent institution dedicated to the preservation of our rich Canadian military maritime aviation heritage. The museum focuses uniquely on the development of RCAF flying and marine operations in Atlantic Canada and the evolution of the Royal Canadian Navy's Naval Air Arm. The museum currently has an inventory of over 10,000 artifacts and possesses 13 heritage naval aircraft with an estimated total value of over 10 million dollars. The museum's prize exhibit is a 1934 vintage, ex-RCN Fairey Swordfish, which is one of only four Swordfish in the world that was restored to flying condition. The Swordfish is renowned for its Second World War achievements; disabling the Italian fleet at Taranto, its vital role in sinking the German Battleship Bismarck and the innumerable visits to HMS Seaborn at Dartmouth when disembarking from Merchant Aircraft Carriers on the North Atlantic convoy runs.



**Firefly FR1**

The museum is also in the final stages of reconstructing an ex-RCN Fairey Firefly FR 1, which arrived in Canada aboard HMCS Warrior in 1946 and served as the RCN's first strike reconnaissance fighter. When the Firefly is restored to flying condition it will be the only flyable Firefly FR 1 in the world. Other RCN aircraft included in the museum's inventory include two anti-submarine Avengers, a Sikorsky HO4S-3 rescue helicopter, a Piasecki HUP-3 twin-rotor helicopter, a F2H-3 Banshee (the RCN's only jet fighter), a Harvard pilot trainer, two anti-submarine Trackers (one of which is the unique prototype RCN Tracker) and a T-33 jet trainer (the only T-33 configured for towing Delmar targets on display in Canada).

The Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation has played a fundamental role in the museum's success. In 2001, the Foundation provided the financial backing to construct a new 20,000 square foot hangar. The new addition allowed the museum to preserve aircraft that were previously displayed out doors where they were badly deteriorating in the corrosive maritime environment. Similarly, the Foundation provided the

funds to purchase one of the last Avenger water bombers in Canada from Forest Protection Limited; from 1950 to 1960 the Avenger flew with the RCN at Shearwater and will be restored in its original RCN colours as "NAVY 303".

If you want to spend a few hours to reminisce about the good old days or learn more about Canada's maritime aviation heritage and the 95-year history of Shearwater, the Shearwater Aviation Museum is well worth the investiture of your time. For information on hours of operation or guided tours call 720-1083 or visit [www.shearwateraviationmuseum.ns.ca](http://www.shearwateraviationmuseum.ns.ca) the Museum's web site.

*Prepared By*  
**Ernie Cable**  
*Shearwater Aviation Museum Historian*



**Avenger and Magnificent**



**HMCS Buckingham and Sikorsky**





## Memories of a Back Seat Naval Aviator

### Part 12

by Peter Bruner

In January 1975 I was back in Churchill MB for the Winter Exercise. I was positioned in the middle of the airport and controlled the entire fleet of aircraft consisting of Kiowa Helos, Huey Helos, Chinook Helos, CF5 fighters, Hercules transports and other various and sundry aircraft of the military.

Total aircraft equated to @ 45 types engaged in the exercise. The one good thing was that considering a 24 hrs day being worked that not one incident of major concern occurred during the exercise. Neither aircraft or aircrew were at anytime in jeopardy.

In the Spring I was advised that as "Vice President of The Officer's Mess Committee", I was to host "Lord Louis Mountbatten" on his daughter's visit to Currie Barracks on the occasion of her visit for the trooping of the colours for 1PPCLI. She was the "Colonel in Chief" for 1PPCLI and was best known as "Lady Patricia Brabourne". On arrival of the official party at the Officer's Mess I was introduced to the Principals "Lady Patricia" and "Admiral Mountbatten". The Admiral noticed that I wore Naval Aircrew wings on my uniform and questioned me as to my military background. After a 30 second explanation of how I was commissioned from the rank of "Chief Petty Officer" and spent 18 years as an enlisted man and then commissioned as a Lieut. And subsequently to a Captain. At this point he asked if I was available to spend some time with him. Naturally as his host I agreed. Thus began a friendship that endured up to the end of the life of the Admiral.

Lady Patricia Attended a Mess Dinner that evening with her father the Admiral as did all the Officer's Mess Members and it was indeed a joyous event. The next morning I attended breakfast with the Official Party. The "Trooping of the Colours" was for the afternoon of that day. The Admiral suggested that I might put forward an alternate plan to occupy the afternoon. I thought of a tour of the city and the two of us drove around Calgary, then to Banff AB for a look at the points of interest. We returned to Calgary via Hwy 1A and saw Canmore, Morley, Cochrane, Sarcee Indian Reserve and Okotoks. Back in the city, I dropped him off at the Officer's Mess after a dinner at The Red Carpet Restaurant. We met up again at the ball at the Officer's Mess being held for Lady Patricia that evening. After things had settled down there the Admiral advised he was tired and retired for the evening. The Ball carried on and Lady Patricia finally quit at 3am, much to the joy of the wives who had children to take care of at home. The Royal Party departed the base the next noon hour for their flight to England. It is to be noted that in the travels in and about Calgary and area, not one person recognized or

indicated they knew who my companion was, except in the Military environment. The Admiral indicated he had quite enjoyed the previous day's travel and events and that he would like to meet with myself again.

In the Fall of 1975 "One Canadian Brigade Group" was dispatched to the North Central area of BC. We proceeded Northwest from Edmonton to Dawson Creek BC. Then onto a local mountain area for the exercise to commence. Living in the Northern Fall weather under canvas was not all that great but we made do, travel was difficult as the roads were ancient and in rough condition. A lot of foot slogging was required but the troops carried on and completed the exercise. We were all glad to return to civilization and after three weeks, a hot shower etc... was most welcome. Back in Calgary was as our routines were supposed to be and we all conformed to our regular duties and routine. Xmas 1975 was just around the corner and all fell into the Xmas holiday spirit and enjoyed the festive season. I took two weeks leave and travelled to Halifax. Met up with my family and enjoyed my holiday. Then back to headquarters at Currie Barracks in Calgary 1976 for the New Year.

In May the Brigade was in Wainwright for the Annual Exercises. Plenty of activity, CF5 aircraft doing close air support, helicopters continuously on the move with troops and supplies. Artillery and the soldiers on the Gunnery Ranges and numerous small groups of infantry doing their training. I June the different Battalions returned to Victoria, Comox, Edmonton, Shilo and Calgary.

The "Calgary Stampede" in July was of great interest as the "Snowbirds" were part of the evening show and displayed their various flying skills much to the enjoyment of the crowds at the Stampede and the population of Calgary in general.

August was a trip to Vancouver for the "Tactical Air Group" to arrange for security at the gathering of people from around the world attending "The United Nations Conference on Human Settlements" at Jericho Beach in the summer of 1976, chaired by Margaret Trudeau. The third Battalion PPCLI was on ½ hr notice to move from Victoria to Vancouver as was 408 squadron of helos to transport them. The event did not occur as all was peaceful. Xmas 1976 I spent with my family in Halifax. I was still on 12 hrs notice to go to the Middle East.

January, back in Calgary, April, back to Wainwright for "One Battalion Group Exercises". The Annual Spring exercise that all turned out for including a group of American soldiers from Anchorage, Alaska. They were from the South Eastern States and found our weather not to their liking and were only too pleased to take off for The States on completion of Wainwright.

In early Summer headquarters, Group proceeded to the Northwest tip of Vancouver Island to exercise with the Navy. Ships, "Restigouche", "Cape Scott" and a few other craft from the West coast participated in the exercise. The event lasted for three weeks before we all returned to our home bases. The mosquitoes were ferocious!

In Calgary for the "Stampede" and once again I had the "Snowbirds" to present their show. The People in Calgary were more than pleased and expressed so to all.

I had travelled to Halifax at the end of July 1977. I finally received permission to move my family to Calgary and spent a couple of weeks driving with them from Halifax area to Calgary in the month of August. On arrival in Calgary, I spent the month of Sep. settling into 1 Liri Ave SW, Officer's Row at Married Quarters in Sarscee Barracks and catching up with my office work. Then it was off to St. Hubert, QC for a briefing and update on Mobile Command. A couple of days at headquarters in Ottawa and I was on my way back to Calgary and settled into the Winter season and upgrading the Tactical Air Control Unit. Xmas was a pleasure for me, my family changed my entire lifestyle.

As the summer came upon us I received a phone call from Lord Louis Mountbatten expressing a desire to renew our acquaintance and spend some time with him. It was coincidental that I had to proceed to London, United Kingdom... for duty and was able to arrange a few days off to meet and renew our acquaintance.

As I was a "Past Master" of a Masonic Lodge in Dartmouth and the Admiral was also of the Masonic Order, he invited me to accompany him and some others to the Grand Lodge of England and attend the meeting as his guest. The evening was an excellent remembrance and I look back on it well. As I was dropped off at my hotel I wished him well and he replied we might meet again in the near future. Our meeting was in the Fall of 1978. On the 27 August 1979 Mountbatten went lobster potting and Tuna fishing in a 30 foot wooden boat, The "Shadow V". Just a few hundred yards from shore a bomb was exploded which had been smuggled aboard the night before. The boat was destroyed by the force of the blast. Mountbatten, then aged 79 was pulled alive from the water by nearby fishermen, but died from his injuries before being brought to shore. The IRA claimed responsibility for the death of Lord Louis Mountbatten.

After my meeting with The Admiral I returned to Canada in 1978 in time for Xmas with family and friends. The New Year was fast approaching, but that's another tale.

To be continued,

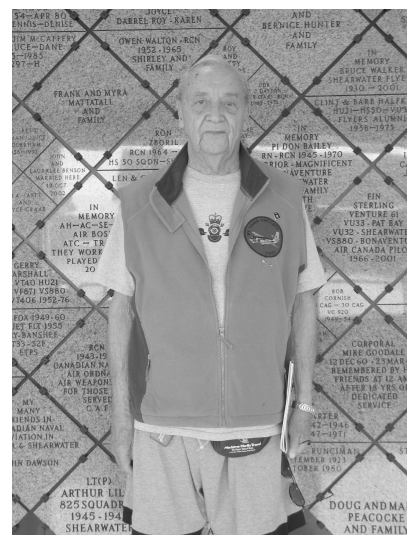
Yours Aye,  
Peaches



*Names  
Please*



**John Webber**



**Stu Beakley**





WHERE? WHEN? WHY? WHO?



*Dear Kay: To you, as Editor, and to those on the staff of Warrior, thank you so much for continuing to publish such a wonderful magazine. In order to make up for my long period of silence, the following anecdote may be of interest to your readers although it has little to do with naval aviation.*

**Ted**

## **A little personal history of a Barracuda**

**Pilot.** By Ted Davis

At the end of 1944 I had qualified as a Barracuda pilot and shortly thereafter our squadron set off to join the Eastern Fleet operating out of Sri Lanka, or Ceylon as it was known at this time. Suffice it to say that the Barra and its Merlin 32 couldn't cope with the heat and humidity. Aircraft were placed in storage in southern India and personnel ferried back to England, at which time I returned to Canada on foreign service leave.

Arriving at Halifax I was sent on leave with instructions to report back on a specific date to take passage back to the United Kingdom. For almost two months there was little to do at home but enjoy each day as it came. Finally this life of leisure was almost over and time to head back to the east coast. On arrival in Halifax I was told to report aboard *HMCS Guysborough*, a minesweeper with a complement of 50 officers and men, which had just completed a refit and was due to return to Plymouth for sweeping operations in the English channel.



**HMCS GUYSBOROUGH**

I believe it was March 7<sup>th</sup> or thereabouts when we left Halifax to refuel in the Azores before heading to Plymouth. There would be no other ships in company and at a speed of just over 11 knots, it would take us almost twelve days to reach the other side. Each day was much like the next, but finally we reached the Azores and now had only five days left to reach our destination. But that little ship never did get as far as the shores of England.

On March 17, 1945, *HMCS Guysborough* was torpedoed and sunk in the Bay of Biscay by the German submarine U868 about 300 miles short of her destination.

At 1800 I was washing up before going to the

wardroom for dinner when the torpedo struck and I was flung violently into the air as the entire ship reverberated under the impact. In that brief instant my head hit something unyielding in the confined space and I collapsed in a heap. Momentarily stunned, I picked myself up and stumbled out onto the weather decks to take stock of the situation.

It was obvious at first glance that the ship was badly damaged. Deck plates were torn off, debris littered the upper deck and whaler and motor boat were holed by the shattering explosion. Back aft I could see that the plating on the quarterdeck was curled up and over like a partially opened sardine tin. Below decks, the sea poured in through a gaping hole in the stern and slowly the ship began to settle.

Although bulkheads were shored up, all possible patching done, and pumps kept working at top speed, it couldn't stem the steady flow of water that continued to flow into the after sections. It was now only a matter of time before the ship would have to be abandoned.

Wading through a foot of water down below, I retrieved my Mae West and flight jacket from the cabin and then returned to the upper deck. Without that fleece-lined jacket I don't think I would have survived the ordeal that followed.

On deck there was a controlled flurry of activity and some groups cleared away and jettisoned the debris while others were busy bringing equipment aft to help the damage control party in its effort to keep the ship afloat. Then, without warning, a second torpedo struck the ship amidships and now any further effort to keep her afloat would be of no avail.

At that moment, the order "Abandon Ship" was given. Since both boats were out of commission, our survival now depended on the five Carley floats, each of which was capable of supporting twenty men. Like others, I was reluctant to jump from the deck but this was no time for indecision. Making sure I wouldn't land on top of someone, I leaped out into thin air before I could change my mind. It was a shock hitting that icy water and I wasted little time in swimming over to the nearest Carley float and clambering aboard. Within minutes everyone had left the ship and was either in, or hanging onto, one of the floats which had been loosely tied together.

Twenty minutes after being abandoned, *Guysborough* sank. As her bow disappeared beneath the surface, three cheers for the ship rang out across the now empty sea.

I don't know if this was true of the other floats, but on ours everyone sat up on the tubing and not down on the platform below, so that only our legs were in the water rather than being immersed up to the waist. Even at that, the sea constantly slopped over the tubing and there was the added problem of staying put and not topple over backward whenever the float lurched as a wave passed by. But then again, perhaps all this clutching and grabbing at one another

as we swayed back and forth helped to keep us awake and reduced the chances of slipping into unconsciousness. And this became more and more likely to happen as the hours went by.

The initial excitement, the keyed-up feeling and alertness soon gave way to boredom and then apathy. The frigid water also took its toll. The cold, the darkness, the apparent futility of it all was an ever increasing drain on our resources, both physical and mental. It was a test of will and endurance as the night wore on. On more than one occasion I had dozed off and on, and it was daylight when I finally awoke to the sound of cheering from the other floats. But I comprehend little of what is going on, and shut out the world around me...

The scrambling net lowered over the ship's side is within easy reach and I clutch at it with both hands. I try to pull myself up into a standing position, but its of no use and sink back onto my knees in the bottom of the float...

The next thing I remember is lying in a bunk with a great weight of coarse, grey blankets on top of me, but I can't stop shivering. Then there's a sharp pinprick in my arm, a feeling of euphoria, and finally a deep, deep sleep.

During the 19 or 20 hours in which the survivors had clung to the Carley floats, 54 had died, a few of injuries but most due to exposure. The remaining 37 were now safely aboard *HMS Inglis*, one of two British frigates dispatched to the scene, and with all the survivors accounted for, were heading back to Plymouth.

It was two days later when I became fully aware of my surroundings and what lay in store for me during the months to come. Here in the R.N. Hospital at Plymouth I learned that a deep cut on my forehead would be attended to on the following morning but additional surgery would be undertaken elsewhere at a later date. After almost three weeks I was discharged and moved to a Canadian military hospital in Taplow, Berkshire, where I would spend the next three months recuperating from surgery on my thigh.

It was during this time that the war in Europe officially ended and the day of the Allied victory, VE Day, was one of great rejoicing at the hospital as it was throughout the land. When word was received of Germany's unconditional surrender on May 8, 1945, the wards emptied as if by magic. Virtually all patients, dressed only in pajamas and dressing gowns, set off towards the local pub about half a mile away, despite attempts by the matron and one or two nurses to halt the mass exodus. Like many of those on the ground floor, I escaped through one of the windows, and on crutches hastened along the country road in company with others on crutches, in wheelchairs, or hobbling along with the aid of a cane.

It was a grand and glorious afternoon but finally the revelry was over and the trek back to the hospital began. Pajama-clad bodies lurched drunkenly along the road, or laughing hysterically, attempted to right the occasional

overturned wheelchair and get it and its occupant out of the ditch. There were those who fell by the wayside, but eventually were coaxed by others to keep moving. By evening all had returned to the wards, some in the company of orderlies sent out to round up the stragglers.

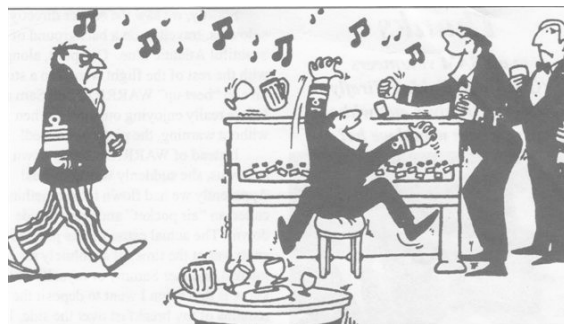
By the end of the first week in June I had recovered sufficiently to be sent on to the Roman Way Convalescent Hospital at Colchester in Essex for more physiotherapy before being considered fit for return to duty. By the end of July I was now able to get around without the need of a cane but it would be at least another month before I could fly again.

It was in August that the war in the Pacific came to an abrupt end. On August 6, the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and three days later a second one fell on Nagasaki with equally devastating results. At the same time Russia declared war against Japan and VJ Day was now not far off. On August 14<sup>th</sup> Japan surrendered unconditionally, bringing World War II to an end.

And that brings this little personal history to an end as well.

It was also the end of a small ship and the loss of almost 60% of those aboard.

\*\*\*\*\*



### ***I'll See You In My Dreams***

***I'll see you in my dreams  
Hold you in my dreams  
Someone took you out of my arms  
Still I feel the thrill of your charms***

***Lips that once were mine  
Tender eyes that shine  
They will light my way tonight  
I'll see you in my dreams***

## C h a n g e   o f   d a t e!!!!

### PLEASE NOTE - NEXT SAMF 50/50 DRAW WILL TAKE PLACE 17 DEC 2013

Tickets must reach our office NLT 10 DEC 2013 for them to be included in this Dec draw.

**Price of tickets: 3 for \$5    6 for \$10**

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If you wish, just call or email us, give us your credit card number and the amount of tickets you want to put in the draw and we will fill out the tickets for you. You may call us at:

**toll free number 1-888-497-7779** or our **local number 461-0062** or

you may email us at [samf@samfoundation.ca](mailto:samf@samfoundation.ca)

The SAMF Secretary will be available at the above numbers etc and ready to help you. If she is out of the office or away from her desk, please leave your number and she will return your call as quickly as possible. This is a secure line.

Some of you will still have tickets on hand from previous draws. You can use them for this one as well. If you prefer to pay by cheque please do so at the following address.

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

***Congratulations to Mr. Robert Ferguson of Ottawa who won our last 50/50 draw.***

Now is the time to get your tickets. Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you.

Carol Shadbolt  
Chair 50 - 50 DRAW

**BACKUP - WARRIOR** Please Read: This is important to me and perhaps to someone out there across Canada or in the local area.

With our Delta List getting longer all the time, I began to think perhaps I'd best give thought to someone becoming my backup as Editor of WARRIOR.

The WARRIOR is set up on a computer so it can be done from any province. The person wanting the job of Editor sometime in the future, should be able to find the stories and photos etc to go into each issue. This isn't always an easy task or a hard one either. We have a small committee that will help. For articles, there is the Library at the Museum, for military magazines, books etc

- even articles from USA publications. Ron Beard is a whiz at getting photos as requested. For further information contact me at:

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## NAVAL AIR OR TALES FROM THE LOWER DECK

By Joe Carver

*(The following is just a snippet from Joe Carvers full article which may be found on our website [www.samfoundation.ca](http://www.samfoundation.ca) under 'Articles'.)*

In the later years of one's service career the humour lay in the reliving & relating of these past events or extolling & criticizing the faux pas of our leaders.

Sometimes though, an incident, an individual event or a comment occurs, which serves to remind us that the 'Navy' we knew is passing or has gone. It also, somewhat brutally, reminds us that we -- like our navy -- are also passing. Although one hasn't thought of it, not everyone -- especially those junior to us, both in length of service or rank -- has experienced the things with which we matured.

### **"You know PO, I heard about that."**

A normal Friday morning in P.O.'s Mess at Shearwater, consisted of cleaning & polishing throughout the Mess -- Lounge & Bar areas -- preparatory for 'Rounds' (inspection). The usual Friday morning 'Rounds' were conducted by the Commander. Occasionally, although not scheduled, the Captain would join the Commander for these 'Rounds'.

A cleaning party of 2 or 3 Ordinary Seamen Air Mechanics were 'detailed off' from the larger Warrior Block cleaning party & sent next door, for cleaning, washing, polishing throughout the PO's "Mess".

Just prior to the Commander or Captain's arrival & after everything was "ship shape & Bristol fashion" the Mess President -- who would be reporting the mess ready for inspection to the Captain or the Commander upon their arrival -- would slip into his office & put on a clean shirt, retie his tie, & replace his linen cap cover with a clean, fresh cover.

Historically the navy had had different uniforms for winter, spring & summer wears. In the winter those in 'Round' rig wore a blue wool sweater {jersey} under our 'jumpers' (tunic) & wore blue caps. In the spring the jersey was changed to a cream, almost white, flannel singlet with a blue border stripe across the neck aperture & the blue caps were changed for white. Later in the summer the cream coloured flannel was replaced by a similar but cotton white front.

For those in 'Square Rig' -- Commissioned Officers, Chief Petty Officers & first class Petty Officers -- spring or summer merely meant changing the cover on their hat. The navy blue cap of winter would be covered by a white linen cap cover.

In 1946 naval policy changed when it was decided that white caps would be worn all year long. The heretofore blue hats of

winter were discarded for a year round -- sometimes plastic -- white hat.

However, many of the Chiefs or Petty Officers retained their old blue cloth peaked hats & continued the practice of changing to a clean linen cap cover when required. This was not done in defiance to change but the older style hat was lighter, softer, and more comfortable. With the grommet removed the hat had character & personality which the newer style, stiff rimmed plastic hats did not.

One Friday the Mess President was in the process of changing preparatory to receiving the Commander for the inspection.

As the Mess President was changing his cap cover -- which entailed removal of the hat's grommet, lining up seams & fitting the cover over the hat-- a young Ordinary Seaman, of the cleaning party, walked past the open office door & noticed what the Mess President was doing.

The Ordinary Seaman did in fact do -- what they call in the movies -- a double take. With a somewhat amazed, wide eyed or confused look on his face the young sailor said, "P.O. your cap is blue?"

"Yeah, replied the Mess President, "I'm just changing my cap cover".

He then went on to explain, "We used to wear blue caps all winter & white caps only in summer."

With an acknowledging nod, the young Ordinary Seaman said, "Oh".

Then starting to turn & walk away, looked directly at the Mess President, & quizzically remarked, "You know P.O., I heard about that".

When the Commander arrived the Mess President saluted & fighting back the tears, reported; "Petty Officer's Mess Ready for inspection sir".

### **Who was Mussolini, PO?**

A similar incident occurred in Warrior Block, on a Sunday afternoon in early 1959.

Two thirds of Warrior Block was the living quarters for H.M.C.S. Shearwater's leading seamen & below. The remaining portion -- with a separate entrance -- was the Petty Officer's mess & housed the 20 first & second class P.O.'s living on board. Inside Warrior Block's main entrance was a large lobby with Admin office space. Off this Lobby was a Lounge area where the 'Hands' watched Television, played cards, ping-pong, & socialized.

This particular Sunday, Willie Knox -- who actually lived next door in the P.O.'s Mess, was Duty Disciplinary Petty Officer. The Duty Disciplinary P.O. performed his duties from the Admin Office in the front lobby of Warrior Block. As Duty

Disciplinary Petty Officer, Willie therefore was required to periodically muster any Blacklist Men {men under punishment} & to be visible & available, in case of any emergencies or personnel problems.

To pass the time however, yet still be easily visible & readily available if required, -- the Duty Disciplinary P.O. could watch television in the near-by 'Hands' recreation lounge. The TV program that Sunday was a documentary, hosted by Walter Cronkite. Cronkite introduced the program saying; "A day, like any other day, but you are there." "Today we present the story of the Dictator of Italy, Benito Mussolini -- Ill Duce". Willie, leaning against one of the large pillars in the lounge remarked, "Oh. Mussolini. This could be pretty good." A young sailor sitting just below where Willie was leaning, overheard the comment & looking up, said, "Who was Mussolini, P.O.?" Willie sarcastically replied, "For Christ's sake, Mussolini was one of the Axis leaders in the Second World War. We sank half his God damned navy in the Med in the '40s. What's the matter with you? Don't you remember any thing?" The young sailor again looking up at Willie, said, "P.O. I wasn't born until 1941." Willie muttered, "Oh God," & came next door to the mess for a drink.

The following 'Dip' does not truly concern Naval Air. It does however; concern one of our more famous Admirals. His more than 30 year naval career impacted the whole of the Royal Canadian Navy. In keeping with the belief that things of a 'Salty Dip' nature should not be lost; it is therefore worth inclusion.



**HMCS Ontario**

### **Ahead or Astern.**

H.M.C.S. Ontario had just arrived from the West Coast & the Chief Bos'n's Mate, who happened to be a close friend said, "Hey Joe, have you heard what Graf Von did in the Caribbean? "No? Well, this is no shit ....."

Our R.C.N. has been blessed with several officers possessing intelligence & wit. For this story -- one such person comes to mind--Admiral Hugh Pullen. Throughout the navy Hugh Pullen was referred to as 'Graf Von'. Because it was believed that he was of German descent Lieutenant Pullen had been tagged with the appellation of 'Graf Von' 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 Commodore Pullen -- was Captain of H.M.C.S. Ontario in Esquimalt, B.C.

H.M.C.S. 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.

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

For some reason however, the United States Admiral in charge of these exercising ships, did not consult his reference tools.

After the welcoming salutes but, before the exercises started, the following occurred:

On H.M.C.S. Ontario's bridge, the Yeoman of signals announced, "Signal from Flagship, sir."

"Go ahead please, Yeoman".

The Yeoman then read the message aloud, "From Flag to Captain, H.M.C.S. Ontario; can you make 30 knots?"

Graf Von paused a moment & turning to the Yeoman, said,

"Yeoman, make to flag ship, "Ahead or astern?"

Further communication between 'Graf Von' & the American Admiral consisted of briefly wishing each other, farewell & good luck, as the exercises concluded & H.M.C.S. Ontario left the Caribbean for Halifax.

Admiral Hugh 'Graf Von' Pullen became Flag Officer Atlantic Coast & in that position directly -- as many may recall -- impacted Naval Air.

There are many other humorous naval or military incidents, each with their ironic juxtapositions. Their re-telling however will have to wait for another day & another narrator.

Messmates, these few 'Salty Dips' belong to you. Hopefully you have enjoyed these anecdotes of our Naval Air escapades & perhaps my reminiscing has aroused or stirred a few happy memories of the circumstances or events which filled our salad years.

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